



Zones of Regulation (Early Years)

WITH NATASHA CRABBE

Aim

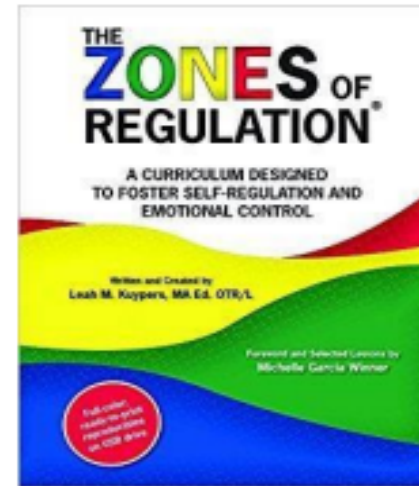
Overview of self-regulation

- To understand how 'The Zones of Regulation' works
- Self-regulation tools
- Calming techniques
- Sensory supports
- Thinking strategies

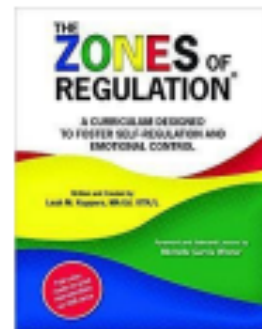
WHAT ARE THE **ZONES** OF REGULATION®?

It teaches children:

- ☐ Vocabulary of emotional terms
- ☐ How to recognise their own emotions
- ☐ How to detect the emotions of others (read others' facial expressions)
- ☐ What may trigger certain emotions
- ☐ How others may interpret their behaviour
- ☐ Problem solving skills



WHY TEACH THE **ZONES** OF REGULATION®?



- Provides a **common language** to discuss emotions – a language that is non-judgemental.
- The Zones of Regulation is **simple** for children to understand but is helpful for all!
- The Zones **teach *healthy* coping and regulation strategies.**

Early Year Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Research shows that from birth, experiences and adult responses influence how children self-regulate and deal with emotions. Meeting children's emotions is critical, even when some are harder to understand or when they evoke strong feelings in you.

Behaviour can be an expression of feelings or emotions. To help children make sense of this, and have the best effect, approach them with empathy, supporting and guiding them to identify and deal with their emotions.

Early Years Foundation Stage

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development.

Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

Early Years Foundation Stage

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

ELG: Self-Regulation

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly.
- Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate.
- Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

ELG: Managing Self

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge.
- Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly.
- Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

ELG: Building Relationships

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others.
- Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers.
- Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

Definition of self-regulation

“...it is defined as the capacity to manage one’s thoughts, feelings and actions in adaptive and flexible ways across a range of contexts.” Jude Nicholas

It encompasses:

- Self-control
- Resilience
- Self-management
- Anger management
- Impulse control
- Sensory regulation

Why is self regulation important?

Life is 10% what happens to us and 90% how we react to it. Charles Swindoll

Research has found that higher academic achievement is more likely when interventions include self-regulation components.

Typically, children who can self-regulate will turn into teens and future adults who can also self-regulate.

A person who can self-regulate is able to:

- Remain CALM AND ORGANISED in a stressful situation. (Executive Functions)
- Cheer themselves up after a disappointment. (Emotional Regulation)
- Knows when they are experiencing sensory overload and can make adjustments.
(Sensory processing)
- Understands when it is appropriate to cheer and shout and when to be quiet.
(Social cognition)

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Lesson 1

Basics:

- how many feelings can you think of?
- can you guess their feelings?
- how do they make your tummy feel?
- match the expressions to the zones

How many feelings can you think of?

Can you guess their feelings?



bored

tired

MAD!

excited

terrified

confused

happy

sick

ready to learn

worried

calm

sad

angry

silly



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Lesson 2

Context:

- Quick recap... can you remember the different zones?
- looking for clues.... Is it easier to tell what the person is feeling when you look at the whole picture?
- Do you think there's a 'good' zone/'bad' zone?
- Where/when is it **expected** to be in a particular zone?
- Where/when is it **unexpected** to be in a particular zone?
- Can you be in two or more zones at the same time?

blue zone



green zone



yellow zone



red zone



Can you remember the different zones and the different types of feelings in each zone?

How are you feeling right now? Which zone are you in?

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- So you see: there is no wrong or right zone, only the expected zone (or zones) for the place and time. We are going into and out of most of the zones all of the time, all day long.
- It's important that we remember to keep moving, and not get stuck in a blue, yellow or red zone for too long...it's exhausting! It's totally natural to move into those zones but good to remember to come back to the green zone as often as you can.
- Everyone will be in each of the zones at some points in their lives and most of the time, we are in a mixture of zones.

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Lesson 3

Tools:

- Zones as signposts... Rest, Go, Slow-down, Stop
- Getting back to green...
- Good strategies/bad strategies
- Introducing tools as strategies for transitioning between zones
- Toolbox suggestions... how many do you already use?
- Can you think of useful tools if you are feeling.....
- Finger breathing video from Pooky Knightsmith

Understanding the zones can be really useful because the different colours tell you what you need to do to help you feel better....



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Sometimes, if you've only just gone into the red zone, you can get back to green through the yellow zone by using: STOP! then Slow down.....

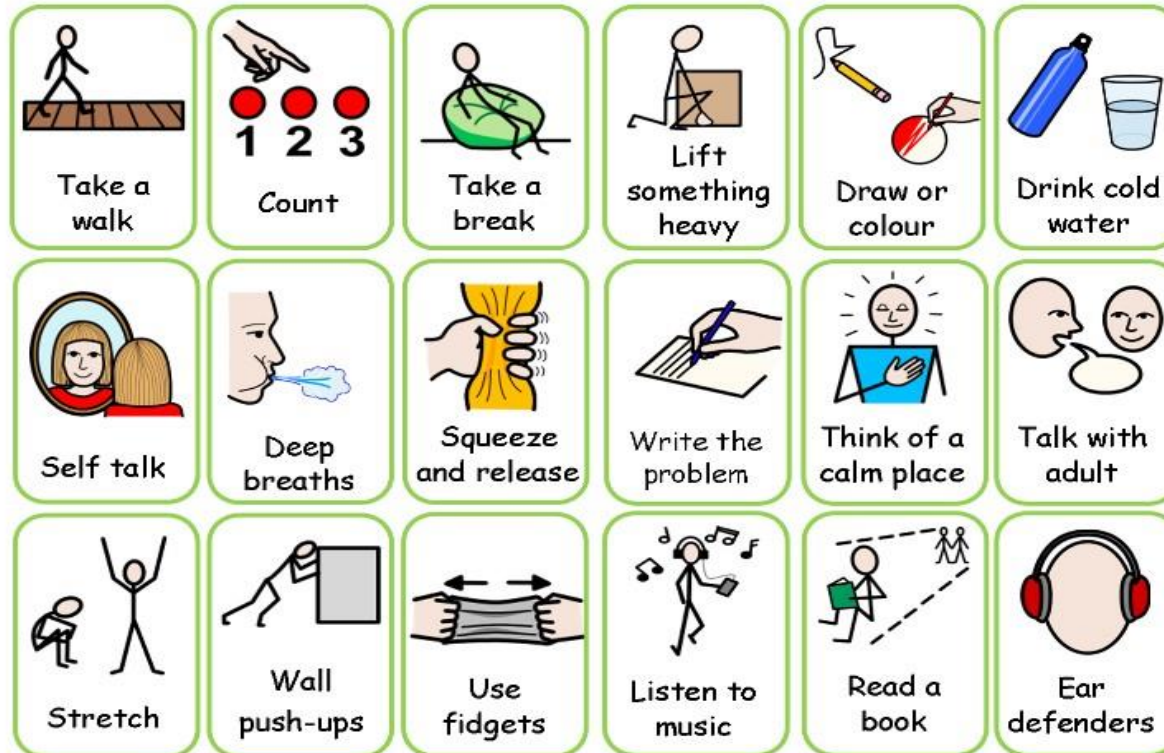


Other times, if you have spent too long in the red zone, you will be tired, and will need to get back to the green zone through the blue zone by using: STOP! then Rest...



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All of these tools can be useful to get us out of blue, yellow or red zones and into the green zone! Do you use any of these tools already?



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Star Breathing

Start at any "Breathe in" side,
hold your breath at the point, then breathe out.
Keep going until you've gone around the whole star.



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Five finger breathing!



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Sensory support



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Lesson 4

Size of the Problem:

- Think of some common problems
- Examples and definitions of different sized problems and appropriately scaled reactions.
- Small / Medium / Large problem-scaling visuals
- Using suggestions given in the first exercise, use the visuals to help work out the size of the problems and possible reactions and solutions.

Small problems

Involves one or two people

Easily fixed

No danger

Can be fixed by yourself

Small problems can be easily fixed by one or two people. A small problem only needs a small reaction. You will probably be able to stay in the green zone, but if you start to feel yellow or blue, use your tools!

Medium problems

Involves some people

Takes an hour or a few days to fix

No danger

Might need help to fix it

Medium problems might need some more people to help fix them. A medium problem only needs a medium sized reaction. You will probably go into the yellow or blue zone so go slow or rest and use your tools to stay calm

Big problems

Involves lots of people

No quick or easy solution

Might involve danger

Need other peoples' help

Big problems usually need lots of people to help fix them. It's normal to have a big reaction to a big problem, so you might be in the red zone for a bit, but remember: try to get out of the red zone as soon as you can.

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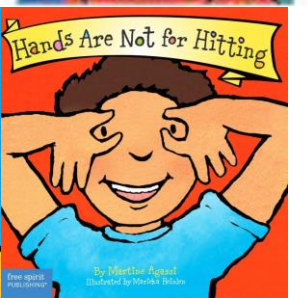
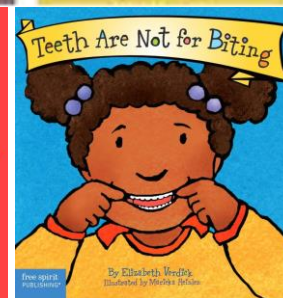
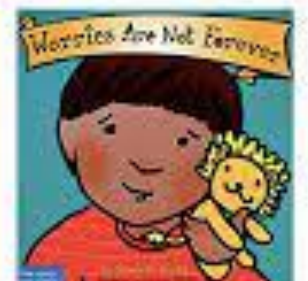
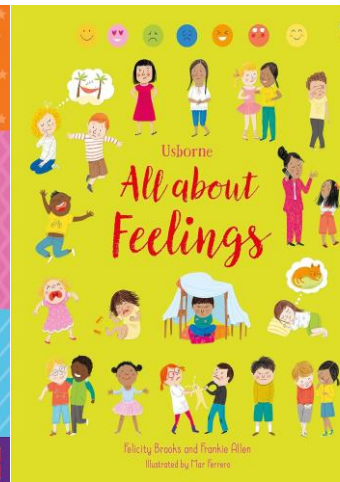
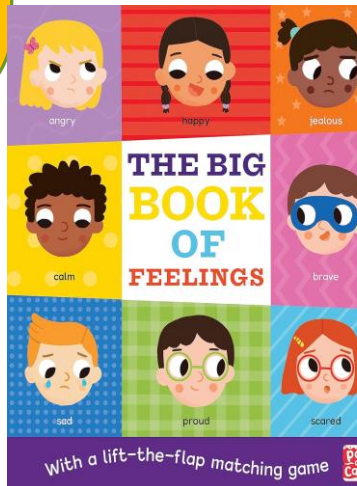
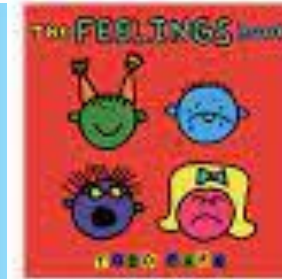
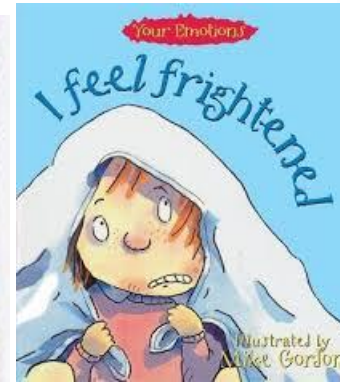
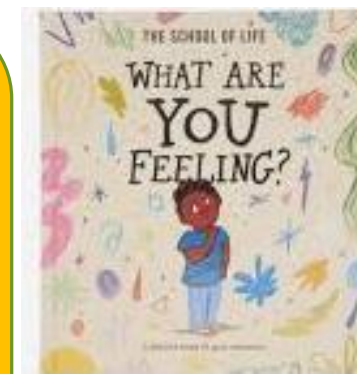
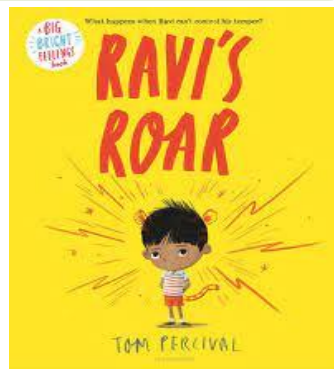
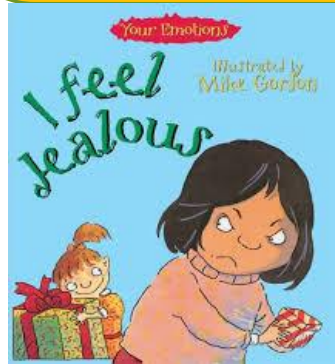
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Lesson 5

How our behaviour affects you and others:

General discussion on unexpected behaviour....

How did you feel at first? How did you feel as it continued? How do you feel now?



Questions



Resources and references

<https://zonesofregulation.com/>

Development matters

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64e6002a20ae890014f26cbc/DfE_Development_Matters_Report_Sep2023.pdf

Emotions

<https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/personal-social-and-emotional-development/emotions#why-emotions-are-important>

Sense of self

<https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/personal-social-and-emotional-development/sense-of-self>

Relationships

<https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/personal-social-and-emotional-development/relationships>