




THE ZONES OF REGULATION

November 2021



What is self-regulation?

Self-regulation is the ability to understand and manage your behaviour and your reactions to feelings and things happening around you. It includes being able to:

- regulate reactions to strong emotions like frustration, excitement, anger and embarrassment
- calm down after something exciting or upsetting
- focus on a task
- refocus attention on a new task
- control impulses
- behave in ways that help you get along with other people.



**Self-regulation
is important
because it
helps children
to:**

Learn

- by giving them the ability to sit and listen in the classroom

Behave

- In socially acceptable ways – by giving them the ability to control impulses

Make friends

- by giving them the ability to take turns in games and conversation, share toys, and express emotions in appropriate ways

Become independent

- by giving them the ability to make appropriate decisions about behaviour and learn how to behave in new situations with less guidance from an adult.



Factors affecting the development of self-regulation skills:

Children experience the most rapid gains in self-regulatory behaviours from the ages of three to five (Karreman et al., 2006; Kopp, 1982; McClelland et al., 2007).

Although self-regulation tends to follow a developmental timetable, the skills are sensitive to:

- environmental influences, such as poverty, parenting, family dynamics, culture (Colman, Hardy, Albert, Raffaelli, & Crockett, 2006; Li-Grining, 2012)..
- medical conditions/SEND e.g. ASD, ADHD



Acquiring self-regulation skills

Research shows that self-regulation skills need to be taught both explicitly and via role modelling.

Covid 19 has had an impact on the development of self-regulation skills. It has led to a lack of schooling and opportunities for socialisation as well as increased pressure on parenting and family life.

The result is that many children who would normally acquire good self-regulation skills without the need for intervention now need more explicit teaching.

How does the Zones of Regulation help develop self-regulation skills?

WHAT ARE THE ZONES OF REGULATION®?




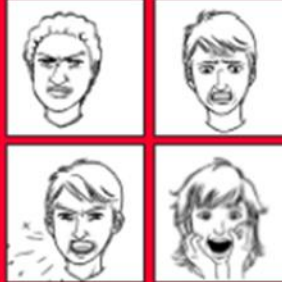
The Zones is a programme which uses a systematic, cognitive-behavioural approach to teach us to recognise, acknowledge and regulate our feelings, energy and sensory needs.

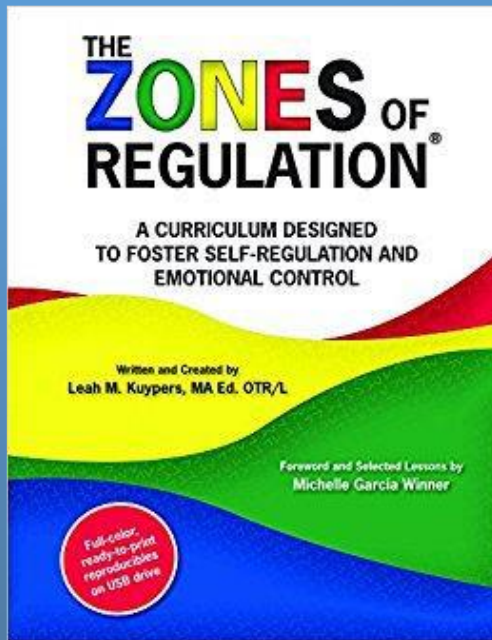
It teaches students:

- 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 and strategies to regulate our emotions

The **ZONES** of Regulation®

We teach children to identify which zone they are in:

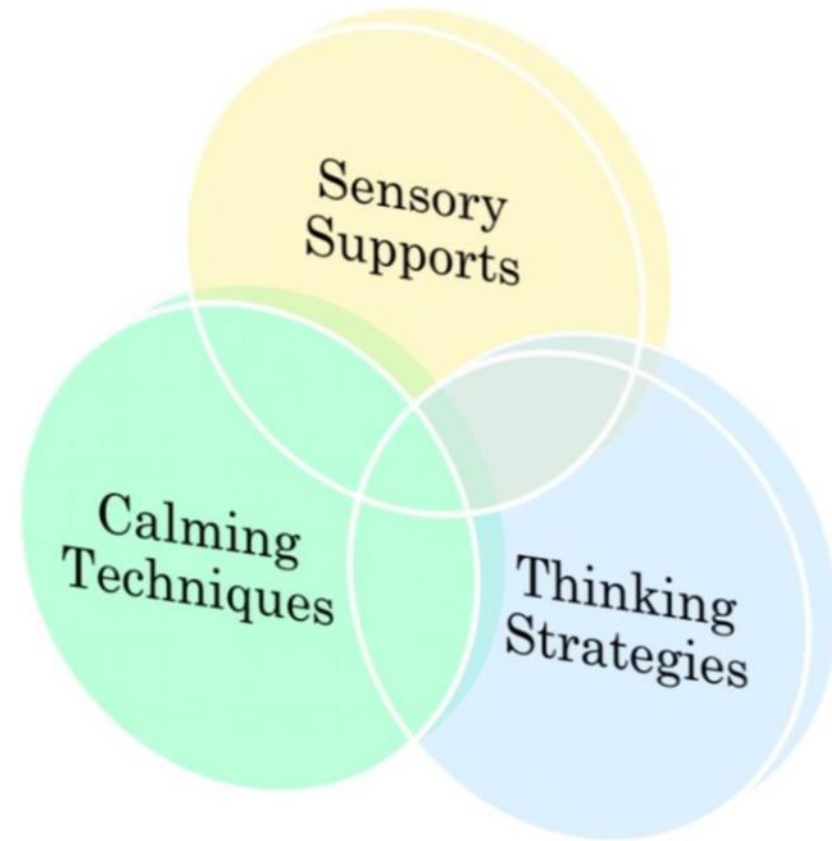
			
<p>BLUE ZONE</p> <p>Sad Sick Tired Bored Moving Slowly</p>	<p>GREEN ZONE</p> <p>Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Ready to Learn</p>	<p>YELLOW ZONE</p> <p>Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control</p>	<p>RED ZONE</p> <p>Mad/Angry Terrified Yelling/Hitting Elated Out of Control</p>



KEY POINTS:

- There is no 'bad' Zone.
- Everyone experiences all of the Zones at different times and in different circumstances.
- We can't change the way children feel BUT we can help them manage their feelings/states and behaviours.
- You can be in more than one Zone at a time (eg. sad AND angry).

We teach tools
to help self-
regulation



SENSORY STRATEGIES:

- Bear Hug
- Swing/rock
- Go for a walk
- Wall push ups
- Sucking smoothie through straw
- Chewy foods (eg. thick slice of bread)
- Blow bubbles
- Classical music
- Roll on an exercise ball
- Trampoline
- Blanket roll



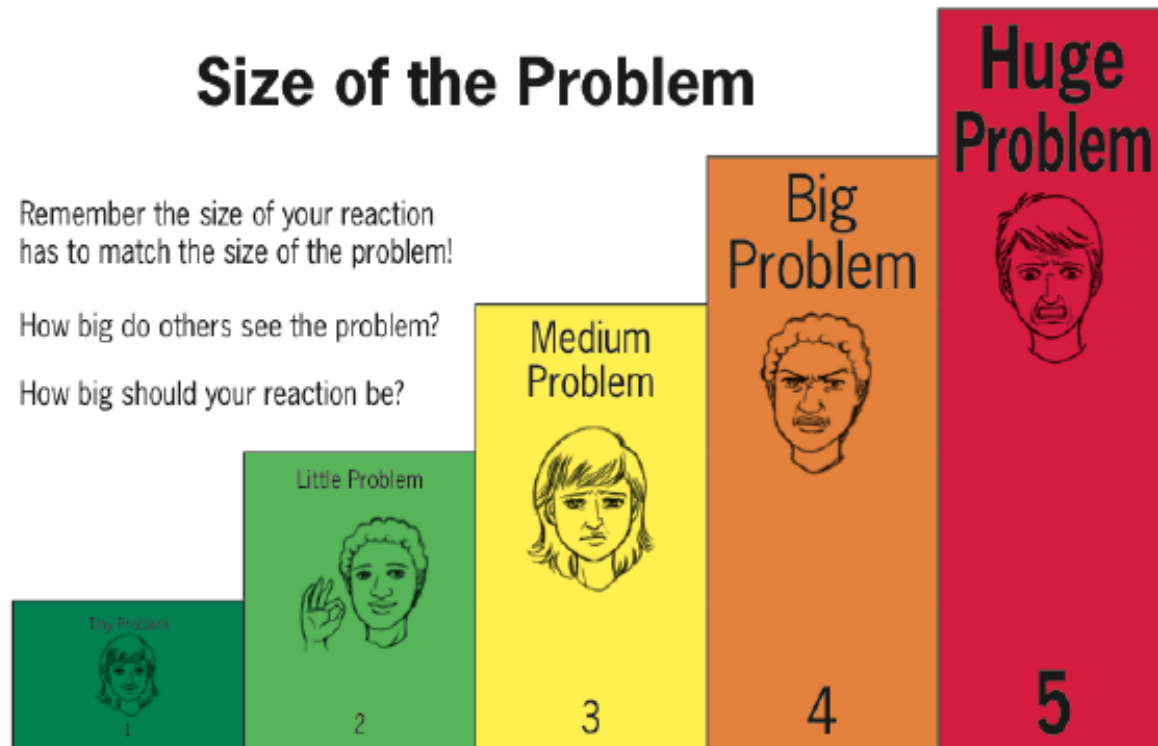
Thinking strategies

Size of the Problem

Remember the size of your reaction has to match the size of the problem!

How big do others see the problem?

How big should your reaction be?



INNER CRITIC	INNER COACH
	
I am not good enough.	I matter, and I am enough.
I'm bad at this.	Mistakes help me learn.
I can't do it.	I will try my best.
I don't fit in.	I am unique and awesome.
No one cares.	It's okay to ask for help.
I am behind.	I am exactly where I need to be.
This is awful.	I will get through this.
No one likes me.	I choose how I feel about myself.

Calming strategies

- Breathing
- Counting
- Listen to music
- Read
- Draw
- Colouring
- Puzzles
- Yoga





In school we are:

- Actively teaching the Zones of Regulation
- Practising self-regulation strategies
- Using the language across the school
- Introducing a 'My Zones' folder for older children to use to help self-regulation skills/behaviour
- Incorporating Zones of Regulation to our Behaviour Policy
- Giving tokens and certificates for children using the Zones and tools



At home you
can:

- Discuss what emotion children feel in each zone e.g. in the yellow zone I may feel worried.
- How this affects them physically e.g. in the yellow zone I may have butterflies in my stomach or have sweaty palms (if feeling anxious).
- Discuss what they might be doing- what would their actions be e.g. in yellow zone would they be pacing around, snapping at others, fidgeting?
- Then discuss how to help them move into the Green zone e.g. if I was in the Yellow zone and feeling anxious I might find doing some yoga stretches/ breathing techniques helps me get back into the green zone.
- Create a list of strategies that work for the child- remind them that we are all unique and the strategies that work for one person might not be the same for them.