



WELCOME TO 10 DAYS OF SELF-REG



We invite you to join us for a 10-day, self-paced, challenge that revolves around understanding the science of Self-Regulation.

Every day, for the next 10 days, explore the guide for a bite-sized piece of information along with a prompt or exercise for reflection.

All our learning and information shared has been derived from The Mehrit Centre and for further learning, we encourage you to explore www.self-reg.ca





10 DAYS OF SELF-REG



DAY 1



Self-reg is not a set of strategies to manage emotions and behaviour – it refers to *how you manage* energy and tension and *how you restore* from the energy loss. Self-reg is what makes self-control possible!

EXERCISE

1. How do you know when you are over stressed?
2. How do you restore your energy?
3. How do you know a child in the program is over stressed?

DEFINITIONS

Self-Regulation: Self-regulation refers to the manner in which an individual deals with stress, in all its many forms, and then recovers from the energy expended.

Self-Control: the ability to control oneself, in particular one's emotions and desires or the expression of them in one's behavior, especially in difficult situations.

NOTES:

ALL INFORMATION HAS BEEN ADOPTED FROM THE WORK OF DR. STUART SHANKER AT THE MEHRIT CENTRE.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT WWW.SELF-REG.CA



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DAY 2

Self-reg needs to be primarily *experiential* rather than a *meta-cognitive* learning process. It's more than just "learning" about Self-Reg and telling a child to calm down, we need to support them in understanding what calm means and feels like in the moment.

REFLECT

1. What does calm mean to you?

2. What does calm feel like for you?

DEFINITION

Meta-Cognitive: awareness of one's thought processes and an understanding of the patterns behind them

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DAY 3

When we see negative behaviour, we often go into pro-social freeze; we stop thinking, and the vacuum invites *deterministic* biases. This is when we stop asking WHY.



REFLECT

1. How does thinking about the Why and Why Now help us move away from deterministic thinking?
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.....
2. Write your thoughts on this quote:
"There is no such thing as bad child"-
Dr. Stuart Shanker
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DEFINITION

Deterministic: Believing that everything that happens must happen as it does and could not have happened any other way, or relating to this belief.

Definition extracted from the Cambridge dictionary

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DAY 4

A child's ability to process information is not related to fixed intellectual potential, rather, it is related to their limbic braking system which goes up or down based on child's stressors. It is very difficult for us as adults to not go into fight or flight when we see a child go into fight or flight (contagion effect).



Asking **WHY** blocks this contagion and interrupts the escalation.

REFLECT

1. Think of a time when a child around you became hyper-aroused – what was your reaction during that time?

DEFINITION

Limbic Brakes: a function of child's energy and tension.

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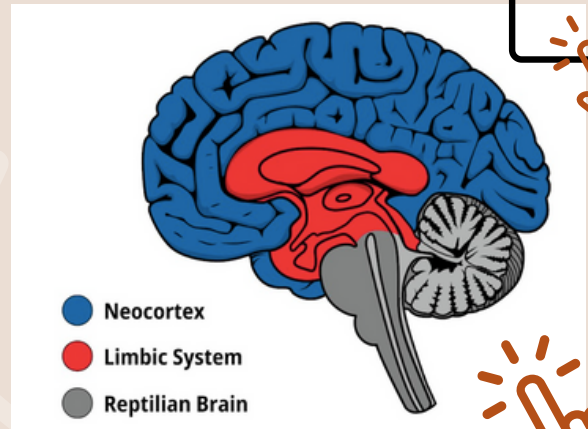


DAY 5

The goal is **NOT** to be in **Blue Brain** all the time, it's to achieve a **Blue Brain, Red Brain Balance**. The key for caregivers struggling with any kind of behavior that they find challenging is to consider whether a child is in **Blue Brain/rational, Red Brain/irrational** or **Grey Brain/non-rational** state. This can help in understanding which neural processes are dominant, and how to respond accordingly.

REFLECT

1. In our professional practice, do we find ourselves seeking balance or control?
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DAY 6

If we treat a child's **red brain (irrational)** decision as a **blue-brain decision (rational)**, we could potentially send the child into **grey brain (non-rational)**. We would falsely be labelling the child as "bad". When a child is in brown brain, and pushed too hard, a neural crash happens (massive energy depletion). It will now take a long time to get back into **red brain-blue brain balance**. With repeated exposure to similar events, it would take less and less stress to send a child into **red/grey** brain.

REFLECT

1. Reflect on a time when your **Red brain** was dominant; what actions did you take to get back into balance?

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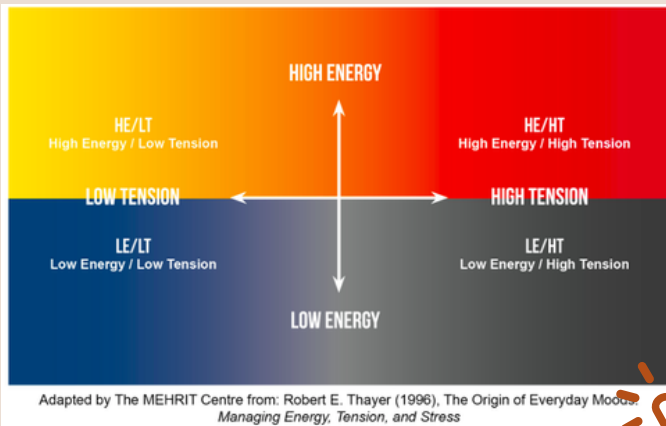
DAY 7



Thayer Matrix- it's natural to flow through all states on the matrix

(**High Energy/Low Tension**, **Low Energy/Low Tension**, **High Energy/ High Tension** and **Low Energy/High Tension**).

The problem is when one gets stuck in a quadrant and is unable to get out of it and restore energy. Your energy-tension state and the stressors in all 5 domains (Biological, Cognitive, Emotion, Social, Prosocial) determine how you are going to respond in a social situation!



REFLECT

1. Reflect on times that you felt you were in each quadrant of the Thayer Matrix. (HE/LT, LE/LT, HE/HT, LE/HT) _____
2. What quadrant do you want to be in for optimal learning? _____

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DAY 8

You can be extremely warm and nurturing in your interactions with children, but it will not help a child reach optimal self-regulation until their particular stressors are decreased and the limbic alarm is turned off! We must, as Self-Reg ECEs, reframe effort and stay wary of labelling a child as “*bad*” or “*lazy*” in such situations.

Effort is a consequence, not a cause. Effort is a function of where we are on the Thayer Matrix (where are we in terms of energy and tension?)

(Refer to day 7 for a refresher on the Thayer Matrix).

REFLECT

1. What could be threatening/stressful stimuli in your classroom?
2. How much effort do you find yourself exerting on a certain task when you are in High Energy/Low Tension vs. Low Energy/High Tension?

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DAY 9

Even though there isn't a lot of self-awareness and **blue brain** executive functioning in young children, they would rather be spending their time with other children (instead of adults). So, we now can establish, that **peer interactions are mostly going to be limbic** (*non-rational, non-cognitive* reactions).

Our goal is not to give lectures on how to interact with peers; our goal is to help them get calm, and that will organically facilitate children's social emotional learning.

REFLECT

1. How can we promote positive peer interactions with this enhanced reframe?

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DAY 10

Congratulations! You have reached the end of the challenge.

Let us begin the conversation on how to embed Self-Reg in our daily practice. The way we lay the foundation is by having the child experience calmness after a moment when they couldn't handle a stressor. The red brain has to see it is safe!

Click [here](#) to find tools to support you in your journey.



REFLECT

1. What strategies can you use in the classroom to support children in building self-regulation skills?
2. How can you support a child in feeling calm? What does that sound like, look like and feel like in the program?

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