

A Guide to the Zones of Regulation

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guide produced by Western Road Community Primary School

The **ZONES** of Regulation®

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

What are The Zones of Regulation?

The Zones of Regulation is a framework that simplifies how we think about and manage our feelings and states. It includes a range of activities to help your child develop skills in the area of self-regulation.

Self-regulation can go by many names, such as self-control, self-management and impulse control. It is defined as the best state of alertness of both the body and emotions for the specific situation. For example, when your child plays in a basketball game, it is beneficial to have a higher state of alertness. However, that same state would not be appropriate in the library.

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



OTHER ZONES VISUALS



Who is The Zones of Regulation for?

We need to teach ALL children good coping and regulation strategies so that they can help themselves when they experience emotions such as anxiety or stress. Teaching children these tools at a young age will support them in later life.

How will my child learn about the Zones?

The Zones of Regulation programme is advocated internationally and, more locally, by East Sussex advisors. Our school is using the programme across the school as part of the PSHE curriculum. Whilst it will be introduced in discrete teaching sessions, the Zones language will be used as part of daily school life.

What are The Zones of Regulation?

Some of the aims of The Zones of Regulation:

- A supportive teaching tool.
- To help children recognise when they are in the different (four-coloured) Zones and how to change or stay in the Zone they are in.
- To gain an increased vocabulary of emotional terms so that they can explain how they are feeling.
- To gain insight into events that might make them move into the different Zones e.g. disagreement with a friend, a certain subject being taught or a fire drill.
- To help children understand that emotions, sensory experiences, physiological needs (eg. hunger/lack of sleep) and environments can influence which Zone they are in.
- To develop problem-solving skills; improving ability to communicate feelings in a safe, non-judgmental way.
- To identify a range of different calming and alerting strategies/tools that support them. Tools identified may be personalised sensory supports (eg. use of putty at key times), calming techniques or thinking strategies.

It is not:

- A discipline model or behaviour approach.
- Punishing or shaming of negative behaviours.

The Zones can be likened to traffic lights:

Green: you are 'good to go!' the optimum state for the classroom and includes feelings such as happy, calm, focused, proud.

Yellow: a high energy state where the 'fizzy' feelings are found e.g. excited, frustrated, anxious, worried, silly. Here we need to slow down or take warning.

Red: an 'out of control' state including feelings such as angry, aggressive, terrified, elated. Here we need to stop and regain control.

Blue: a low energy state / rest area where you need to recharge. You might be feeling tired, sad, bored or sick so you 'pull over'.



Things to remember:

- There is no 'bad' zone, all zones are 'expected' at different times and in different circumstances.
- We can't change the way we feel BUT we can help them manage their feelings / states and behaviours. *"It's ok to be angry but it's not ok to hit..."*
- You can be in more than one zone at a time e.g. sad AND angry.
- Some emotions may fall into more than one zone.

Key Language:

- Toolbox: a collection of calming and alerting strategies a child can draw upon (can be a literal toolbox or a collection of known strategies).
- Tools: calming or alerting strategies that support self-regulation.
- Trigger: something that causes the child to become less regulated and increases the likelihood of going into the Yellow or Red Zones.
- Expected behaviours: behaviours that give those around you good or comfortable thoughts about you.
- Unexpected behaviours: behaviours that give people uncomfortable thoughts about you.

Key points:

- If your child is confidently using words to describe their emotions, they don't need to revert to Zones language HOWEVER it is useful for them to know the strategy groups that will help them e.g. sick or tired = blue zone strategies.

If your child is in the red zone:

- Limit verbals – this is not a teachable moment.
- Discuss use of tools when a child is regulated.
- Plan for if/when a child is in the Red Zone *“I wonder if this strategy would help..?”*

Ways you might help your child use The Zones of Regulation

- Identify your own feelings using Zones language in front of your child (e.g. “I’m frustrated, I think I am in the Yellow Zone.”)
- Talk about what tool you will use to be in the appropriate Zone (e.g. “I need to take 4 deep breaths to help get me back to the Green Zone.”)
- At times, wonder which Zone your child is in or discuss which Zone a character in a film/book might be in (eg. “You look sleepy, are you in the Blue Zone?”)
- Engaging your child in discussion around Zones when they are in the Red Zone is unlikely to be effective. You need to be discussing the different Zones and tools they can use when they are more regulated/calm.
- Teach your child which tools they can use (e.g. “It’s time for bed, let’s read a book together in the rocking chair to get to the Blue Zone.”)
- Different strategies will be uploaded onto our website.
- Share how their behaviour is affecting your Zone. For example, if they are in the Green Zone you could comment that their behaviour is also helping you feel happy/go into the Green Zone.
- Put up and reference the Zones visuals and tools in your home.
- Praise/encourage your child to share which Zone they might be in.

Understanding and Using Zone Tools



Blue Zone tools: help wake up our bodies, feel better and regain focus.

Green Zone tools: help us stay calm, focused and feeling good. These are often proactive strategies.

Yellow Zone tools: help us regain control and calm ourselves.

Red Zone tools: help us stay safe and start to calm down.

Pick 2/3 for each Zone (depends on child).

Sensory Strategies:

- Bear hug
- Swing/rock
- Go for a walk
- Wall push ups
- Sucking/chewing a straw
- Chewing/crunching foods e.g. carrot sticks
- Blow bubbles
- Classical music
- Roll on an exercise ball
- Trampoline
- Blanket roll



These are not a treat but a tool to help a child feel regulated.


SENSORY TOOLS



Could you have a sensory box at home?

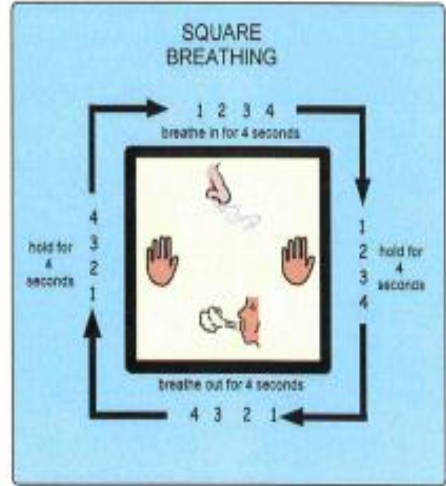
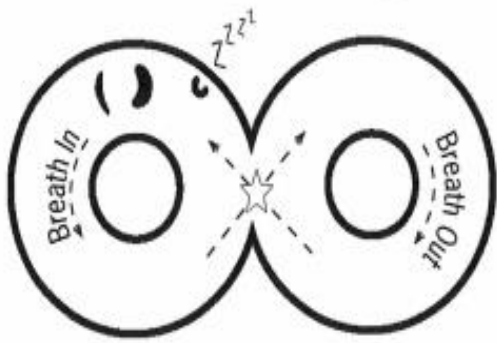
Thinking Strategies:

WHAT CAN I SAY TO MYSELF?		INNER COACH VS INNER CRITIC
INSTEAD OF...	TRY THINKING...	
I'M NOT GOOD AT THIS	-WHAT AM I MISSING?	
I'M AWESOME AT THIS	-I'M ON THE RIGHT TRACK	
I GIVE UP!	-I'LL USE SOME OF THE STRATEGIES I'VE LEARNED	
THIS IS TOO HARD	-THIS MAY TAKE SOME TIME AND EFFORT	
I CAN'T MAKE THIS ANY BETTER	-I CAN ALWAYS IMPROVE; I'LL KEEP TRYING	
I CAN'T DO MATH	-I'M GOING TO TRAIN MY BRAIN IN MATH	
I MADE A MISTAKE	-MISTAKES HELP ME IMPROVE	
I'LL NEVER BE AS SMART AS HER	-I'M GOING TO FIGURE OUT WHAT SHE DOES AND TRY IT	
IT'S GOOD ENOUGH	-IS THIS REALLY MY BEST WORK?	

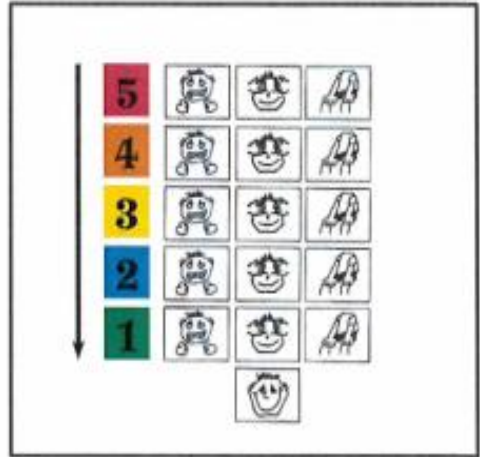


Calming Strategies:

Lazy 8 Breathing



The Six Sides of Breathing



Counting

- Forward and backward
- Count objects
- Count colours
- Count breaths
- Count pulse

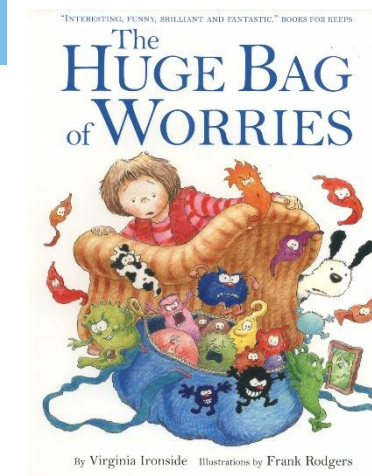
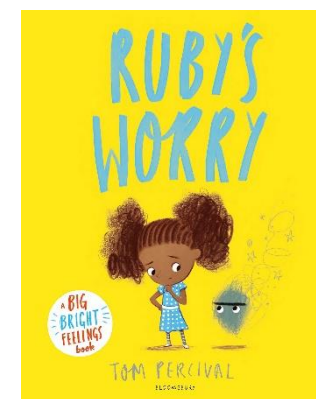
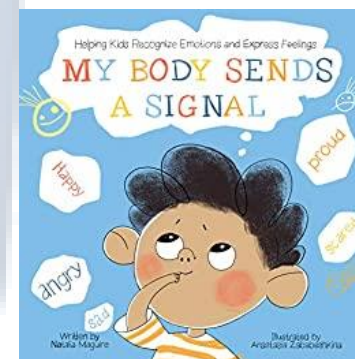
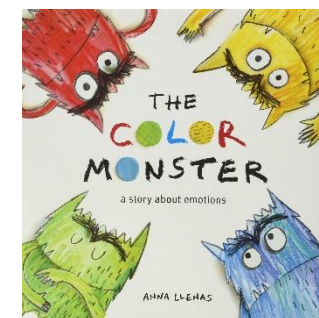
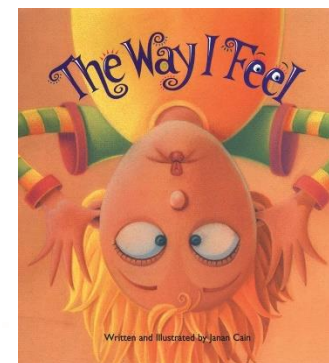


Calming Activities:

- Puzzles
- Listen to music
- Draw/paint
- Origami
- Play doh/clay
- Read
- Stack rocks



Useful Books:



It is important to note that everyone experiences all of the Zones – the Red and Yellow Zones are not the ‘bad’ or ‘naughty’ Zones. All of the Zones are expected at one time or another.

How do I learn more about The Zones of Regulation?

- Visit our school website under
- <http://zonesofregulation.com/index.html>
- Contact your child’s class teacher or the school SENCO for more information.

