

# Reflective Regulatory Profile™

*A parent–coach exploration tool for understanding regulation through relationship, sensory experience, environment, movement, meaning, and choice.*

**Purpose & Practice:** This exploration is *not* a clinical assessment or a test. The coach is not determining whether you are 'regulated' or 'dysregulated.' Instead, this reflective tool is designed to center your lived sensory, cultural, relational, and environmental knowledge. Together, we explore: *What helps your body feel available, connected, organized, and ready to respond—and what tends to make that harder?* You are the expert on your own experience; your coach's role is to join you in becoming curious about your nervous system's unique signature and regulatory patterns.

## 1. Start with Your Regulatory Story

*Everybody has things that help their body feel more settled, energized, connected, or ready. Some things work for one person and do not work for another. Let's get curious about yours.*

### When you are having a really good day...

*What does your body feel like? What are you able to do more easily? How do you know you're feeling okay? What are you like with your child? What helps you stay there?*

### When things become too much...

*What do you notice first? Does your body speed up, tighten, get restless, become heavy, go numb, or something else? What happens to your thoughts, voice, and desire to connect with people? What does your child usually experience from you?*

## 2. The 10 Regulatory Pathways

Which of these pathways tends to help your body feel more like itself? For each pathway, mark your nervous system's response and note your reflections on the prompts.

### 1. NATURE

(Sensory: Visual, Auditory, Tactile)

Trees • water • sunlight • animals •  
fresh air • gardening • being outdoors

Usually helps  
Sometimes helps  
Makes it harder  
Don't know yet

Where in nature does your body seem to exhale? Does being outside energize or settle you? Do you prefer open space or enclosed natural spots? How does water affect you?

### 2. RHYTHM & MUSIC

(Sensory: Auditory, Proprioceptive)

Music • singing • humming • drumming  
• clapping • repetitive sounds

Usually helps  
Sometimes helps  
Makes it harder  
Don't know yet

What kinds of sounds change your mood? Do you like predictable or unpredictable music? Do you naturally hum, rock, tap, or sway? Is silence regulating or uncomfortable?

### 3. MOVEMENT

(Sensory: Vestibular, Proprioceptive)

Walking • stretching • dancing •  
rocking • exercise • yoga • shaking •  
swimming

Usually helps  
Sometimes helps  
Makes it harder  
Don't know yet

When stressed, does your body want to move or be still? What movement feels satisfying rather than exhausting? Do repetitive movements help? Gentle or vigorous?

### 4. TOUCH & PRESSURE

(Sensory: Tactile, Proprioceptive)

Hugs • massage • weighted blankets •  
holding hands • self-massage • deep  
pressure

Usually helps  
Sometimes helps  
Makes it harder  
Don't know yet

Does touch help you settle? What kinds of touch feel comforting? Do you prefer firm pressure or light touch? Closer or more space when overwhelmed?

### 5. WATER & TEMPERATURE

(Sensory: Vestibular, Tactile,  
Proprioceptive)

Baths • showers • swimming • warm  
water • cool water • washing • floating

Usually helps  
Sometimes helps  
Makes it harder  
Don't know yet

Does water change how your body feels? Warm or cool? Do you prefer immersion or simply hearing/seeing water? What happens to your breathing around water?

## 2. The 10 Regulatory Pathways (Continued)

Which of these pathways tends to help your body feel more like itself? For each pathway, mark your nervous system's response and note your reflections on the prompts.

### 6. CREATIVE EXPRESSION

(Sensory: Visual, Tactile, Proprioceptive)

Drawing • painting • writing • crafts •  
cooking • decorating • photography

Usually helps  
Sometimes helps  
Makes it harder  
Don't know yet

Do you feel different after creating something? Does making things help you express what words cannot? Is the process more regulating than the finished product?

### 7. RELATIONSHIP & TALKING

(Sensory: Relational, Social, Attachment)

Conversation • being listened to •  
laughter • storytelling • affection •  
companionship

Usually helps  
Sometimes helps  
Makes it harder  
Don't know yet

Who helps you feel more like yourself? What does a helpful listener do? When overwhelmed, do you want to talk or be left alone? What makes asking for help easier?

### 8. BREATH & STILLNESS

(Sensory: Interoceptive)

Quiet • meditation • prayerful breathing  
• resting • mindfulness • solitude

Usually helps  
Sometimes helps  
Makes it harder  
Don't know yet

Does slowing down feel good or uncomfortable? What happens when you pay attention to your breathing? (Note: stillness can sometimes increase distress/distressing sensations)

### 9. MEANING & SPIRITUALITY

(Sensory: Meaning-making, Cognition)

Prayer • ritual • faith • ancestors •  
ceremony • gratitude • reflection •  
community

Usually helps  
Sometimes helps  
Makes it harder  
Don't know yet

What reminds you that you are not alone? What gives difficult experiences meaning? Are there practices from your family/culture that help you feel grounded?

### 10. PURPOSE & AGENCY

(Sensory: Executive, Agency, Mastery)

Organizing • solving problems •  
accomplishing tasks • helping others •  
learning • making decisions

Usually helps  
Sometimes helps  
Makes it harder  
Don't know yet

Do you feel better when you can do something? Does having a plan help? What happens when you feel powerless? What helps you regain a sense of choice?

### 3. My Regulation Fingerprint & Dose

Check the box next to your top regulating pathways to map your nervous system's 'fingerprint.'

| NATURE   | RHYTHM     | MOVEMENT  | TOUCH        | WATER  |
|----------|------------|-----------|--------------|--------|
| CREATIVE | CONNECTION | STILLNESS | SPIRITUALITY | AGENCY |

#### Understanding Dose: The Regulatory Window

A sophisticated profile maps dose and conditions. The question is not just 'does this help?' but 'when and how much?'

| Pathway                  | Too Little (Under-stimulated)       | Just Right (Regulatory Window)    | Too Much (Over-stimulated)         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Movement</b>          | Restless, sluggish, or heavy        | Grounded, focused, and integrated | Exhausted, wired, or activated     |
| <b>Social Connection</b> | Isolated, disconnected, or lonely   | Connected, safe, and seen         | Overwhelmed, drained, or fatigued  |
| <b>Nature</b>            | Confined, stuck, or indoor-fatigued | Spacious, settled, and expansive  | Exposed, unsafe, or overstimulated |

### 4. Connect the Profile to Parenting

When your child becomes dysregulated, what happens to your own regulation? Mark your typical response patterns below:

**Match:** My child gets loud → I get loud.

**Shut Down:** My child cries → I go blank.

**Escape:** My child escalates → I need to get away.

**Fix:** My child struggles → I try to solve it.

**Move Toward:** My child struggles → I instinctively move closer.

**Adapt:** I notice what they need and adjust.

**Reflective Prompt:** What might your child's nervous system be experiencing when yours does that?

### 5. My Personal Regulation Menu

Early Signals of Overwhelm:

Things that Settle Me (when hyperaroused):

Things that Energize Me (when shut down):

People Who Help Me Regulate:

Places Where I Regulate Well:

Things that Usually Make It Worse:

What I Need from Child/Partner/Support:

One Thing I Can Offer Myself Before Responding:

**The Reflective Coaching Framework:** SENSE (What is in my body?) → NOTICE (What changes my state?) → NAME (What helps/hinders?) → EXPLORE (Under what conditions?) → CHOOSE (What to try?) → CONNECT (How does this affect my child?)

Sahara Educare Services • Reflective Coaching Inventory • Developed by Maimunah Marah, MSEd, LCCE, CCHW, ECMH-E®, ERS®, PMH-C • Early Development & Behavioral Care Manager • 202-630-5403