

# Self-Regulation Strategies

Reduce ADHD Overwhelm, Distraction & Reactivity.  
Build Awareness, Insight, & Resilience.

## Deep Breathing



take a long steady deep breath in through the nose... allow the out breath to be long and slow. notice the stomach, chest & shoulders rising & expanding with the inhale...falling with the exhale.  
inhale for 4 seconds. exhale for 6, or longer if it's comfortable.  
remain in the present moment with the breath. repeat at least 3 times.

taking slow, deep breaths, changes the body's physiology. it allows us to down shift or transition out of a heightened fight, flight or freeze state. deep breathing gives adequate supply of oxygen to flow to both the heart & brain. deep breaths slow the heart rate, reduces blood pressure, & relaxes our muscles. all settling the nervous system. this reduces stress & it's long-term impact on the body.

## Mindfulness of the Body



become aware of your body. notice how the body moves with the breath. notice the sensation of breathing through your nostrils. connect to each part of the body, from the toes all the way to the top of the head, section by section through a body scan.

body awareness, allows us to be fully present. it helps us transition out of overwhelming or stressful thoughts about the past or future. it grounds us. And allows us to skillfully manage our attention.

## Sensory Profile



check in with your internal & external sensory experience. am I hungry or thirsty? hot or cold? do I need to go to the bathroom? is my environment too loud or too bright? am I overstimulated in some way by my surroundings? what is 1 small thing I can do or change to improve my current situation? if you'd like an idea...try splashing ice cold water on your face or neck. takeoff or put on a layer of clothing. chant, hum or sing. put in noise cancelling ear buds. or listen to soothing sounds.

if you are in sensory overload, you might not be aware of it, you will however find it very difficult to focus, stay on task, prioritize, or problem solve. use this information to strategize & make a micro adjustment.

## Move Your Body



slowly move your chin over your left shoulder and look behind you.....now rotate your head over the right shoulder. Raise your forehead towards the ceiling....now drop your chin to your chest. Bring your left ear to your left shoulder.....now your right ear to your right shoulder. puff out your chest, bring your shoulder blades together. grab your hands behind your back. reset. twist your body all the way behind you to your left, then to your right. shake out your hands, then your arms & shoulders, whole body. stand up. dance or walk. run up & down stairs.

physical activity of any kind jump starts a new perspective, taking us out of fixation. movement increases blood flow. think of movement as food for the brain. exercise helps us sustain attention, increases energy levels, boosts self-esteem & helps improve sleep. regular exercise strengthens executive functioning: such as planning, prioritizing, processing speed, memory & retaining new information. exercise stimulates the production of dopamine, serotonin & endorphins, alleviating symptoms of depression & anxiety. Movement generates positive moods & overall emotional well-being.

## Balance & Coordination



jump up & down, try landing in the same place each time. stand on one leg, then the other. if that's too easy close your eyes. step forward with one foot, lower your body by bending both knees to about 90 degrees. also called a lunge. walk in a straight line, pretend you're on a balance beam, heel first, then toe. or, take 1 minute to hold a yoga posture of your choosing.

notice if you're spacing out or ruminating, utilize these diversion tactics, redirect your attention away from default mode by stimulating your cerebellum. enhance cognitive function, learning process, increase brain growth & flexibility known as neuroplasticity.

## Emotion Identification



name your emotion. if identifying an emotion is difficult, use the emotion wheel. become familiar with the emotion. where & how does the emotion show up in your body? is it in your throat or gut? does it feel like a volcanic eruption in your gut or a heaviness on your chest? Ask yourself, is my current emotional reaction disproportionate to the situation? differentiate the emotion from 'the story i'm telling myself'. notice how emotional intensity can change with time.

emotion identification leads to self-awareness & connection, this reduces reactivity, empowering ourselves to speak & behave in closer alignment with our core values. helps us navigate social interactions more skillfully & fosters healthy relationships. we are able to lessen the grip of our harmful habits & not be hijacked by our emotions. creating space between experiencing the emotion & our response is essential in working towards long term goals & mood regulation. our emotions heavily affect decision-making & motivation.

SECOND ARROW ADHD COACHING  
SKILLFULLY NAVIGATING LIFE'S CHALLENGES

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