Riding the Wave of BIG Emotions

Heidi Garcia, O.T.Reg. (MB)





Welcome here!

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Pause & Enter

BACKDROP
(e.g. environment)









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Hopes & Wishes

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REGULATION

It is MUCH easier to REGULATE when you KNOW what feels safe, comfortable, calming and joyful FOR YOU!!!

Let’s explore the emotions and ways of being that FEEL regulating for us and our kids!

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Being regulated is MORE than feeling “happy”!!
It may feel something like...

Safe, comfortable, settled

Curious, engaged, alert

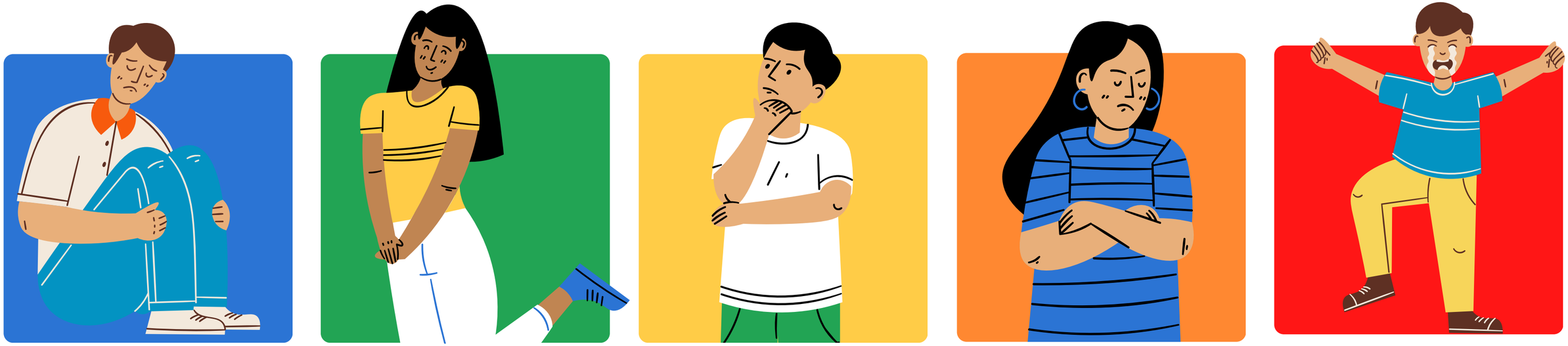
Loved, valued, supported

Connected, brave, whole

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Many people ask the check-in question...

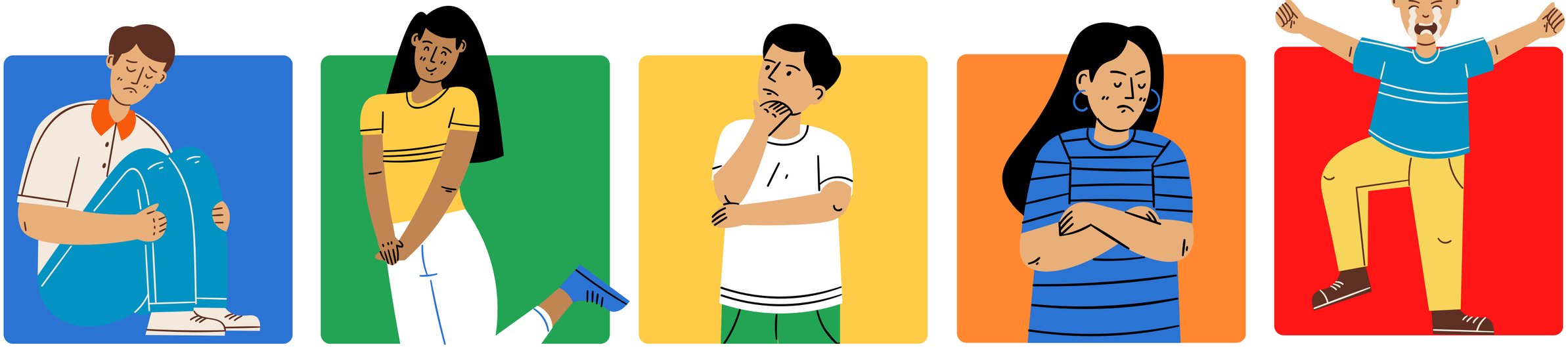
How do you feel today?



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I'd like to change the conversation to...

How do you feel right NOW?



And know that it will soon change again!

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FIRST Get rid of the myths the world has tried to make us believe about emotions!

NEXT We need to understand & name emotions... What do they look like & feel like?

THEN How can we BE with all emotions (ours and the little ones we support)

LAST What helps... practical strategies!

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SOME MYTHS & FACTS

About Emotions & Emotional Outbursts

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MYTH #1

We are supposed to feel happy most or all of the time



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FACT #1

As humans we feel the whole range of human emotions, including the ones we "judge" as unpleasant or painful.



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MYTH #2

Kids should never tantrum after the "terrible two's"

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FACT #2

Tantrums are an outward expression where a child is saying "HELP", but don't have the words.

- I can't regulate my emotions (but I'm still learning how).
- I'm overwhelmed.
- I feel this is an injustice.

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MYTH #3

Kids should be able to self-regulate their own emotions.



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FACT #3

Kids FIRST need a co-regulator to help them co-regulate before they are able to learn to self-regulate.

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MYTH #4

Emotions can linger for hours!

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FACT #4

Neuroscientist, Jill Bolte Taylor has shown that when we allow an emotion to move, it takes 90 seconds.
When it lasts longer, it's because there has been another trigger... or we've attached an OLD story to the current situation.



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MYTH #5

Big emotions are intentional and manipulative.



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FACT #5

Like a fever - big emotions are a signal that there has been a trigger... need to figure out the trigger... also remember trauma.

Big emotional outbursts are often automatic (fight, flight, freeze) to try to seek safety.

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NEXT

OOPS... there I go with judgement language about emotions!

We need to understand & name emotions...
and **the good, bad & ugly.**
What do they look like & feel like?

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There are some other programs – e.g. "Zone of Regulation" or "How Does Your Engine Run?"

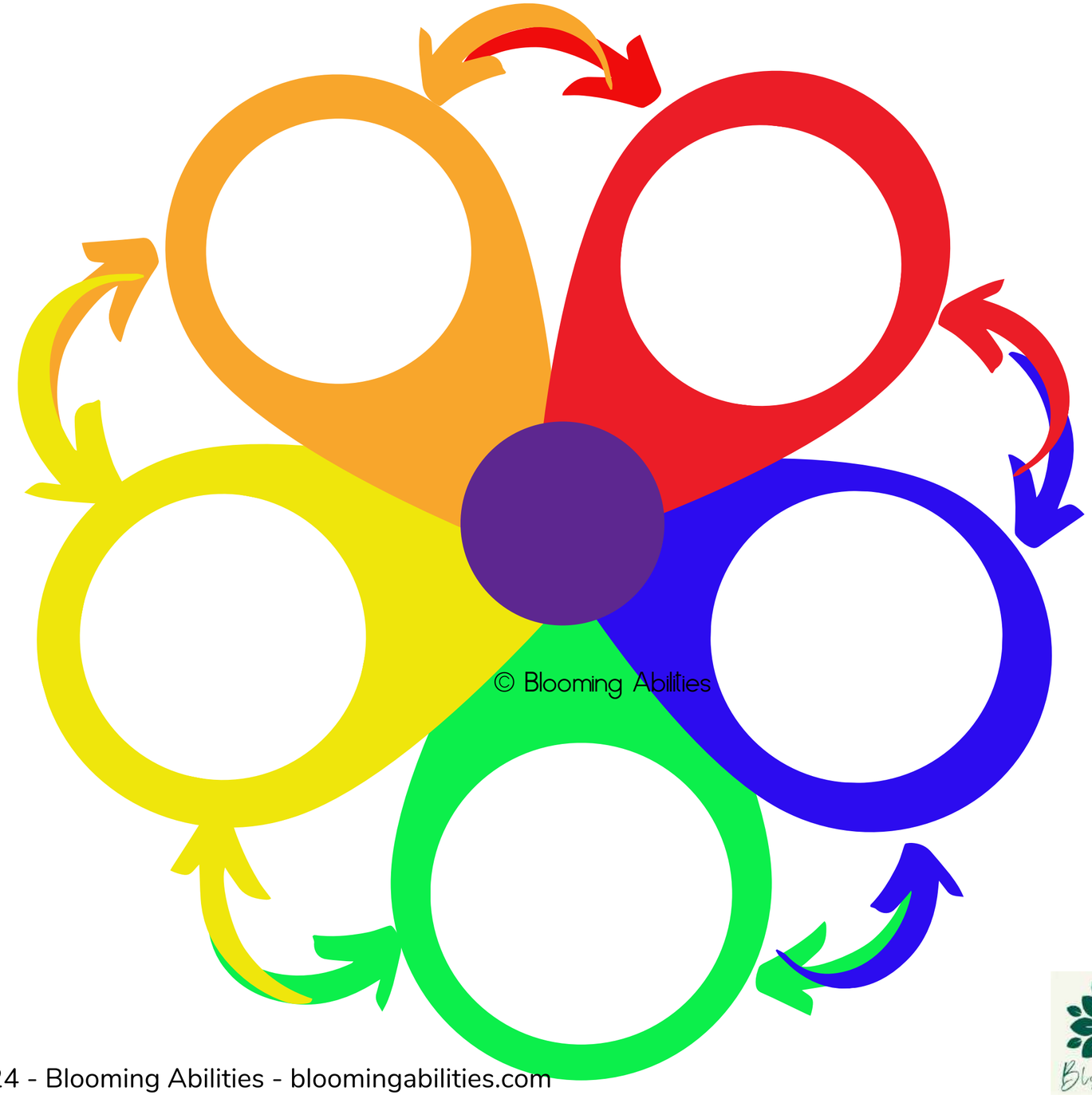




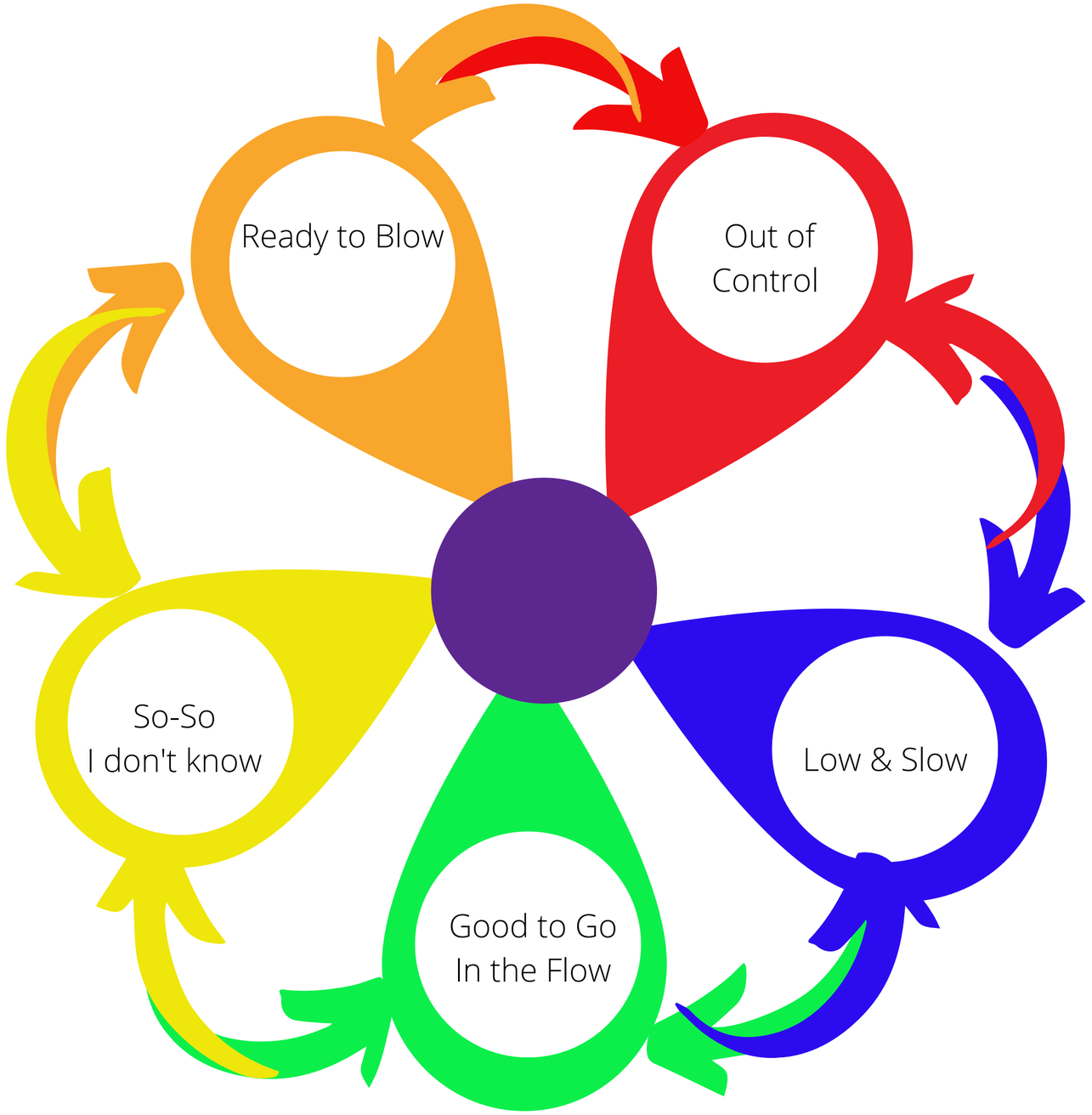
Thank you... but it didn't quite fit...
There was a gap between yellow and red.
Our emotions are not linear... and there isn't an "end" point

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My creation... "Flow"er of Emotions



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1st Recognize...

- Looks Like
- Sounds Like
- Feels Like

then Name it

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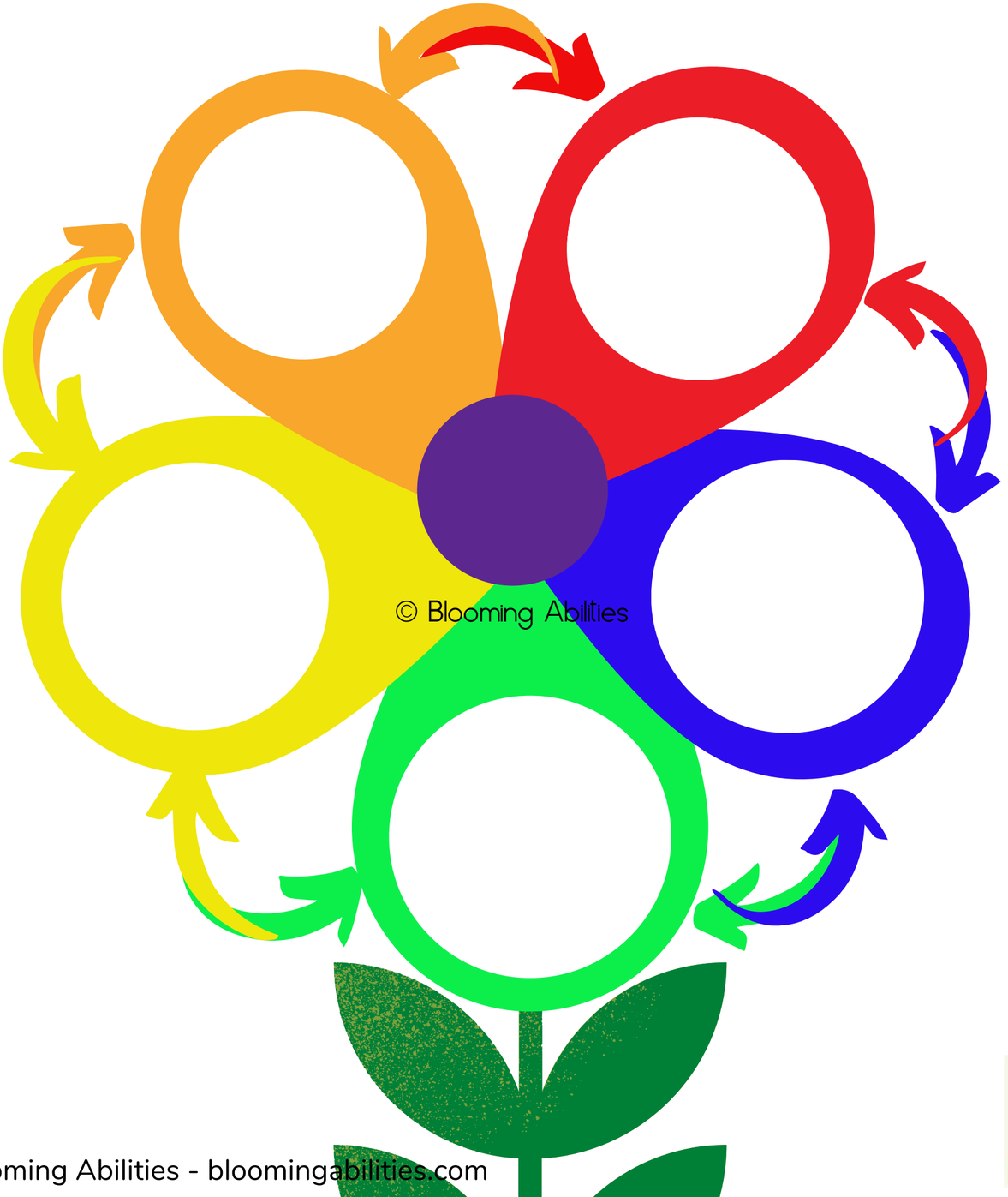
Key components:

- There is movement / flow from one area to the next *unless a trauma trigger through the middle.

- The brain is ONLY available for "growth" and new learning in green - frontal cortex

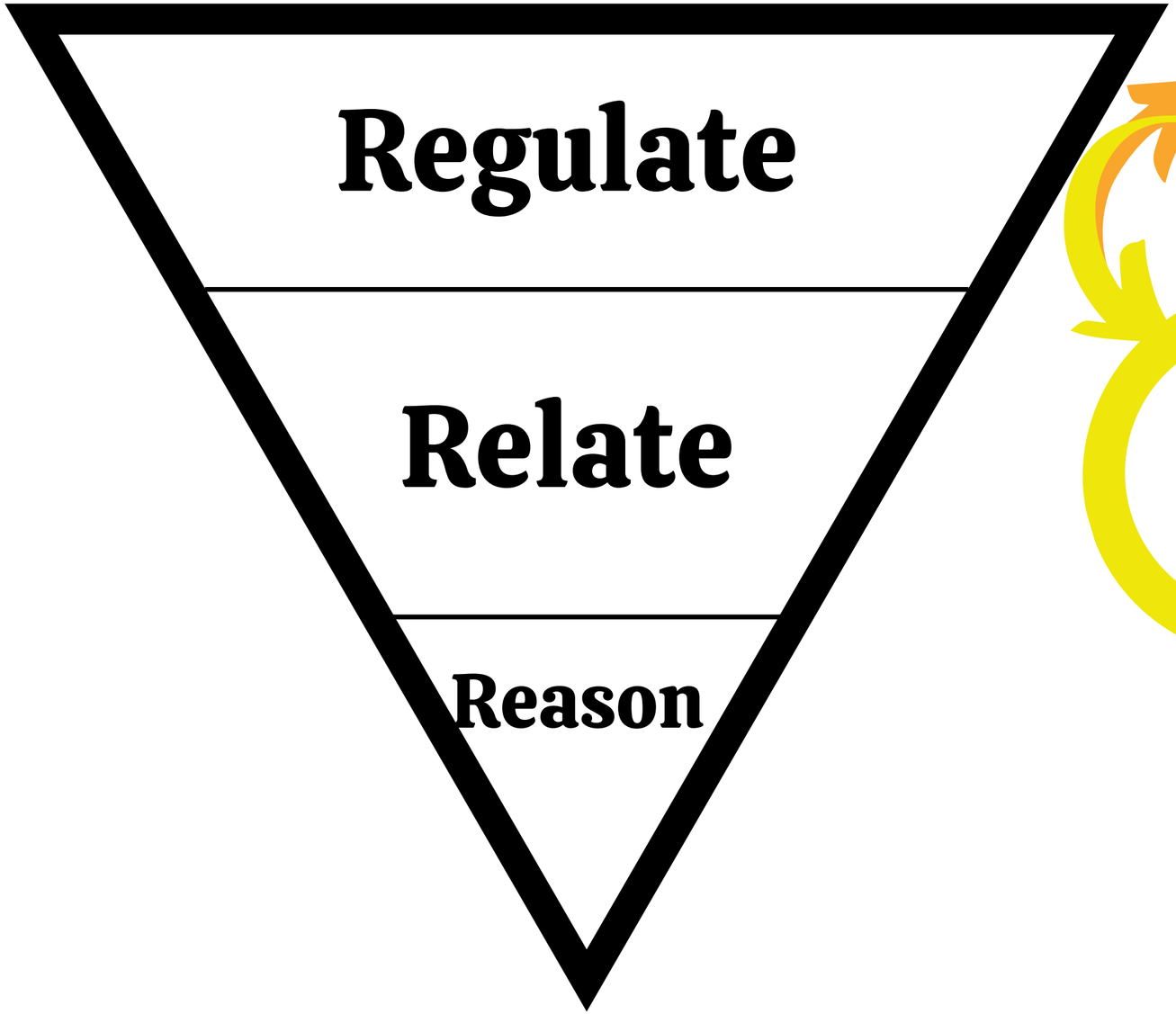
.

- Added orange between yellow & red.



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Fits with Research:

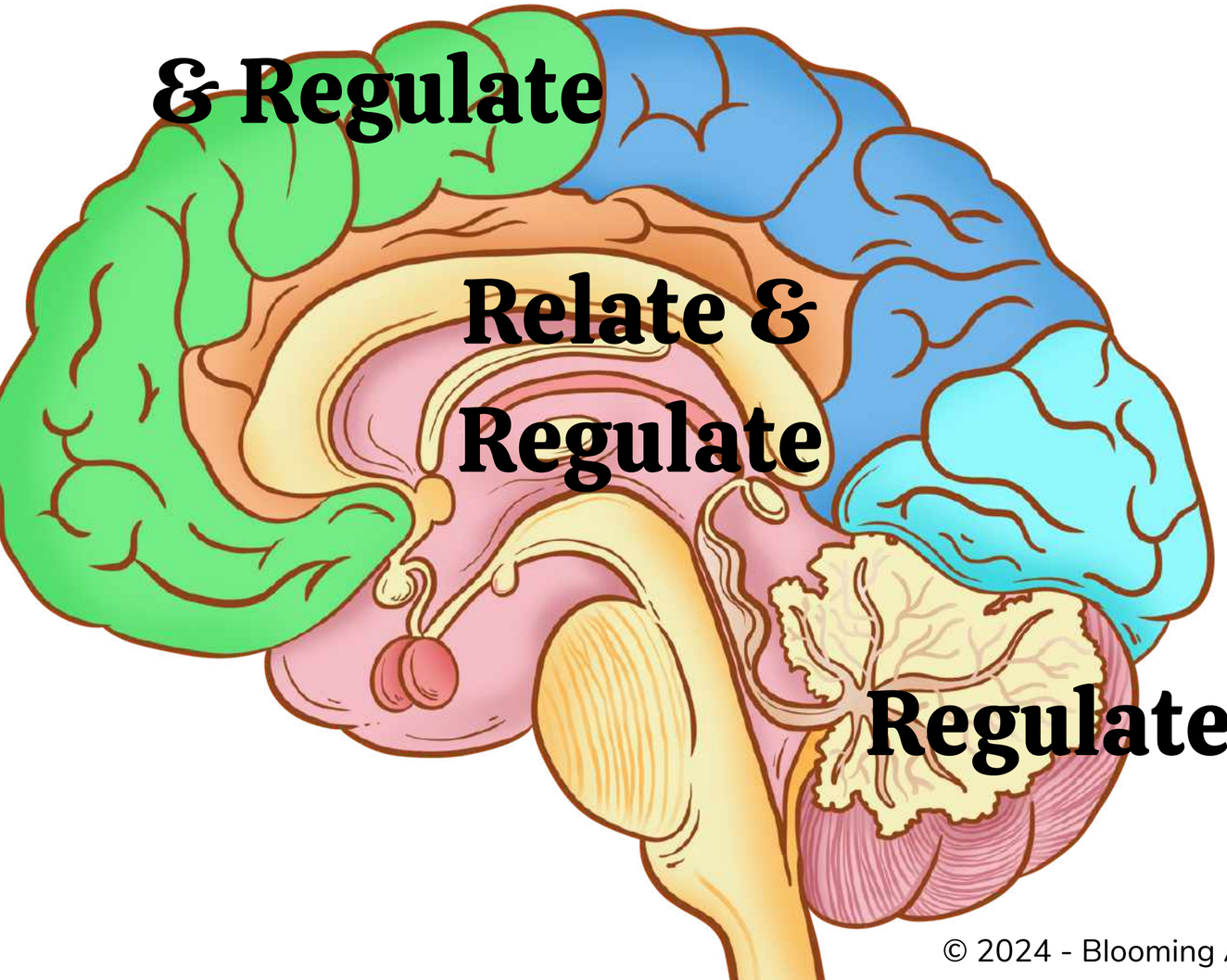




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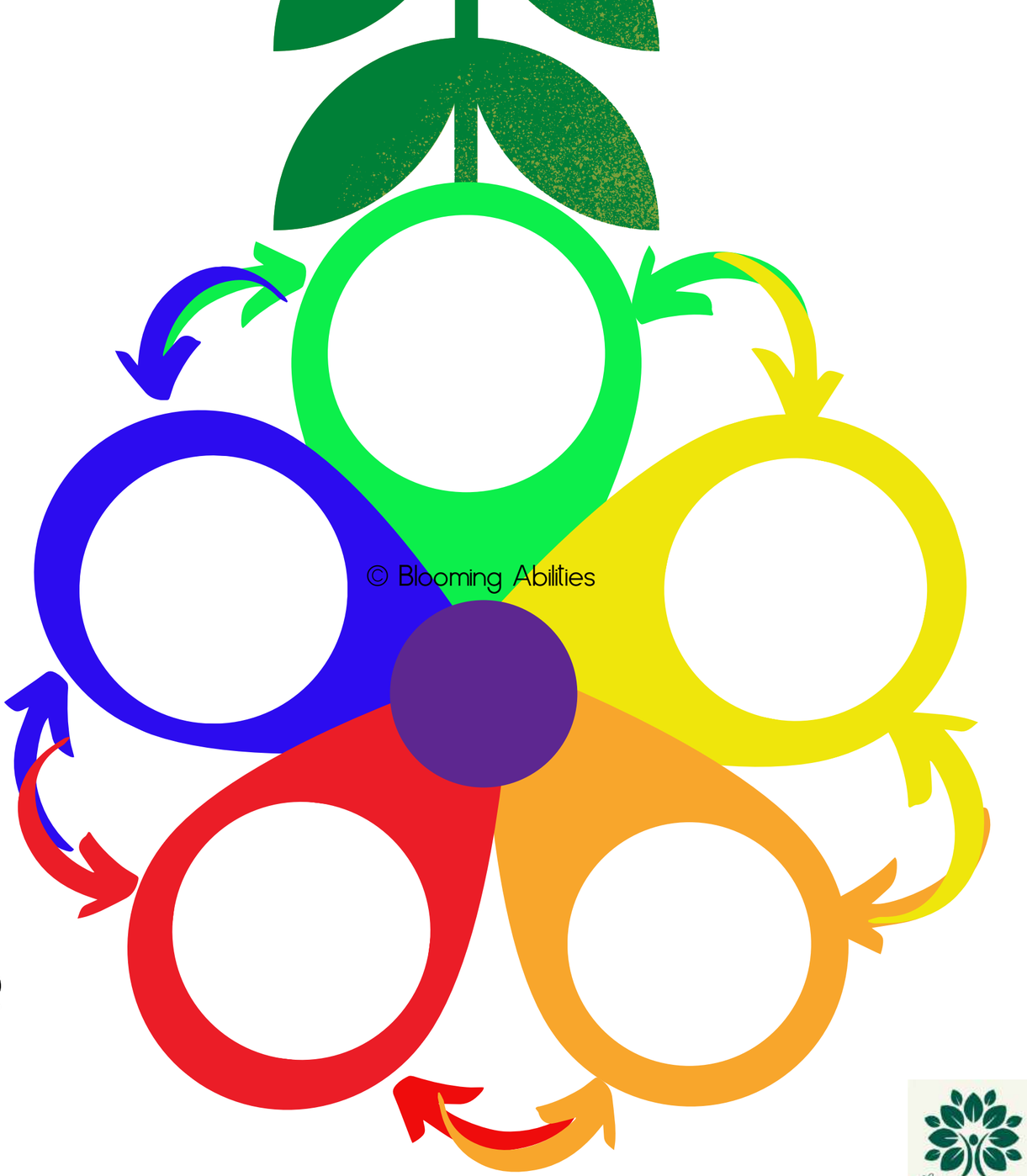
And the Brain...

Reason & Relate
& Regulate



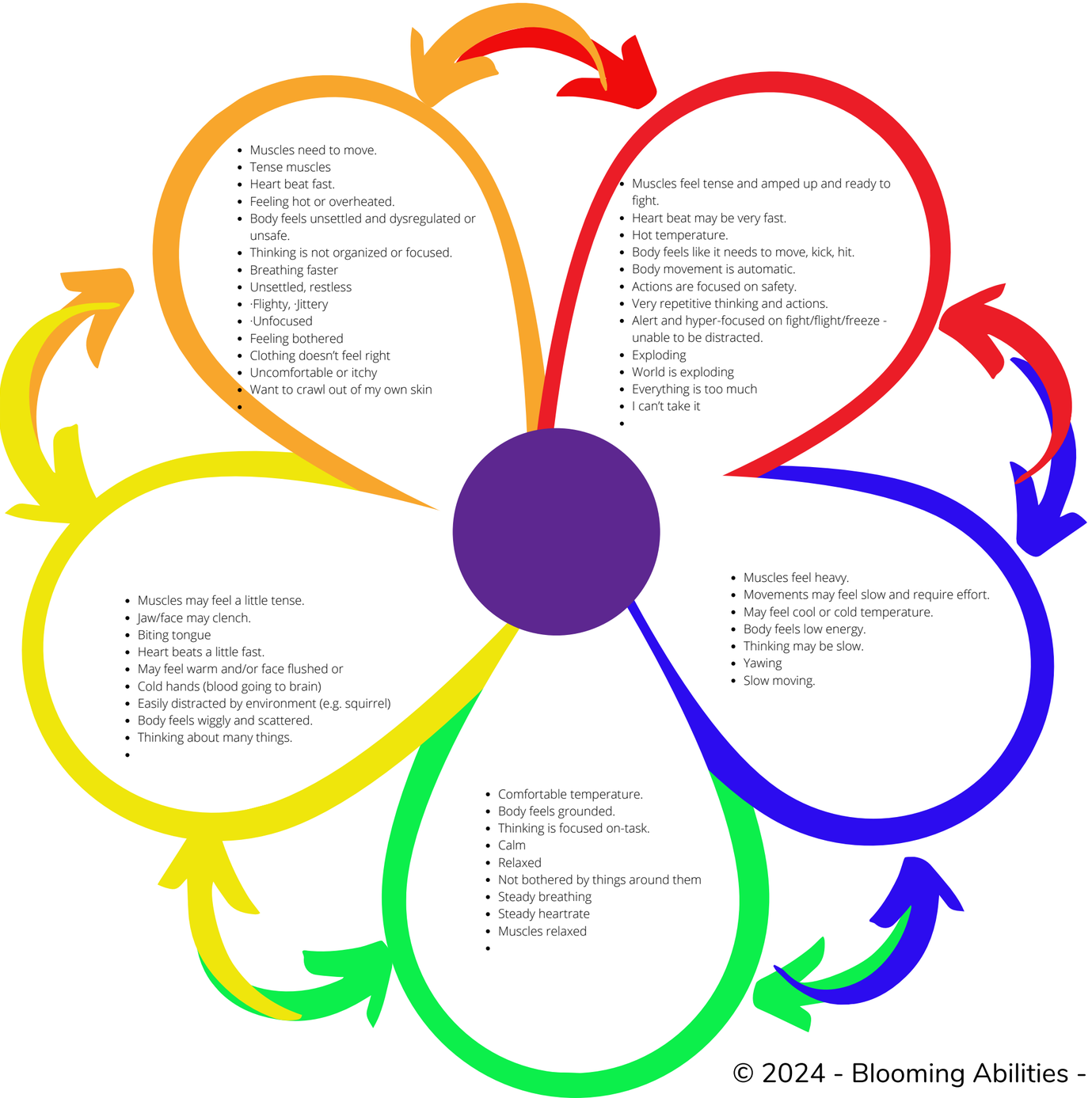
Relate &
Regulate

Regulate



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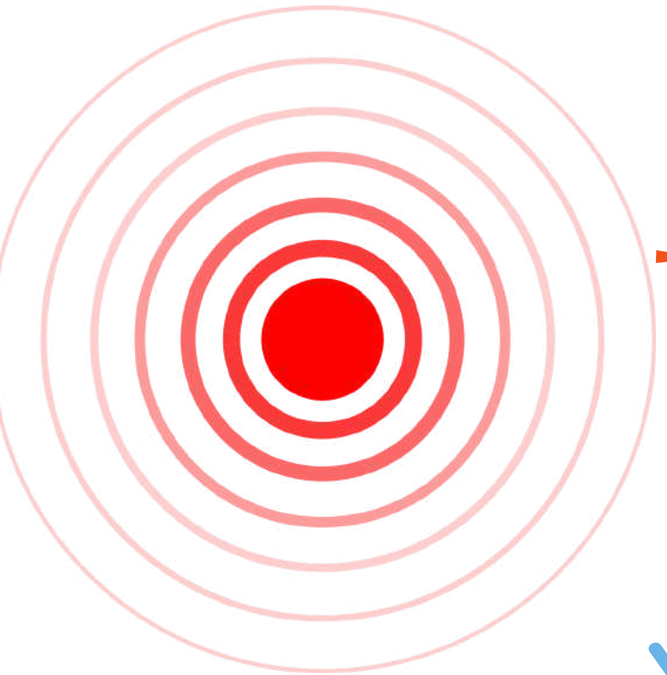
What could our emotions <u>feel</u> like?

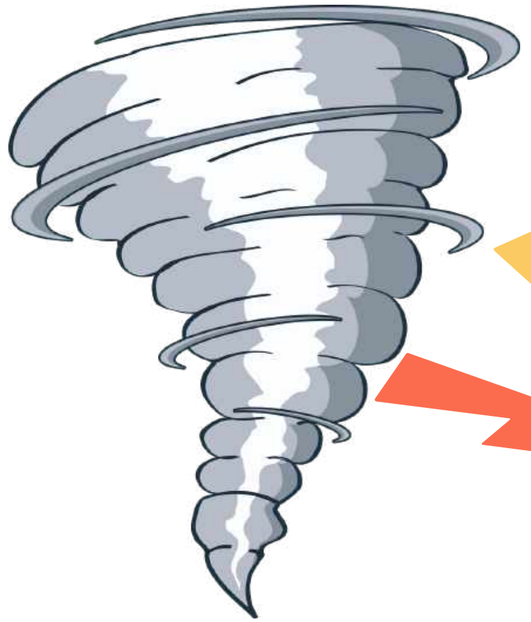
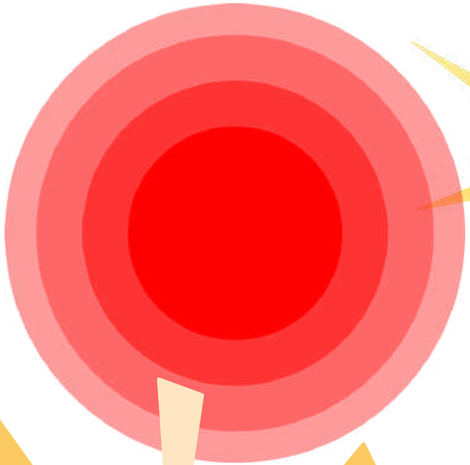


Let's put words to it...

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WHAT DO BIG EMOTIONS FEEL LIKE?



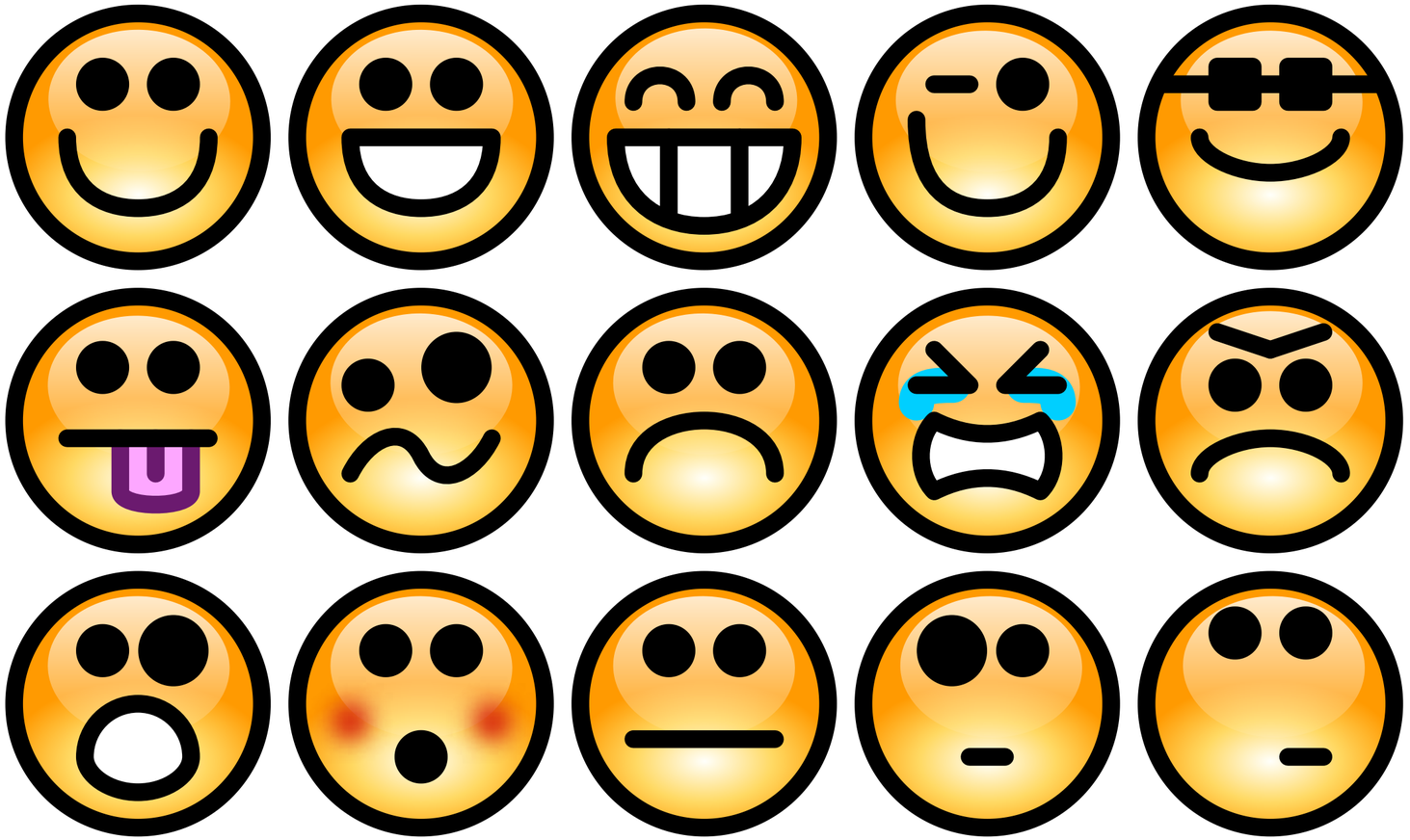





More **intense** emotions are often easier to feel and notice...

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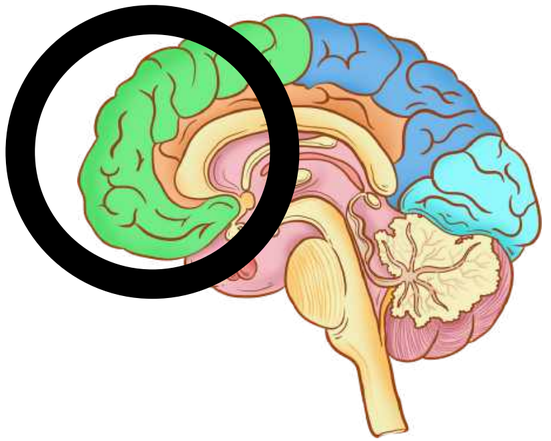
NOTICE HOW YOU FEEL...



Could be a clue to what the child is feeling...

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THE FRONTAL CORTEX

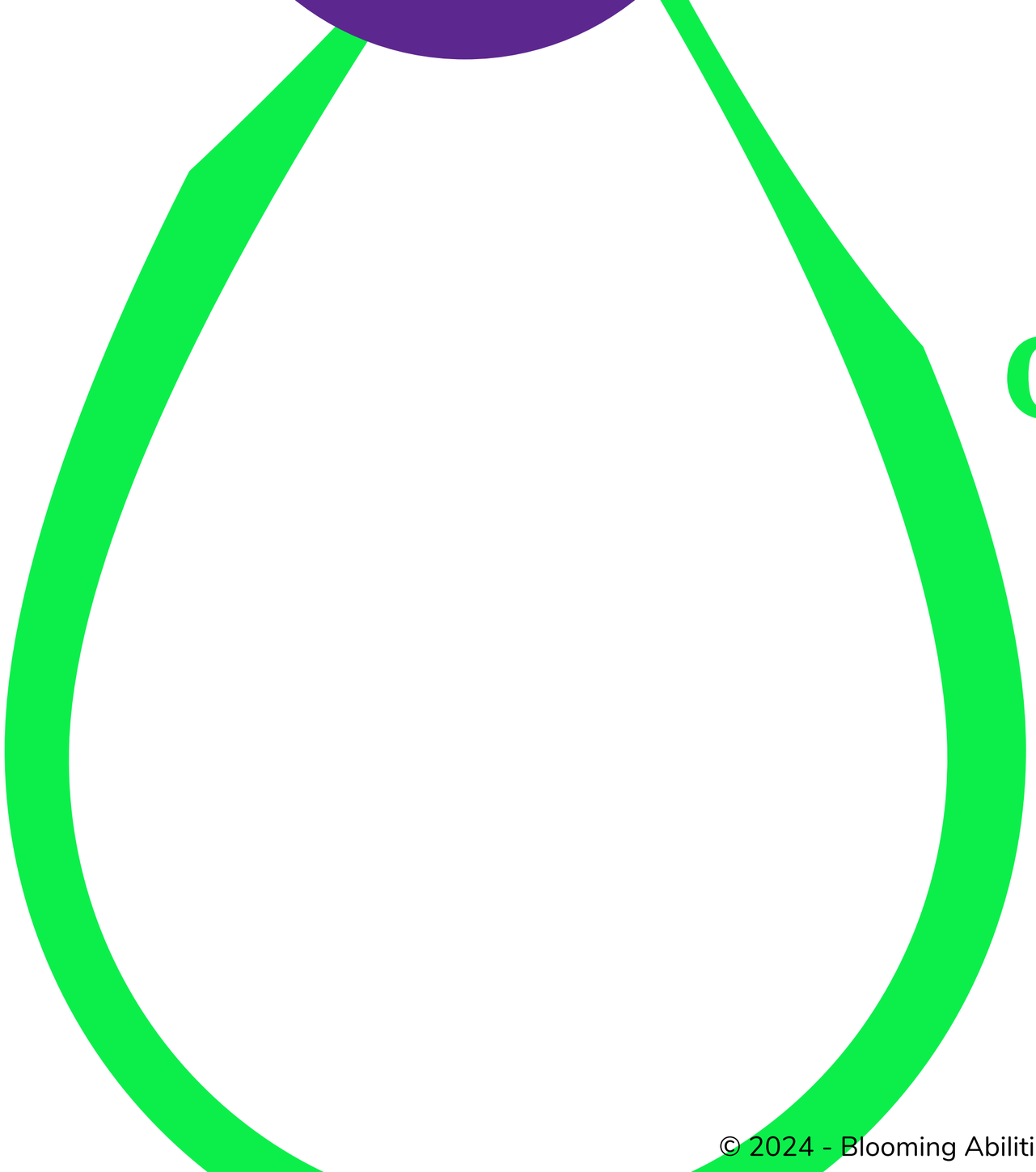


AVAILABLE FOR CURIOSITY & ABSTRACT THINKING

The place of ...

- language
- problem solving
- higher thinking
- logic & reasoning
- planning & organizing

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What could GREEN emotions feel like?

Let's put words to it...

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What could GREEN emotions feel like?

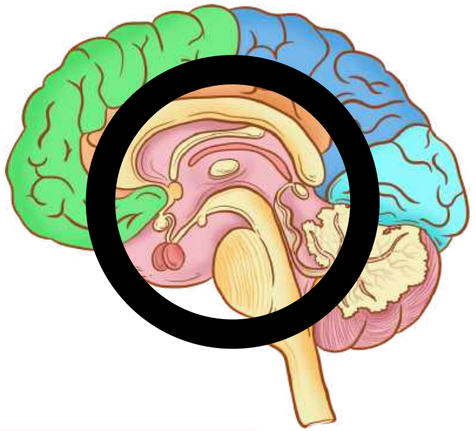
- Comfortable.
- Body feels grounded.
- Thinking is focused on-task.
- Calm
- Relaxed
- Not bothered by things

- Comfortable temperature
- Steady breathing
- Steady heartrate
- Muscles relaxed

Let's put words to it...

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THE MIDBRAIN/LIMBIC SYSTEM



In the Midbrain
AKA...
... the yellow brain
... the limbic brain
... emotional brain
... mammalian brain

THE GOAL IS RELATIONSHIP & CONNECTION!

The place of ...

- emotional thinking
- value judgements
- (I'm not good enough)

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What could BLUE emotions feel like?

Let's put words to it...

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What could BLUE emotions feel like?

- LOW and SLOW...

- Muscles feel heavy.
- Movements may feel slow and require effort.
- May feel cool or cold temperature.
- Body feels low energy.

- Thinking may be slow.
- Yawning
- Slow moving.
- Lethargic

Let's put words to it...

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What could YELLOW feel like?

Let's put words to it...

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In the "Yellow" petal...

- You may not feel your needs are being met
- You may feel some control and some lack of control
- You may feel misunderstood
- You may show that you are upset, even if you haven't recognized it yet...

- **A heightened arousal state...**
  - Increased blood pressure
  - Increased heart rate
  - Increased breathing
  - Flushed face
  - Tense muscles
  - Jittery in stomach
  - Uncertain, unsettled, ungrounded

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- Heightened... more intense... not relaxed

- Muscles may feel a little tense.
- Jaw/face may clench.
- Biting tongue
- Heart beats a little fast.
- May feel warm and/or face flushed OR
- Cold hands (blood going to brain)

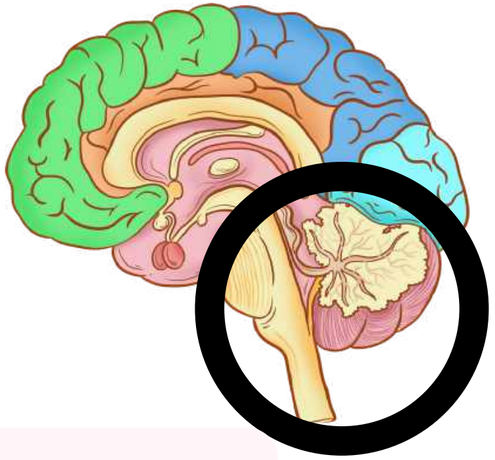
- Easily distracted by environment (e.g. squirrel)
- Body feels wiggly and needs to move
- Thinking about many things (Flighty or scattered mind)
- Jittery or ungrounded
-

What could YELLOW feel like?

Let's put words to it...

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THE BRAINSTEM



THE ONLY GOAL IS <u>SAFETY - INSTINCT & SURVIVAL!</u>

In the Brainstem
AKA...
... the red brain
... the reptile brain
... lizard brain
... primal brain

The place of ...
FIGHT
FLIGHT
FREEZE
(and also *FAWN*)

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What could ORANGE emotions feel like?

Let's put words to it...

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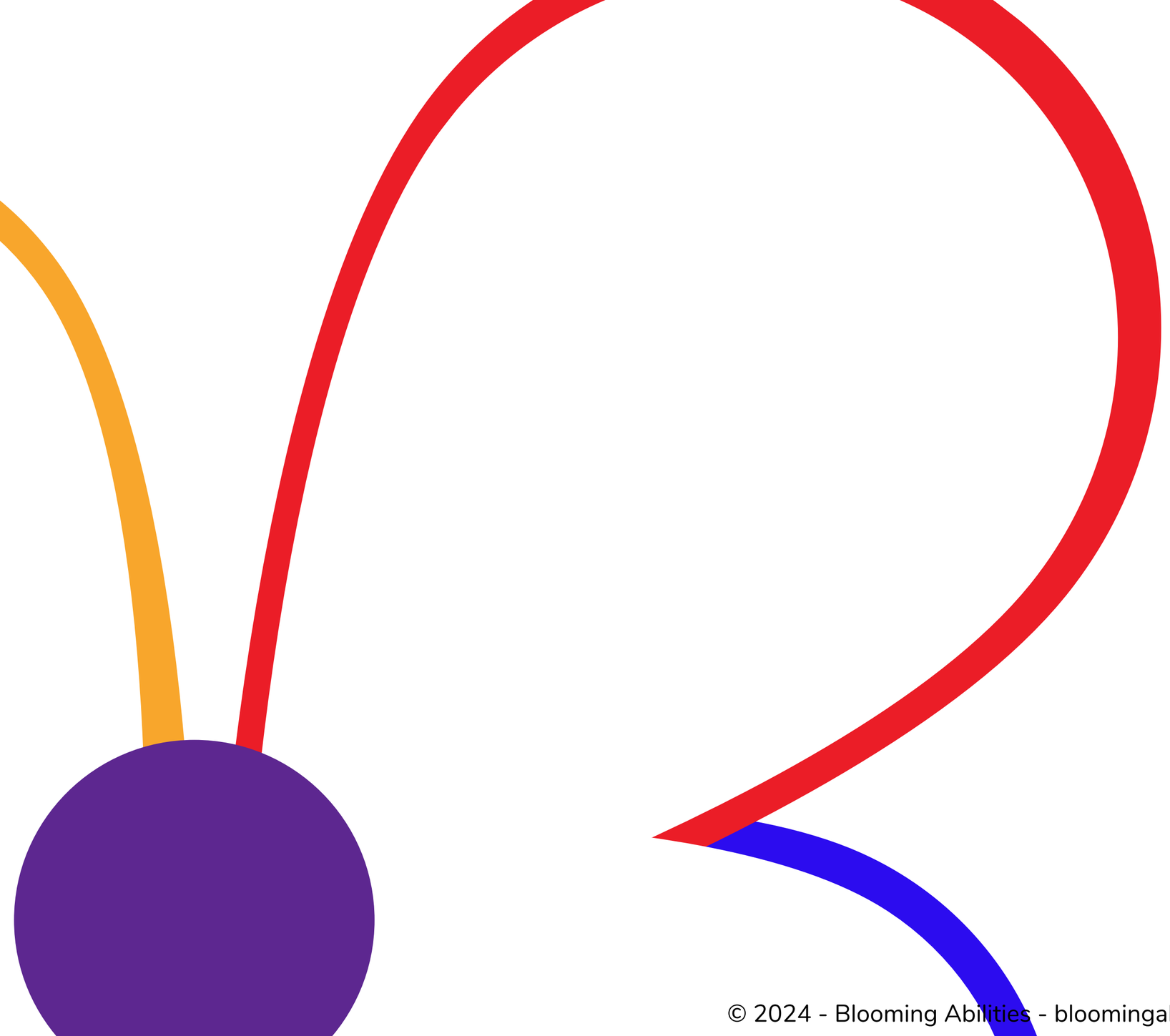
What could ORANGE emotions feel like?

- Muscles need to move.
- Tense muscles
- Heart beat fast.
- Feeling hot or overheated.
- Body feels unsettled and dysregulated or unsafe.
- Thinking is not organized or focused.
- Breathing faster

- Unsettled, restless
- May appear Flighty, Jittery, Unfocused
- Feeling bothered
- Clothing doesn't feel right
- Uncomfortable or itchy
- Want to crawl out of my own skin
- Overwhelmed
- Unsafe - seeking safety

Let's put words to it...

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What could RED emotions feel like?

Let's put words to it...

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What could RED emotions feel like?

- Muscles feel tense and amped up and ready to fight.
- Heart beat may be very fast.
- Hot temperature.
- Body feels like it needs to move, kick, hit.
- Body movement is automatic.
- Actions are focused on safety.
- Very repetitive thinking and actions.

- Alert and hyper-focused - no thinking
- Reacting - automatic
- Fight/flight/freeze
- Unable to be distracted.
- Exploding
- World is exploding
- Everything is too much
- I can't take it

Let's put words to it...

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What do our emotions look like?



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What might our emotions look like...





















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What emotions might look like...
what we might see or hear...





















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WHAT WE SEE OR HEAR iS BEHAVIOUR?

- The way a person acts (or behaves).
- Behaviour is a response to things that are happening:
  - internally - thoughts and feelings
  - externally - the environment, including other people.
- Every action by a person that can be seen or heard. Such as:
  - Asking, Talking, Yelling, Hitting, Biting, Throwing, Spinning, Jumping, etc...

THE BEHAViOURS WE SEE OR HEAR ARE CLUES TO WHAT A PERSON MiGHT BE FEELiNG...

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WHAT IS THE REASON?

Behaviour serves a purpose and has a reason, including:

- **communication** - through use of body language, facial expressions, gestures and silence
- **function** - to help meet a need, attract attention, gain an internal or sensory sensation, access an item or activity, or get away from something.

The key to understanding behaviour is to understand why it is occurring, what is being communicated or what is needed.





LET'S GET CURIOUS!

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THERE IS ALWAYS A REASON FOR BEHAVIOUR...

1. Sometimes the reason is very difficult to understand.
2. Sometimes we, as adults, jump to a conclusion (assumption) about the behaviour.

- Observing behaviour is the easy part (and even that is NOT always very easy.)

- Understanding **why someone does what they do** is much more complicated.

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BIG BEHAVIOURS...

When behaviours are "big and bold" our <u>child might be telling us</u>:

- They don't feel safe.
- They have been using so much energy pretending they know what is going on but they are exhausted or confused.
- They don't understand... so they avoid questions, ignore us or make up creative responses or lies to cover up that they don't understand.
- They are feeling an emotion - and they don't have the words to express it.

It is what a person does to make something happen, to make something change or to keep things the same.



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WHY DO CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS HAPPEN?

SO MANY REASONS ARE POSSIBLE...

Here's a few:

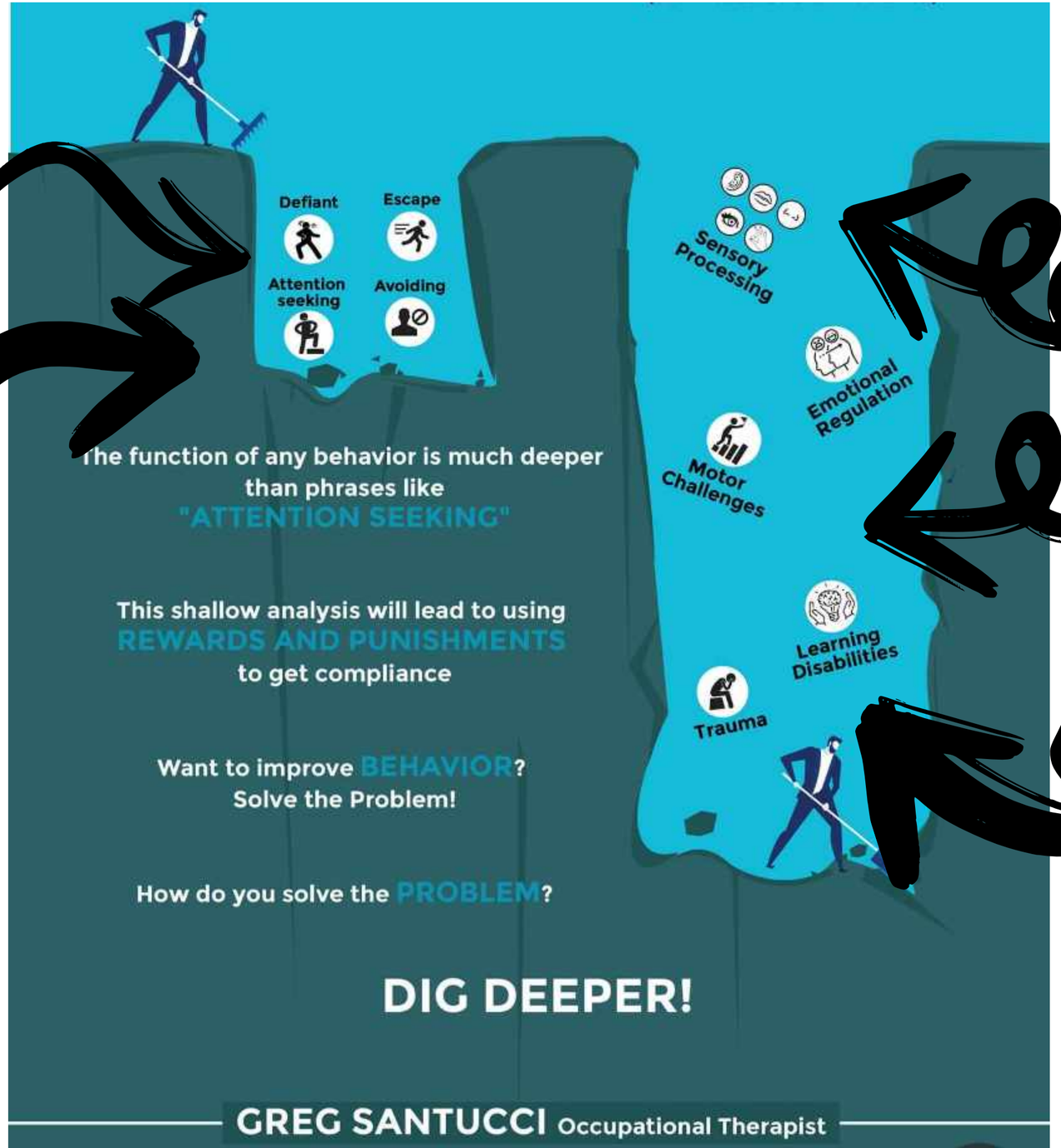


- I’m overwhelmed
- The world it too much
- I’m confused or worried or sad
- I don’t feel safe
- It takes so much energy to cope
- There is SO much to process & organize & make sense of
- “My brain broke from my body”
- This is TOO hard right now
- I need help. I can't do this by myself.
- I'm tired, hungry, thirsty, in pain, I’m done...
- I’m feeling _____

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WHAT iT LOOKS LiKE

WHAT YOU SEE



WHAT ELSE MiGHT GOiNG ON...

IF BEHAVIOUR IS COMMUNICATION...

... what could be the message?

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CONSIDER IF A CHILD...



HIT ANOTHER CHILD...

What was the **intention** or **reason** for the behaviour (action)?

- Did they intend to hurt the other child?
- What else could that behaviour mean?

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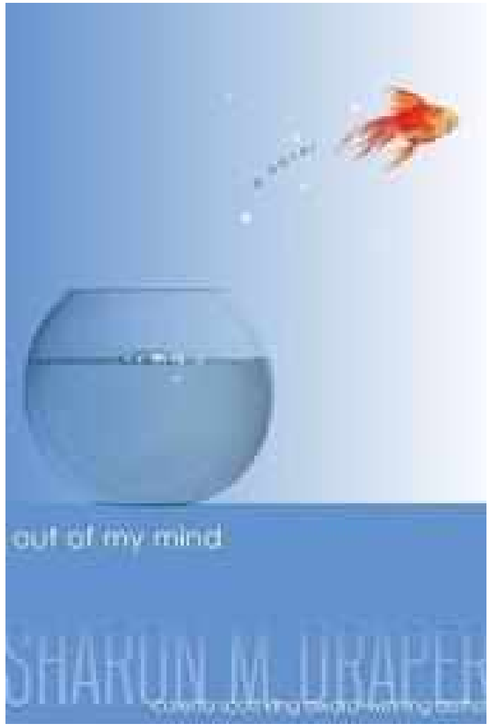
WHAT ELSE COULD THE BEHAVIOUR MEAN?

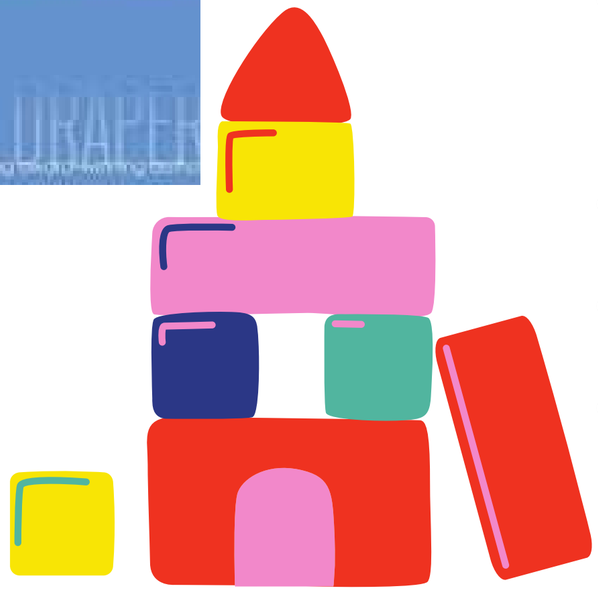


- "This world is overwhelming."
- "You invaded my personal space."
- "I don't know what I need."
- “I. AM. SO. CONFUSED."
- "I want to connect & be your friend."
- “I don’t understand what’s happening.”
- “That startled/scared/surprised me.”
- "I'm in pain."
- "Please help me."

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SCENE FROM BOOK: "OUT OF MY MIND" (P.14-17)





- Melody (10) recalls a scenario when she was 4
- Melody has cerebral palsy and is non-speaking and has very limited mobility.
- "tornado explosions" = "I can't stop. I lose myself. It can get kinda ugly."
- In a 'superstore' (e.g. Costco) and she started pointing to blocks while seated in shopping cart.
- **"No sweetie, you don't need those blocks."**
- Melody = so angry - screaming & kicking, kept getting louder.
- Mom in tears abandons shopping cart and leaves the store.

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WHAT MELODY WAS TRYING TO COMMUNICATE...



"THOSE BLOCKS WERE RECALLED DUE TO LEAD PAINT!"

Melody has a photographic memory.

- she saw on TV those blocks had been recalled because several children had been hospitalized due to lead poisoning
- What was she trying to communicate = "Those blocks are dangerous. Get rid of them before another child gets sick."

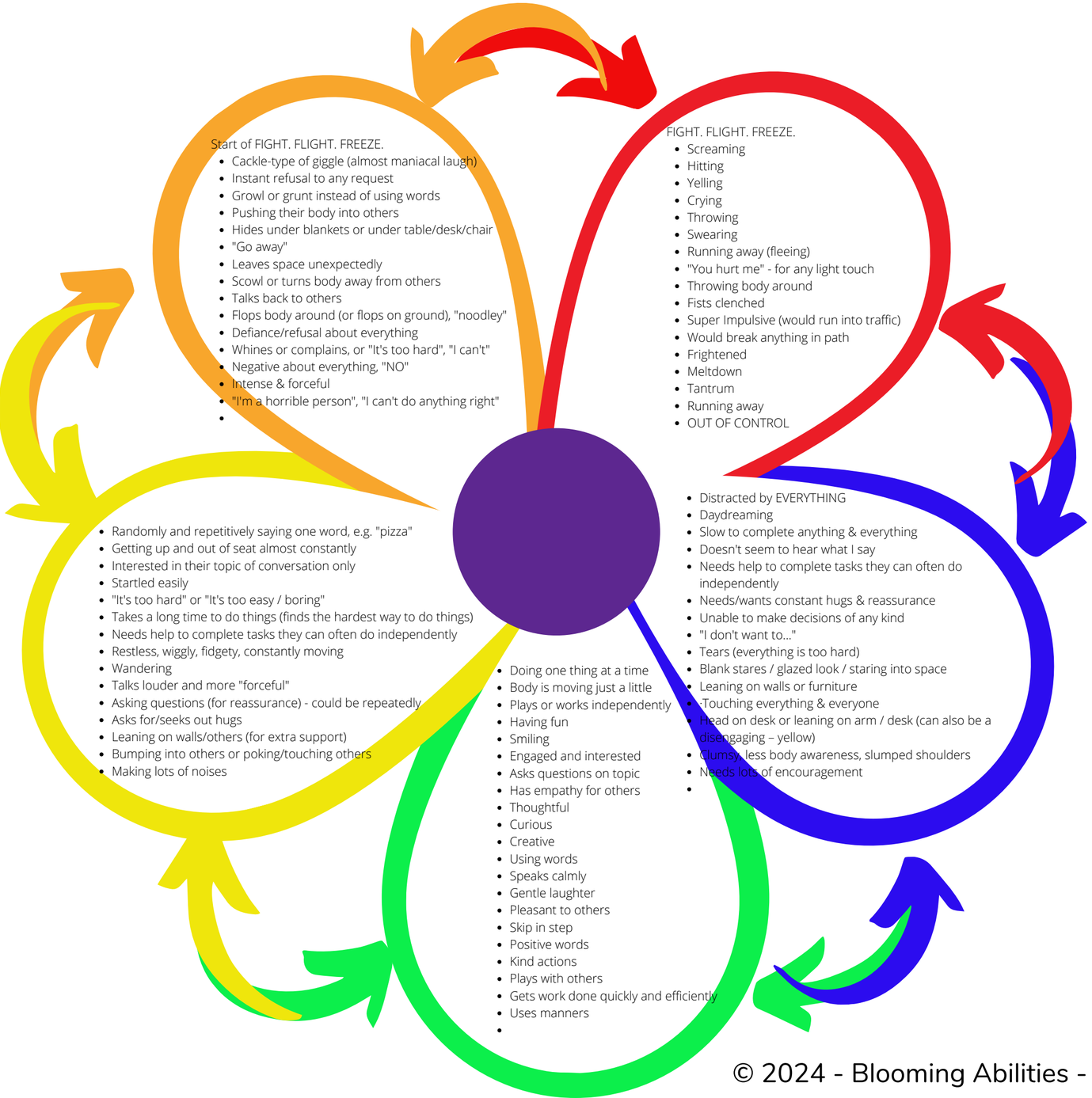
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BRING CURIOUSITY & COMPASSION



- What could the child be trying to communicate?
- What am I assuming?
- What else could be going on?
- What might they need more of?
- What might they need less of?
- Is this a new behaviour or a pattern?
- I wonder how I might support them?
- What's going on "below" the surface, when I DIG deeper?
- Start where **you ARE** and where the child is (not where you wish you were, or what you wish child could/would do)

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What could our emotions look like or sound like?

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What could RED emotions look like or sound like?

Let's put words to it...

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What could RED emotions look like or sound like?

FIGHT. FLIGHT. FREEZE.

- Screaming
- Hitting
- Yelling
- Crying
- Throwing
- Swearing
- Running away (fleeing)
- "You hurt me" - for any light touch
- Throwing body around
- Fists clenched
- Super Impulsive (would run into traffic)
- Would break anything in path
- Frightened
- Meltdown
- Tantrum
- Running away
- OUT OF CONTROL

Let's put words to it...

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What could ORANGE emotions look like or sound like?

Let's put words to it...

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What could ORANGE emotions look like or sound like?

Start of FIGHT. FLIGHT. FREEZE.

- Cackle-type of giggle (almost maniacal laugh)
- Instant refusal to any request
- Growl or grunt instead of using words
- Pushing their body into others
- Hides under blankets or under table/desk/chair
- "Go away"
- Leaves space unexpectedly
- Scowl or turns body away from others
- Talks back to others
- Flops body around (or flops on ground), "noodley"
- Defiance/refusal about everything
- Whines or complains, or "It's too hard", "I can't"
- Negative about everything, "NO"
- Intense & forceful
- "I'm a horrible person", "I can't do anything right"
-

Let's put words to it...

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What could YELLOW emotions look like or sound like?

Let's put words to it...

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What could YELLOW emotions look like or sound like?

- Randomly and repetitively saying one word, e.g. "pizza"
- Getting up and out of seat almost constantly
- Interested in their topic of conversation only
- Startled easily
- "It's too hard" or "It's too easy / boring"
- Takes a long time to do things (finds the hardest way to do things)
- Needs help to complete tasks they can often do independently
- Restless, wiggly, fidgety, constantly moving
- Wandering
- Talks louder and more "forceful"
- Asking questions (for reassurance) - could be repeatedly
- Asks for/seeks out hugs
- Leaning on walls/others (for extra support)
- Bumping into others or poking/touching others
- Making lots of noises

Let's put words to it...

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What could BLUE emotions look like or sound like?

Let's put words to it...

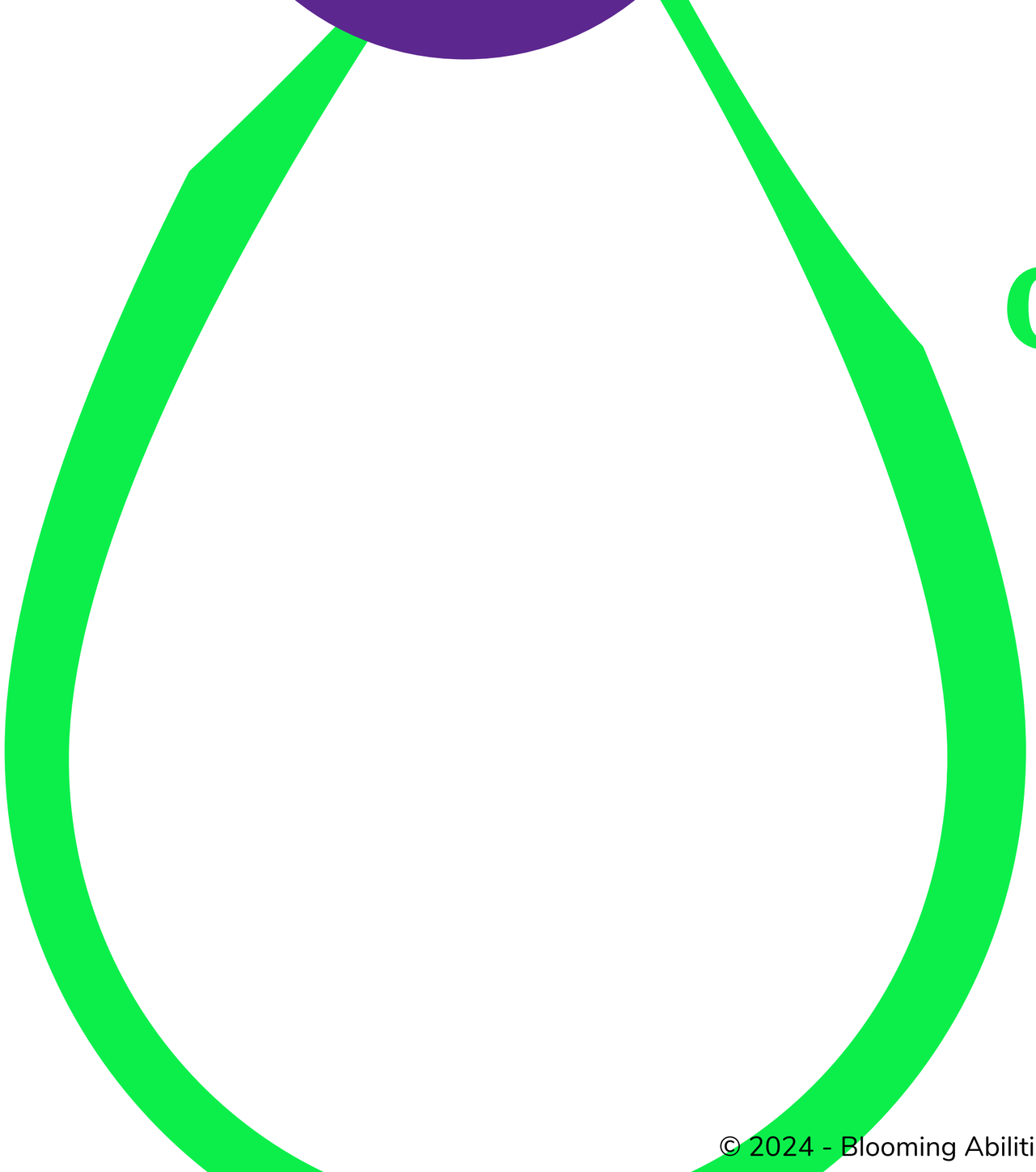
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What could BLUE emotions look like or sound like?

- Distracted by EVERYTHING
- Daydreaming
- Slow to complete anything & everything
- Doesn't seem to hear what I say
- Needs help to complete tasks they can often do independently
- Needs/wants constant hugs & reassurance
- Unable to make decisions of any kind
- "I don't want to..."
- Tears (everything is too hard)
- Blank stares / glazed look / staring into space
- Leaning on walls or furniture
- ·Touching everything & everyone
- Head on desk or leaning on arm / desk (can also be a disengaging – yellow)
- Clumsy, less body awareness, slumped shoulders
- Needs lots of encouragement
-

Let's put words to it...

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What could GREEN emotions look like or sound like?

Let's put words to it...

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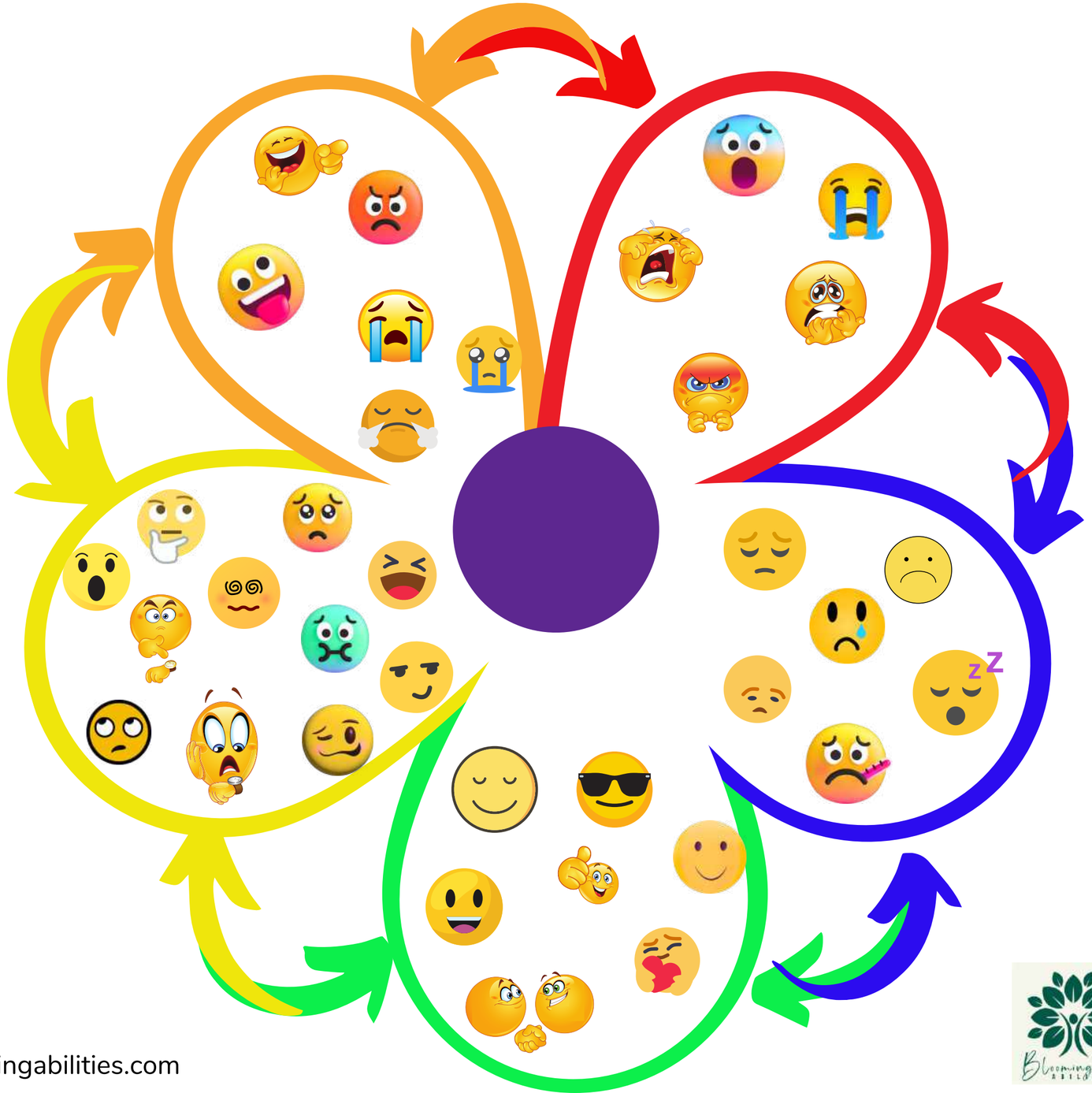
What could GREEN emotions look like or sound like?

- Doing one thing at a time
- Body is moving just a little
- Plays or works independently
- Having fun
- Smiling
- Engaged and interested
- Asks questions on topic
- Has empathy for others
- Thoughtful
- Curious
- Creative
- Using words
- Speaks calmly
- Gentle laughter
- Pleasant to others
- Skip in step
- Positive words
- Kind actions
- Plays with others
- Gets work done quickly and efficiently
- Uses manners
-

Let's put words to it...

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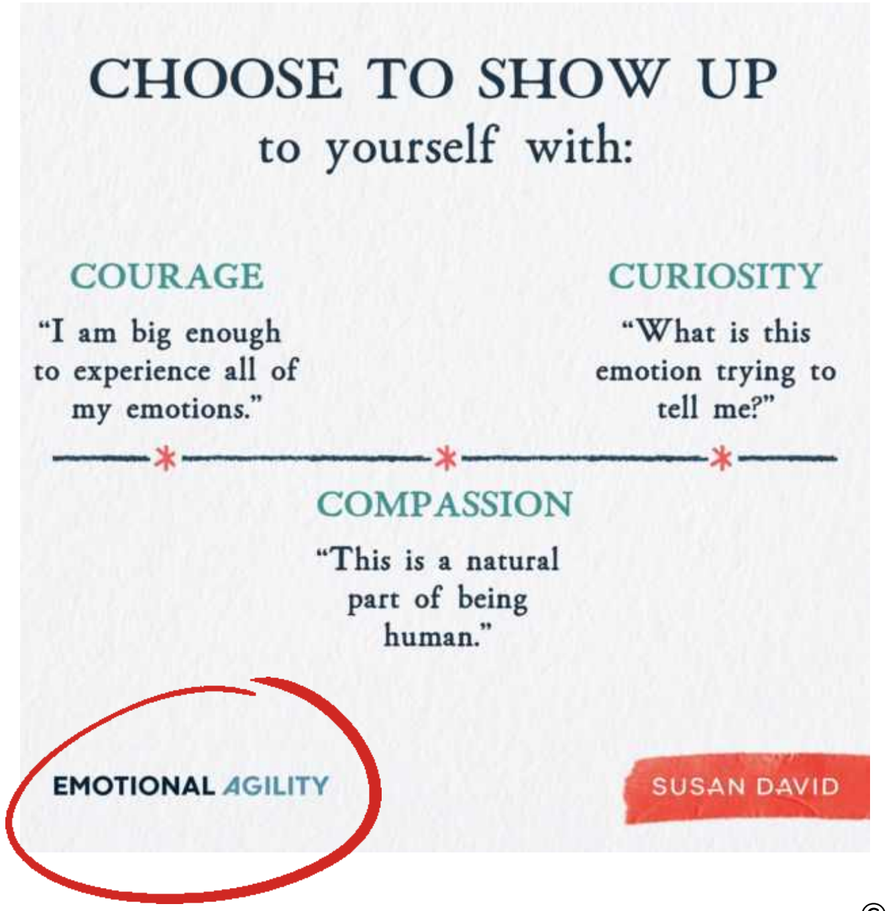
Now that we have noticed what it feels like, looks like & sounds like...

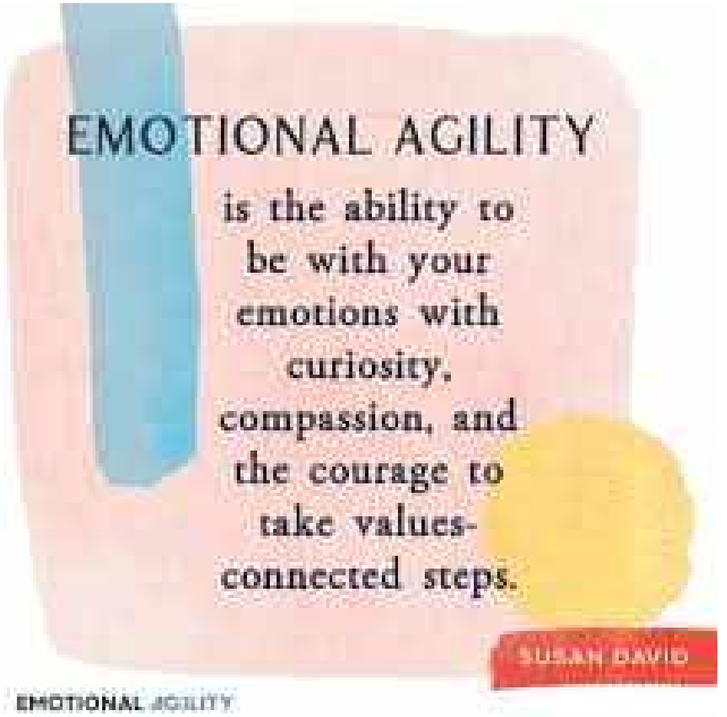


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Let's Name the Emotion...

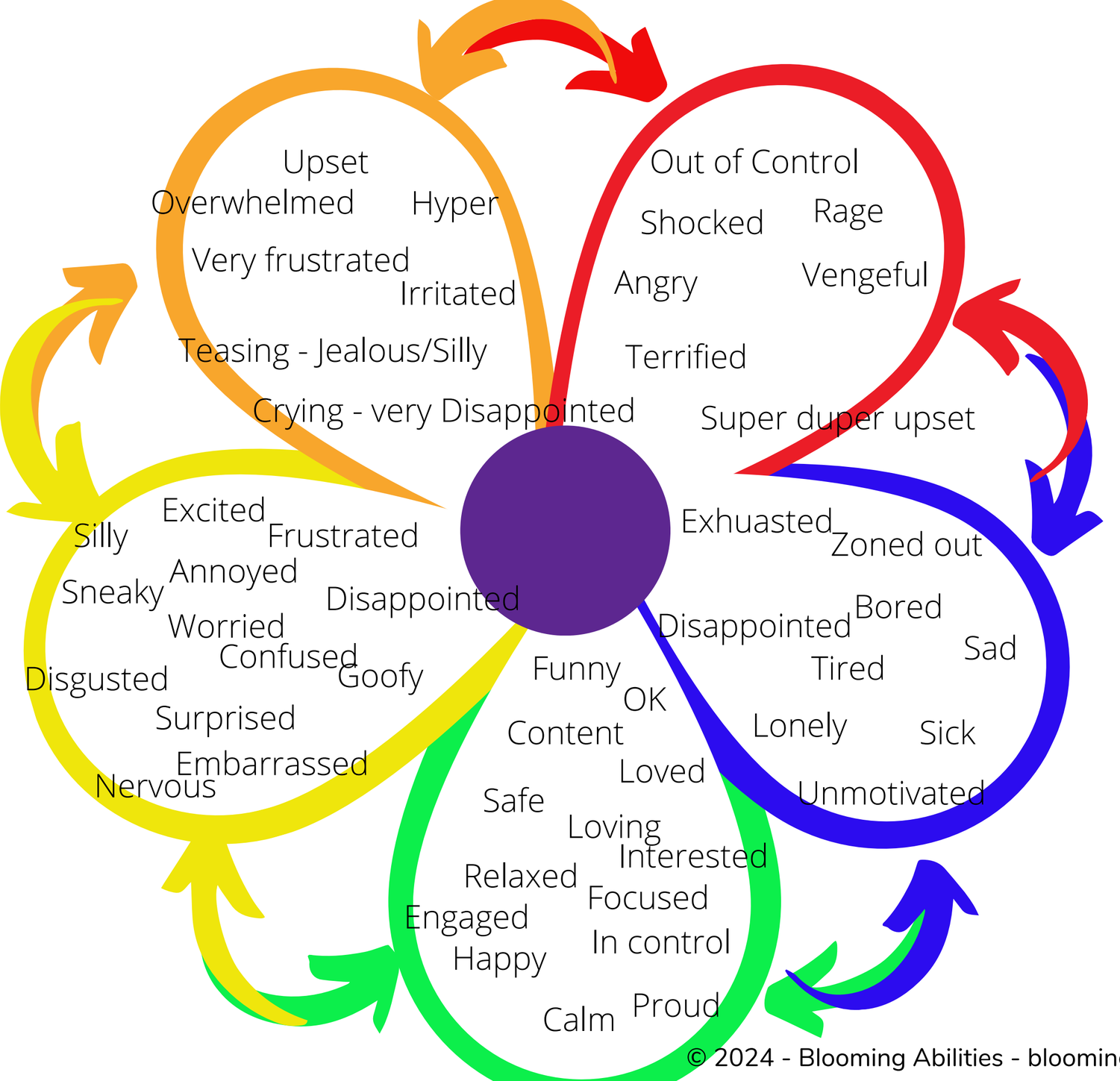
"Name it toTame it" - Daniel Siegel





NEW WAY: Name it to Understand, Accept and Move the Emotions... and Choose new Actions (Behaviours)!

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Name it:

I'm Feeling...

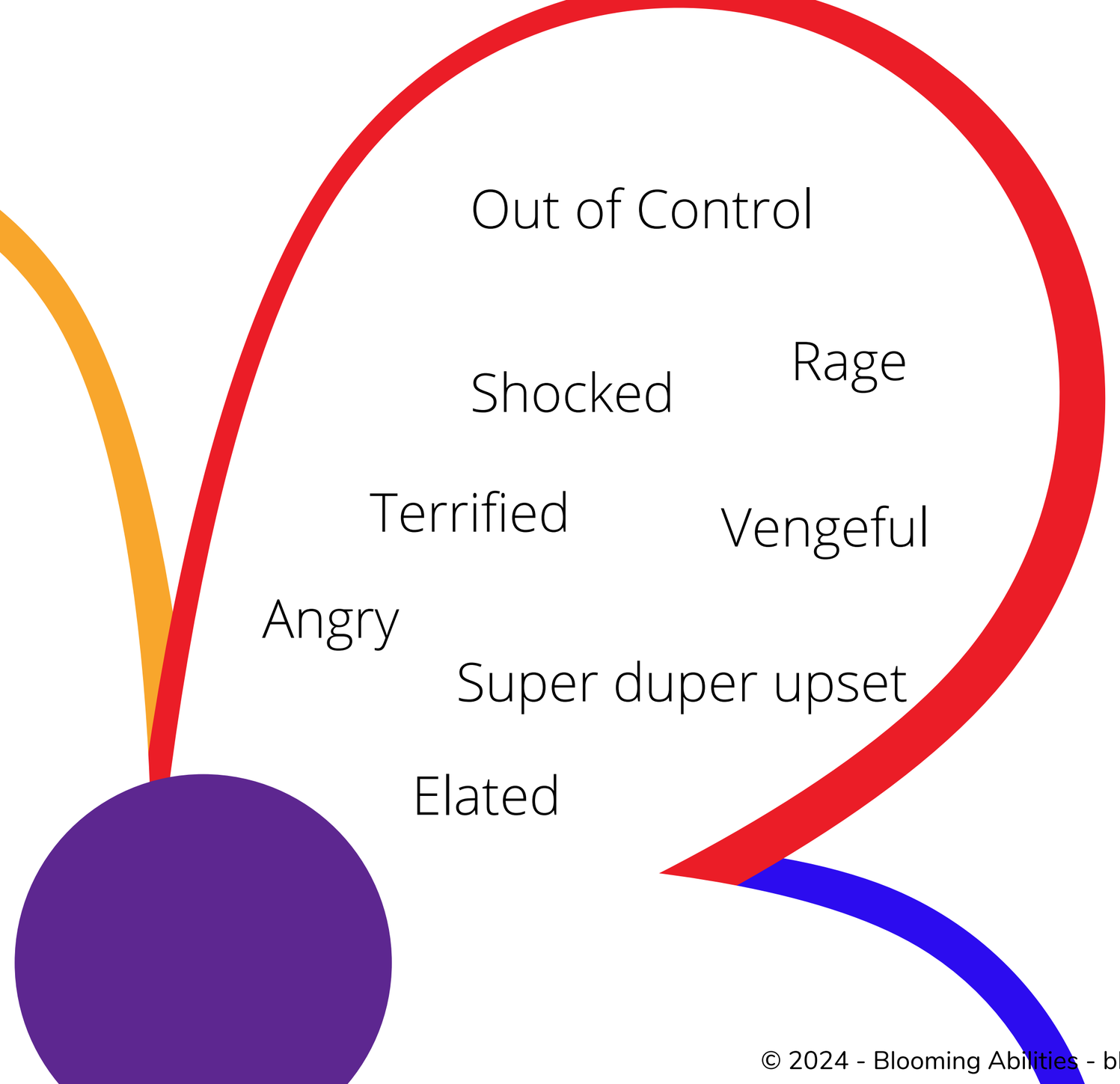
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What might you name RED emotions?

menti.com

Let's put words to it...

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What might you name RED emotions?

Let's put words to it...

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What ORANGE emotions would you name?

Let's put words to it...

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Upset

Irritated

Hyper

Mad

Overwhelmed

Very frustrated

Teasing - Jealous/Silly

Losing Control

Crying - very Disappointed

What ORANGE emotions would you name?

Let's put words to it...

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What might you name some BLUE emotions?

Let's put words to it...

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What might you name some BLUE emotions?

Exhuasted

Zoned out

Disappointed

Bored

Tired

Sad

Lonely

Unmotivated

Sick

NOTE: Worried or overwhelmed might live here... if there is a frozen feeling, and underaroused instead of overaroused.

Let's put words to it...

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Unfocused
Distracted
Restless
Fidgety
Flighty
Ungrounded
Wiggly
Silly
Edgy
Unpassionate
Goofy
Sneaky
Unsettled
Reluctant
Impatient
Dis-interested

Unsteady
Vulnerable
Wobbly
Inflexible
Stubborn
Intolerant
Rigid
Concerned
Upset
Impatient
Unbalanced
Irritable
Restless
Disappointed
Discouraged
Helpless
Regret
Excited
Surprise
Anticipation
Ungrounded

Embarassed
Confused
Puzzled
Indecisive
Jealous
Teasing
Betrayed
Vulnerable
Ignored
Overlooked
Weak
Incapable
Timid
Disconnected
Avoiding
Defensive
Insecure
Uneasy
Unsure
Suspicious

Unloved
Unsupported
Dissatisfied
Aloof
Discouraged
Disappointed
Insecure
Disgust
Judgemental
Pessimistic
Guilt
Dread
Critical
Dishonest
Unsuccessful
Unconfident
Apprehensive

Uncomfortable
Cautious
Afraid
Scared
Nervous
Timid
Worried
Anxious
Alarmed
Uncertain
Agitated
Trouble
Frustrated
Annoyed
Tense
Overwhelmed
Stressed
Grumpy
Unhappy
Upset
Not in control

Which YELLOW emotions do you identify with? And do you see in the child(ren) you work with...

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When do you feel YELLOW emotions? What are you doing?

What do you see MOST in your child(ren)? When? What are they doing (or not doing?)

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What GREEN emotions do you feel most?

Focused
Curious
Engaged
Alert
Attentive
Inquisitive
Creative
Interested
Passionate
Innovative
Savouring
Awe
Wonder
Amazement
In Flow
Productive
Fascinated
Captivated
Absorbed
Energized
Enthusiastic
Entralled
Balanced

In control
Regulated
Settled
Centered
Grounded
Stable
Steady
Harmony
Flexible
Resilient
Even-keeled
Interested
Growing
Learning
Sharing
Communicating
Listening
Give & Receive
Organized
Adaptable
Easy-going
Tolerant
Harmonious

Connected
Belonging
Appreciated
Seen
Heard
Known
Understood
Accepted
Accepting
Clear headed
Body-Brain Connected

Strong
Powerful
Brave
Determined
Courageous
Trusting
Intuitive
Certain
Whole

Loved
Loving
Supported
Supportive
Satisfied
Affectionate
Valued
Respected
Appreciative
Grateful
Thankful
Pleased

Caring
Positive
Optimistic
Compassionate
Empathetic
Thoughtful
Friendly
Kind
Honest
Confident
Proud
Successful

Safe
Comfortable
Relaxed
Calm
Bliss
Tranquil
Ease
At Peace
Settled
Serene
Well
Joy
Pleasure
Delight
Amused

Content
Pleased
Playful
Having fun
Joking
Funny
Optimistic
Hopeful
Inspired

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Being "REGULATED"?

When you are both:

- CALM and ALERT
- GROUNDED and ENGAGED
- Brain is engaged and organized
- You are able to make sense of the world around you
- Feel safe, secure and connected

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Need to know and understand GREEN...

To know what the goal is...

- What does being regulated look like?
- What are they doing?
- What does it feel like?
- What is the experience of a calm state?

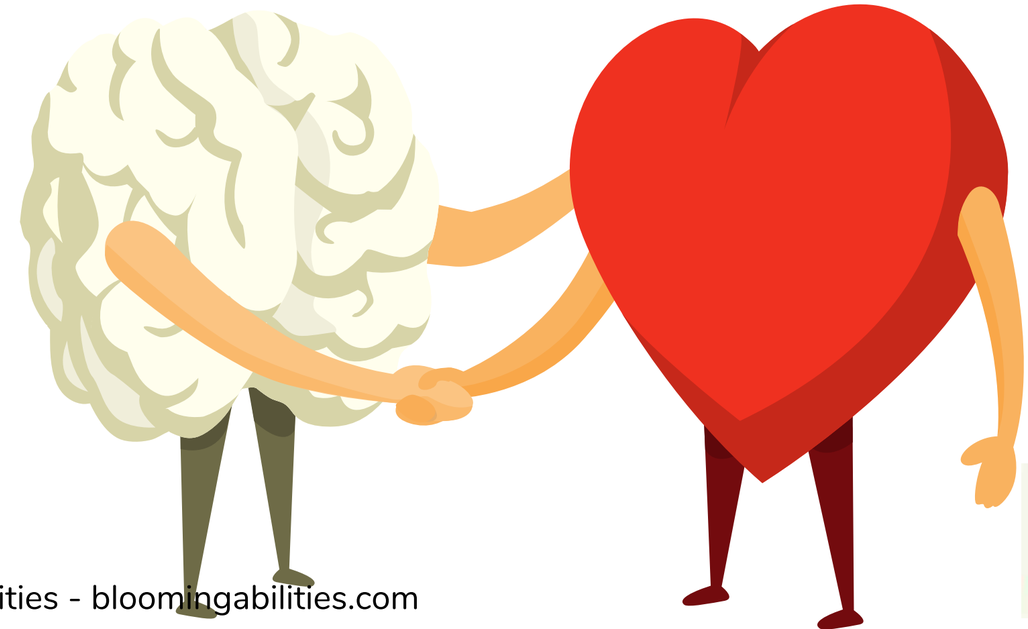
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GOAL OF GREEN: CONNECTION

- with self (body & brain & heart)
- with others (especially a safe adult)
- with world (environment around them)

...and your child feels safe and calm again!

CONNECT

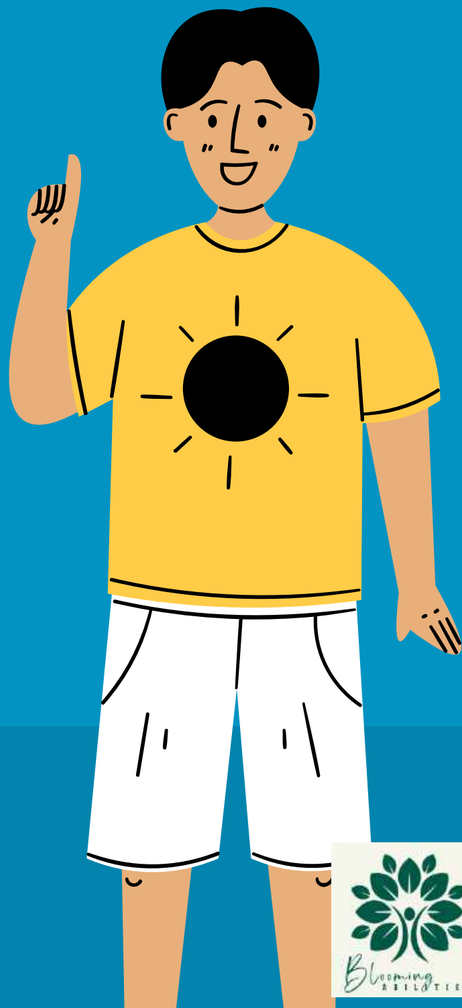


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Let's continue the conversation!

And exploring LOTS more practical tools and strategies....



AFTER THE BREAK...

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AND THEN...

Be with the emotions...

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BRING CURIOUSITY & COMPASSION



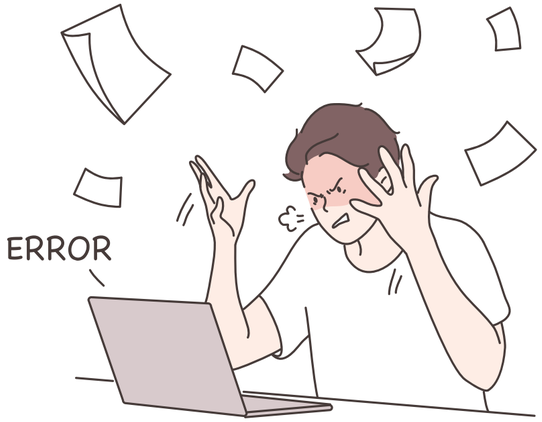
- What could the child be trying to communicate?
- What am I assuming?
- What else could be going on?
- What might they need more of?
- What might they need less of?
- Is this a new behaviour or a pattern?
- I wonder how I might support them?
- What's going on "below" the surface, when I DIG deeper?
- Start where **you ARE** and where the child is (not where you wish you were, or what you wish child could/would do)

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it's okay to feel your feelings







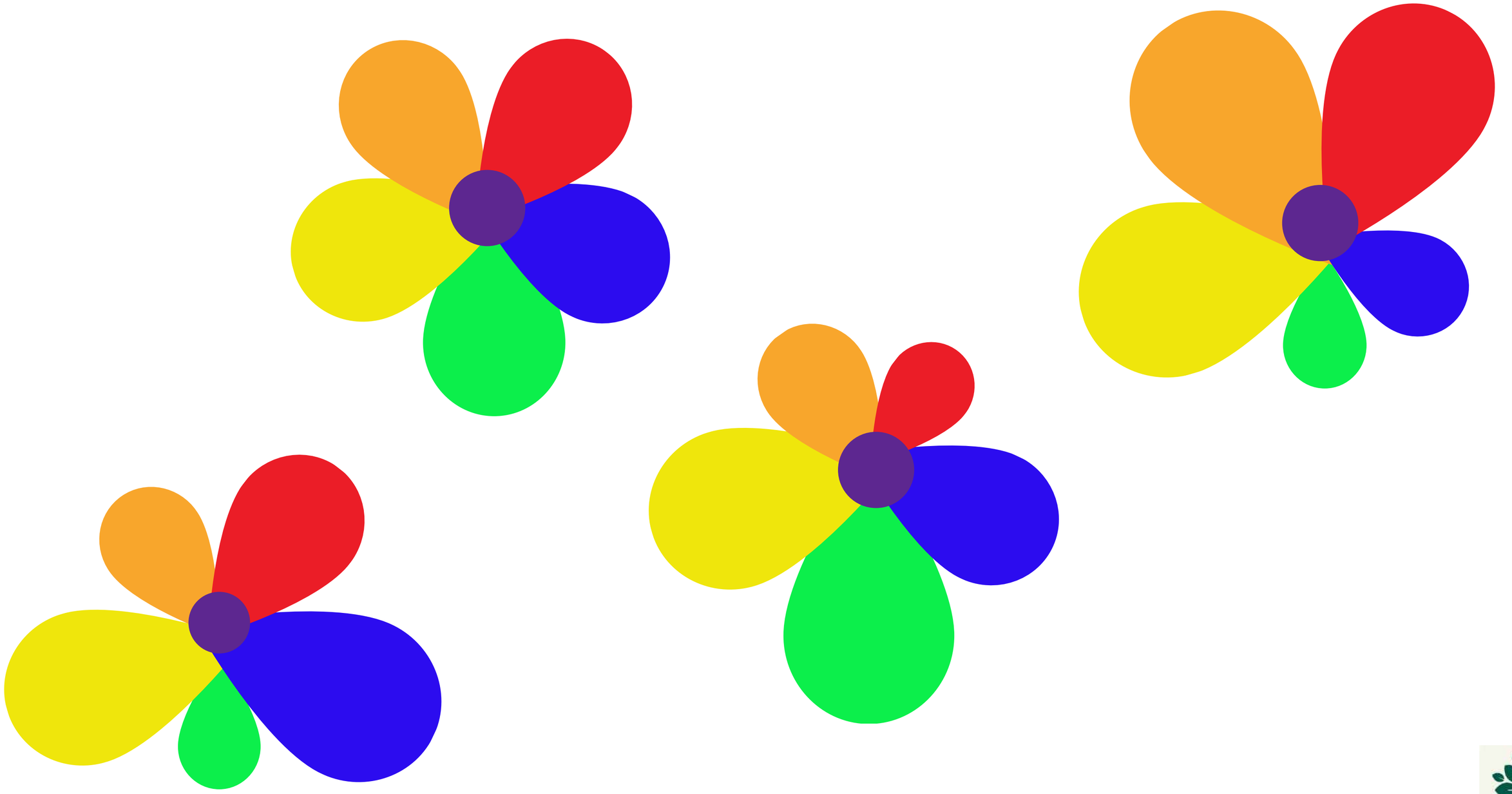
But it's not ok to hurt yourself or others... let's find safe ways to move and release those big feelings!!

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IT IS EXPECTED...

To spend time in each of the "zones" each day depending of different situations.
BUT... sometimes the size of the reaction is SO big it impacts daily life.

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OUR EMOTIONS



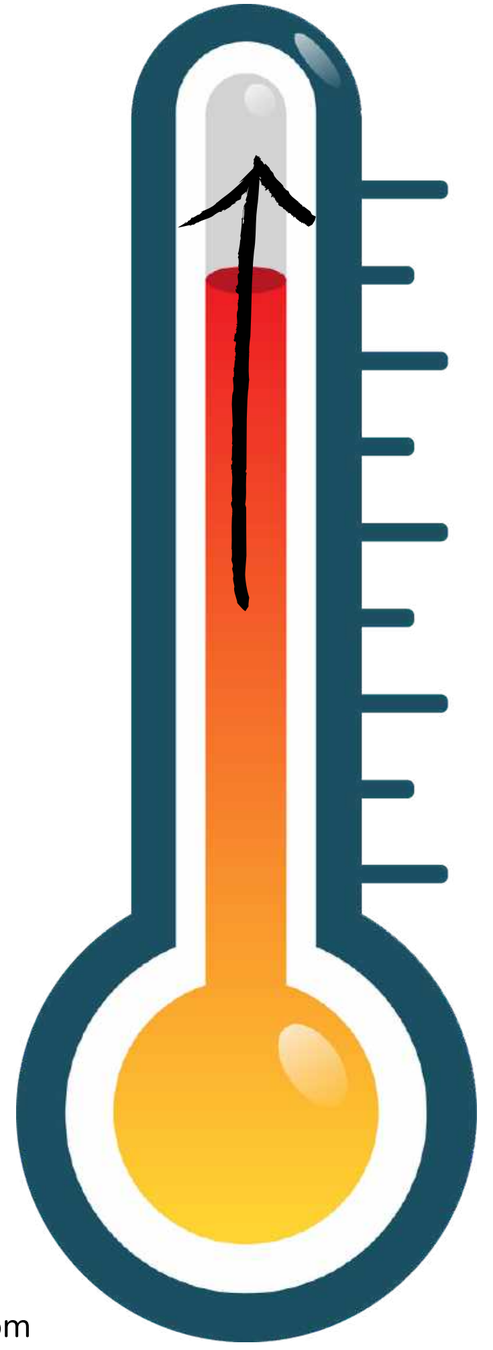
ARE **MEANT** TO BE FELT

NOT controlled or managed...
When we learn to recognize our emotions and move with and through them... that's when we can more fully live!

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WHEN EMOTIONS FEEL IGNORED...

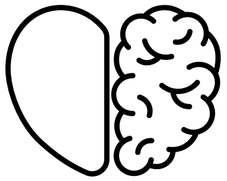
THEY GET BIGGER, STRONGER,
LOUDER & MORE INTENSE



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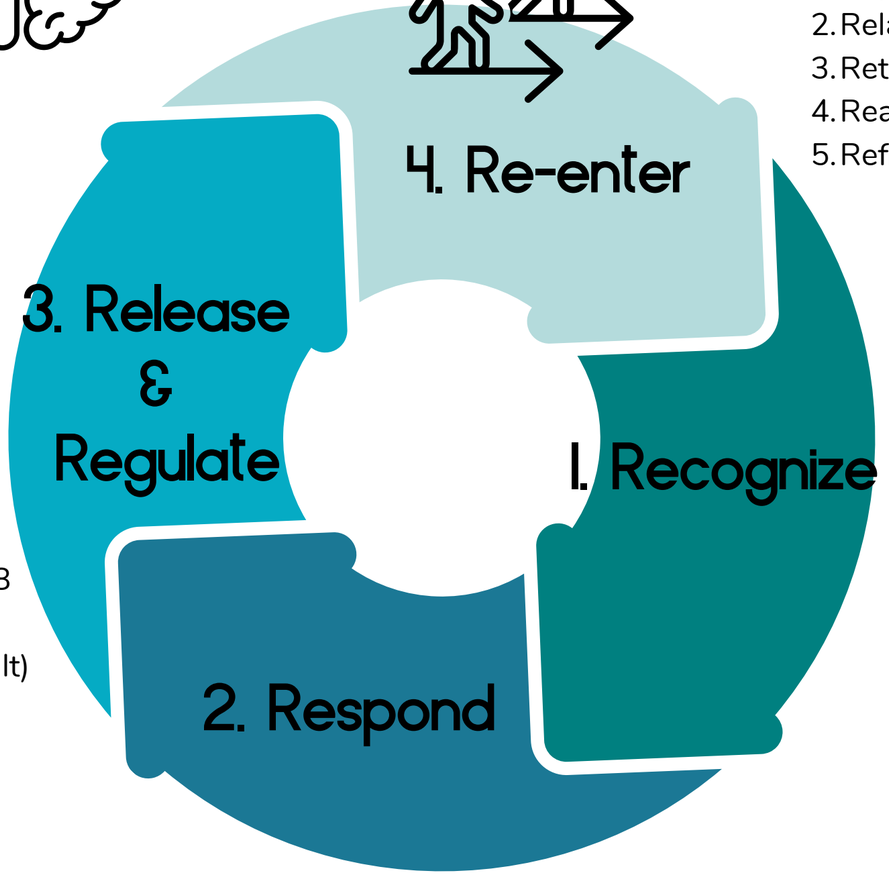
4 R's of Emotional Explorers











What is most needed RIGHT NOW to re-enter & move forward?

1. Repair
2. Relate
3. Return
4. Reason
5. Reflect

Move Emotion (energy in motion)

- Proactive
- Move it
- Let it out
- Re-direct (meet needs in safe way)
- Use 8 senses

Connect...

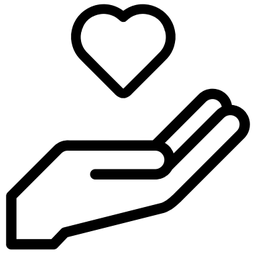
- with self (body & brain & heart - 8 senses)
- with others (especially a safe adult)
- with world (environment around them)

...until your child feels safe and calm again!



Notice & Observe

- What emotion might your child be feeling?
- Name it (to self)
- What are they doing?
- What does it look like or sound like?



Meet your child in their emotion... respond to their needs with:

- Support
- Create safety
- Lead with love
- Connect
- Pause
- Be present
- Allow
- Be WITH
- Be quiet
- Accept - it is it is



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Recognize



Respond







Release
&
Regulate





Re-enter

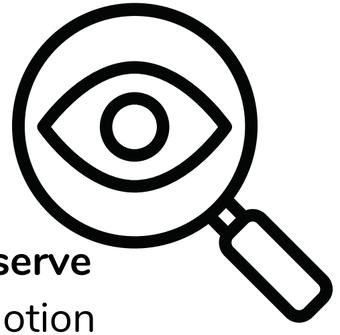


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4 R's of Emotional Explorers



1. Recognize



Notice & Observe

- What emotion might your child be feeling?
- Name it (to self)
- What are they doing?
- What does it look like or sound like?

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1. RECOGNIZE

What are the "Yellow" emotions - caution - pay attention





Allow

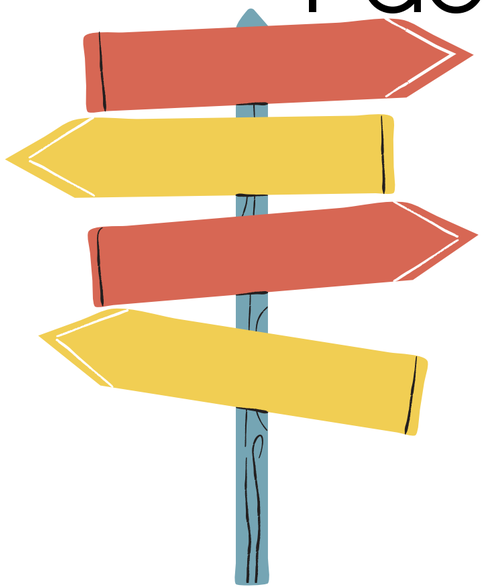


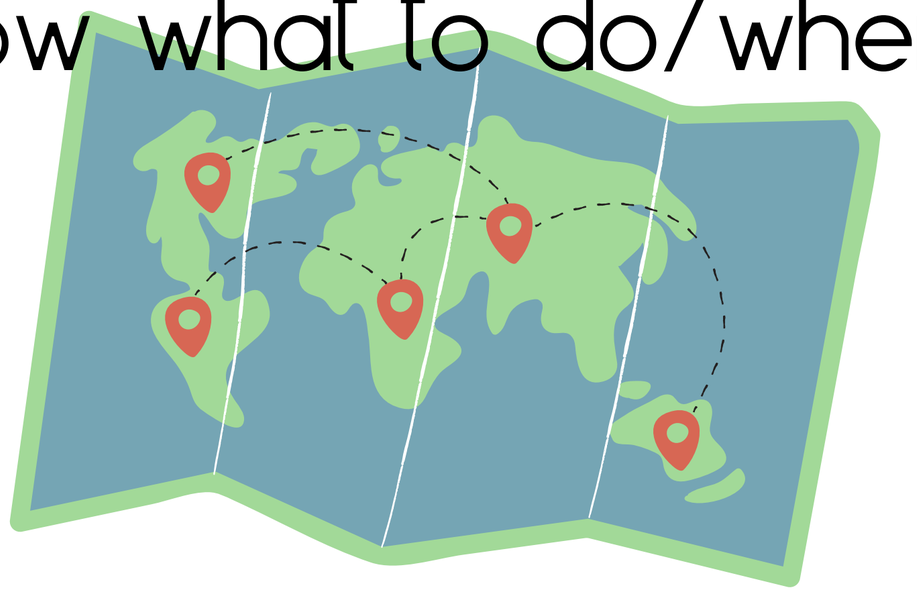
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EMOTIONS ARE...

a messenger, what are they telling you?

- this is too hard
- I need help
- I'm overwhelmed
- I don't know what to do/where to go



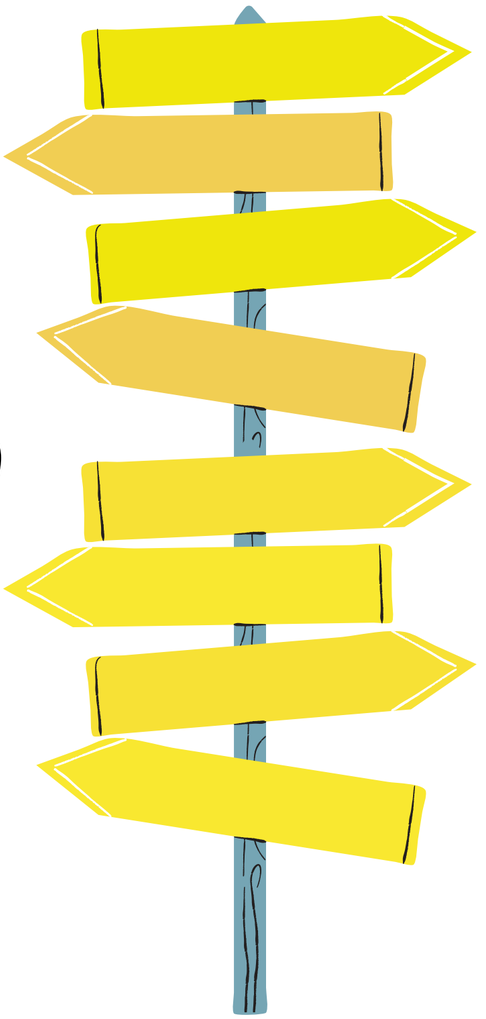




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"Yellow" Emotions

They are asking us to PAY ATTENTION & NOTICE!



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From the yellow petal there are Two main possibilities:

1. escalate to orange
2. use a tool and move to green

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2. RESPOND

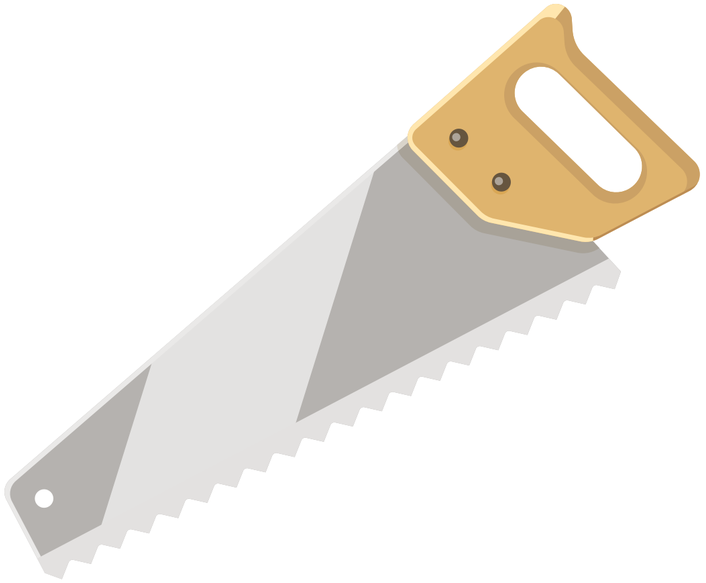
to your child's needs...

Do they need... comfort? support? love? food? water? warmth? sleep? something else?

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DIFFERENT TOOLS...

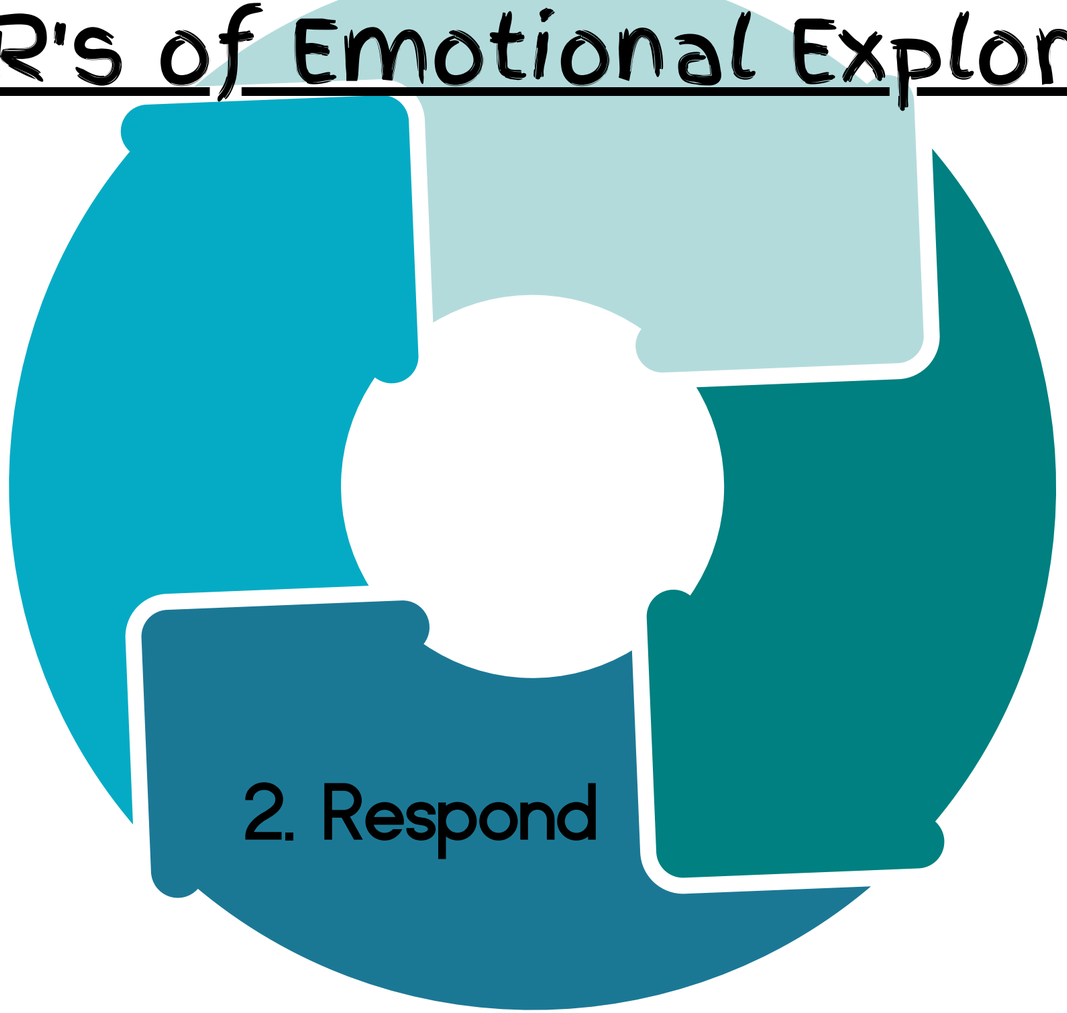


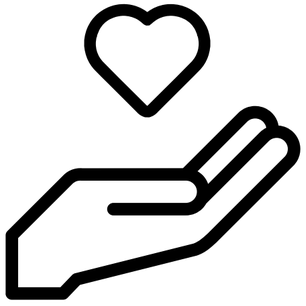




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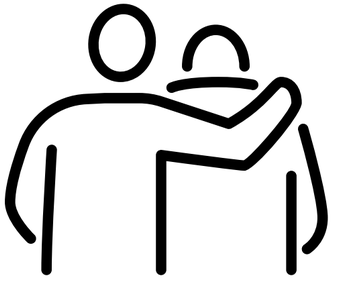
4 R's of Emotional Explorers





Meet your child in their emotion... respond to their needs with:

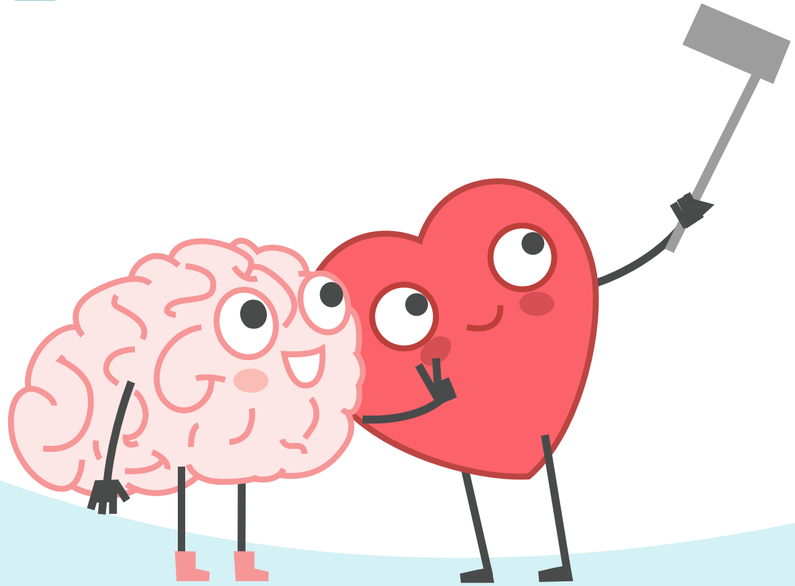
- Support
- Create safety
- Lead with love
- Connect
- Pause
- Be present
- Allow
- Be WITH
- Be quiet
- Accept - it is it is



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Lead with Compassion

for you and the child!



HEART and BRAIN working together
ADULT and CHILD together

Root (Latin)

- com (with, together)
- pati - passion (endure, undergo, experience, endure)



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MISBEHAVIOUR VS. STRESS BEHAVIOUR

MISBEHAVIOUR

- mis = bad or wrong
- behaviour = action

** Child has made a CHOICE and is AWARE of their action

** Child was CAPABLE of making a different choice.

STRESS BEHAVIOUR

- stress = strain on the body
- stress behaviour = caused by too high stress load

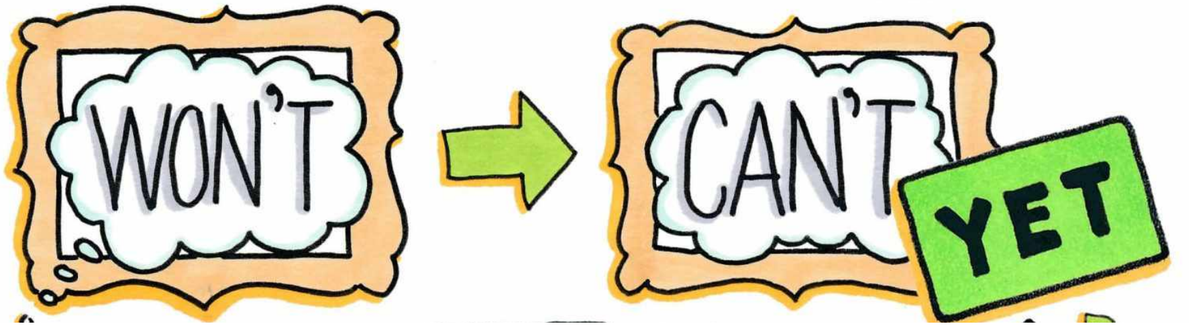
** Child in NOT fully aware of what they are doing or WHY

** Child has/had LIMITED CAPACITY for making a different choice.

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REFRAME THE BEHAVIOUR

"KIDS DO WELL IF THEY CAN"
~ROSS GREENE





"SEE A CHILD DIFFERENTLY, YOU SEE A DIFFERENT CHILD"
~Dr. Stuart Shanker

When kids exhibit challenging behaviour we can be "STRESS DETECTIVES"...finding and removing barriers.

- FIND STRESSORS → REDUCE THEM
- FIND UNMET NEEDS → MEET THEM
- FIND SKILLS DEFICITS → TEACH THEM

@kwiens62

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When you feel upset...

...what do you need?

someone to point out your mistakes?

OR

someone to give you a hug?

OR

time & space to process?

OR

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We can RESPOND by...

CREATE SAFETY.

SUPPORT.

LEAD WITH LOVE.

CONNECT.

PAUSE. BE QUIET.

BE PRESENT.

ALLOW.

BE <u>WITH</u> the CHILD... so they can learn to do it themselves.

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HOW?

- Don't try to solve anything right now!
  - Don't even need to know WHY now
- Accept "what is"
- Name (to yourself or child)
- Be curious
- Be patient.
- Be present.
- Be quiet.
- The wave will come, rise, peak & fall...

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WHICH EMOTIONS ARE...

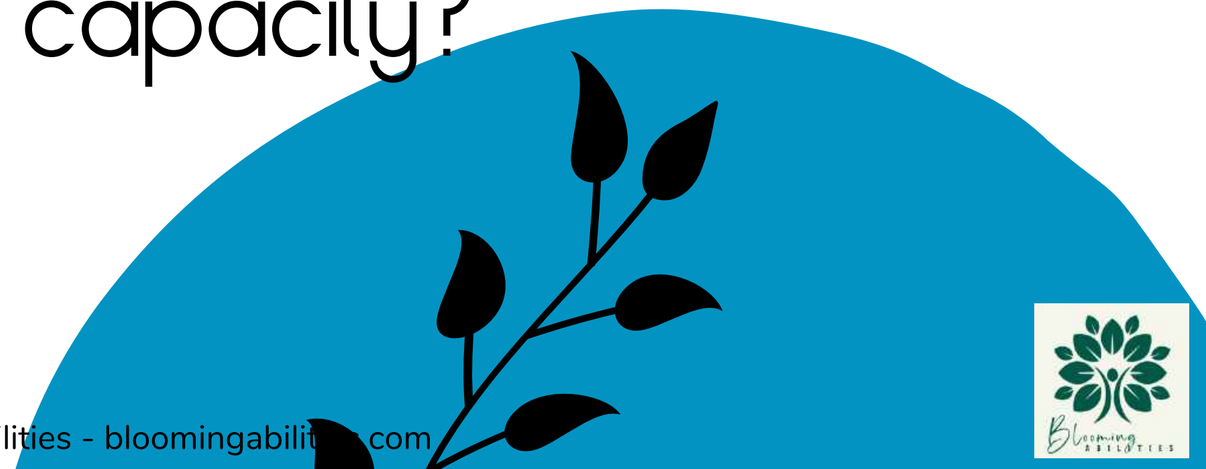
Comfortable for you?
Feel uncomfortable?

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NOTICING OUR EMOTIONS...

How comfortable we FEEL about various emotions many impact our ability to respond.

Are you triggered by some emotions?
How might you build your capacity?



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WE CAN NOTICE...

And explore how OUR own behaviour and the emotional responses IN US that arise during intense, emotional experiences.

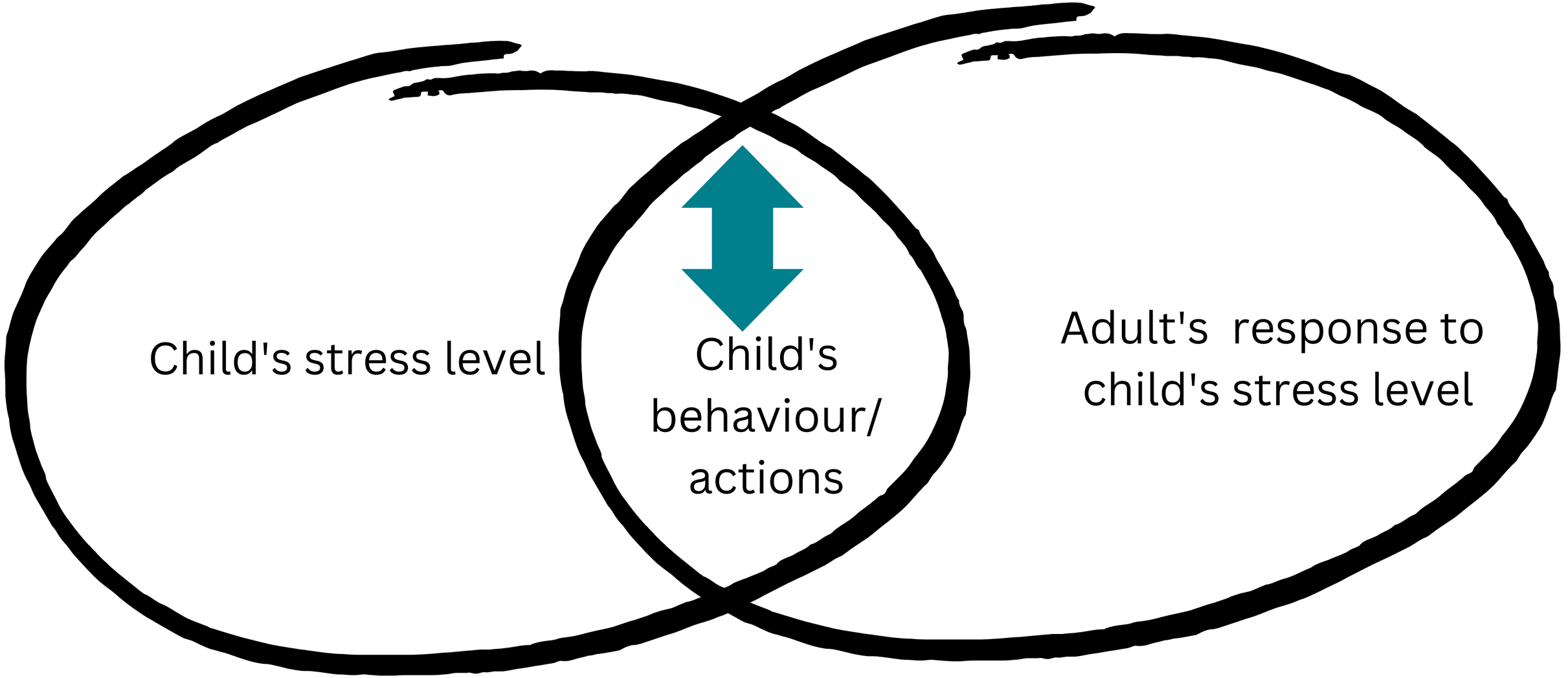
We need to understand OUR contribution to the situation, and when OUR demands to the already stressed-out child outweigh their current functional coping strategies.

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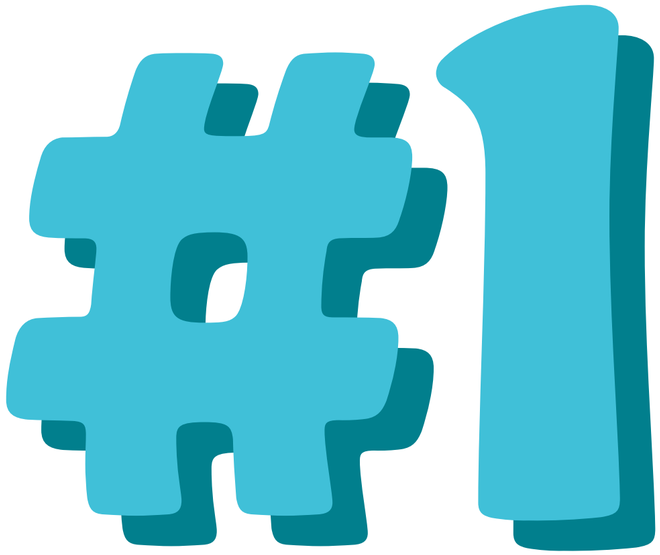
"It might not just be one thing that starts the meltdown, but rather a combination of different stressors prior to the incident that triggers the situation. And **another thing is that you learn to understand yourself as a person, and the interaction between yourself and the child, when the child is entering a state of high arousal**".

- Scott Larsen, Low Arousal Theory

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Let go of demands until the waters have subsided

~ Scott Larsen, Low Arousal Theory
(https://www.studio3.org/signe-lo-scott-larsen)

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#2

Be close, but also keep a distance, in order to give the child an opportunity to escape from the situation if they need to.

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#3

Deliberately avoid direct eye contact and movements, which could be interpreted as attempts to try and stop the child.

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GOAL:

Reduce the points of conflict that lead to challenging behaviour and big emotional outbursts.

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GOAL:

Seek solutions that reduce high levels of stress / arousal / heightened emotions in the child.

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GOAL:

Avoid punitive consequences, rather SUPPORT safe strategies to allow the safe release of the current emotion (agitation/agression).

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DID YOU KNOW?

Discipline - The root word of discipline is "disciple," which comes from the Latin word discipulus meaning "student." - we want to TEACH a new behaviour with support (as the teacher).

Punish - punishment is teaching children a new behavior using fear.

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RESPONSES TO TRY...

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TRY...

BREATHE!!!
Don't make it personal.
Stay grounded & neutral.
Remove judgement.
It's NOT about YOU!

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INSTEAD of...

Thinking, "They shouldn't be acting this way."

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TRY...

Thinking, "I wonder why this is so difficult right now."

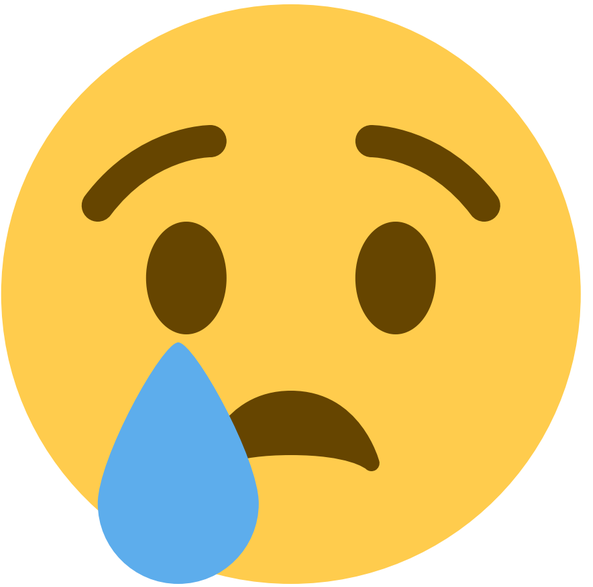
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VALIDATE...

- When you see your child displaying an emotion, make a simple statement about what you see.
- If you're not sure ask a yes/no question.
- Practice labelling your own emotions as part of everyday conversation

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BE WITH...



- it's not time to fix or comfort
- honour and hold space
- sometimes silence and space is best







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In the YELLOW or BLUE...

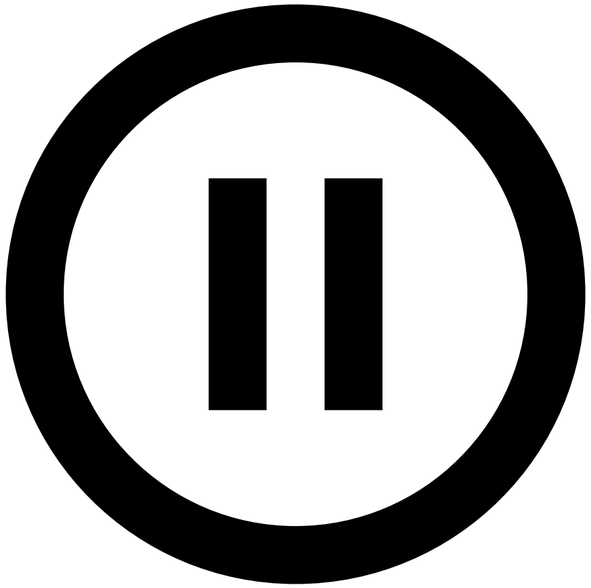
Instead of:	Try:
"What's wrong?"	"You look ____ right now."
"How are you feeling?"	"Are you feeling _____?"

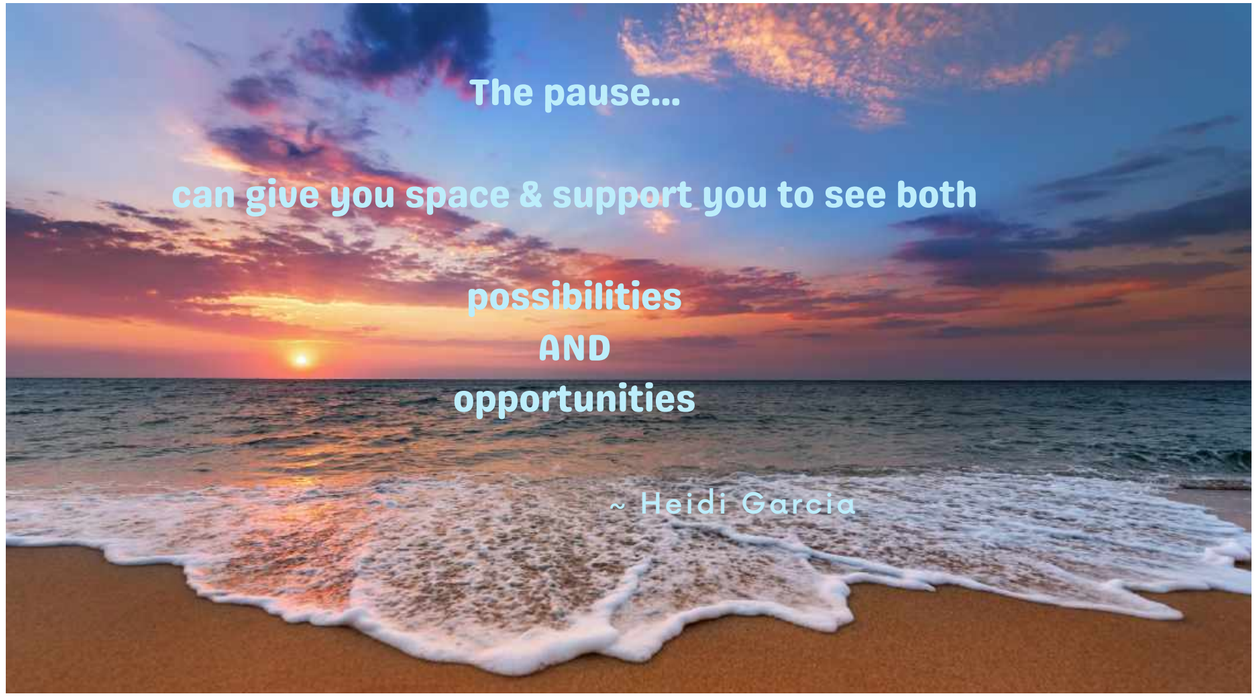
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In the YELLOW or BLUE...

Instead of:	Try:
"Calm down!"	"Let's try one of our tools."
"We can fix that. Don't get frustrated."	"Let's take a little break."

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- Pause activity - Take a break
- Stop and use a tool
- Re-direct behavior - Ask yourself "What does child need right now?"
- Support for success (Consider capacity)
- Help child choose an more appropriate way of expressing need/emotion- what TO DO (instead of what not to do)

.

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CAPACITY MATTERS!

CONSIDER IMPACT OF ...

- STRESS
- REGULATION
- ATTENTION
- FATIGUE
- NOURISHMENT
- TIME OUTSIDE
- EVENTS OF THE DAY
- TECH USE
- ETC...



NOTE: Current capacity MAY be different than yesterday, an hour ago, or a week ago

SKILL LEVEL or CAPABILITY + **CURRENT** CAPACITY = **CURRENT** ABILITY

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CONSIDER CAPACITY



We can consider:

- What can I do to help or support this child RIGHT now?
- I wonder what they are struggling with?
- How can I help this child through this distress?
    - Also consider what YOU need to maintain your calm!
- What might they need to learn to BUILD their capacity?

CREATE SAFETY - How do we wrap our children up so beautiful they can find their way, make their best choices, and feel calm and safe? (And so we don't feel so overwhelmed & exhausted!)

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OFFER A TOOL...

- Breathing activity
- Take a break
- Go outside
- Movement / Heavy work
- Colour or draw
- Have a snack

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You will know if your response is what they need...

- it matches where they are at (validates)
- they don't escalate further

... if you miss it - you will know, and don't worry... you will get another opportunity to practice again soon.

.... just like chips & salsa



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3. RELEASE & REGULATE

EXPRESS & MOVE emotions

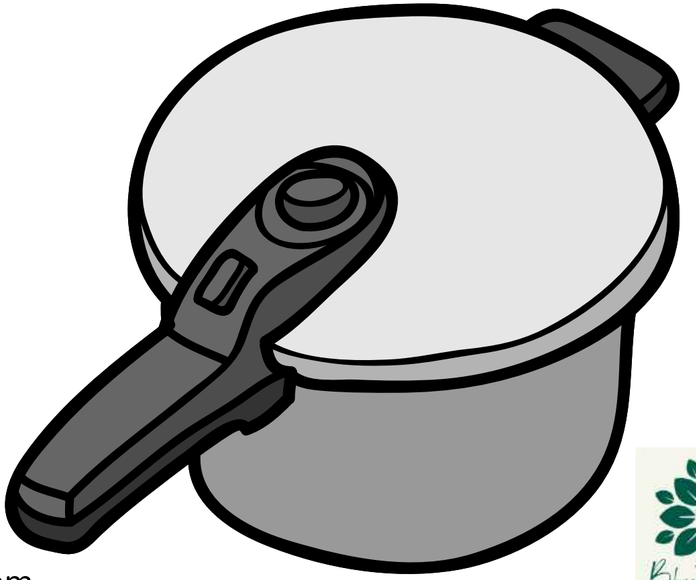
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WITHOUT A RELEASE...

YOU CAN GET AN EXPLOSION

... the pressure and/or intensity keeps building and building

... let out pressure/steam gradually

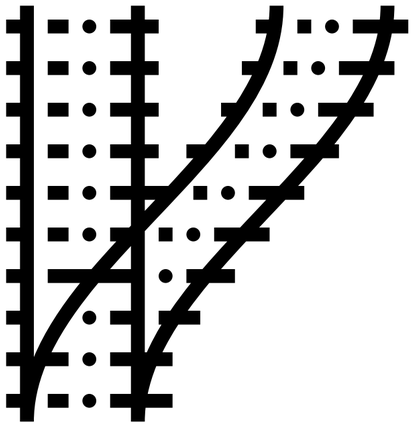


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- **PROACTIVE**
  … support at the top of the hill (yellow or blue)



- **REDIRECT**
  … redirect for safety
  … pivot; new path





- **MOVE IT / LET IT OUT**

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REMEMBER...

Child needs to know what TO DO (not what NOT to do)

Instead of:	Try:
"No hitting"	"Can you hit this pillow"
"Don't hit"	"Hit this"
"Hands are not for hitting."	"This is safe to hit"

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USE the 8 SENSES

Vision - Eyes



Oral - Mouth



Touch



Proprioception



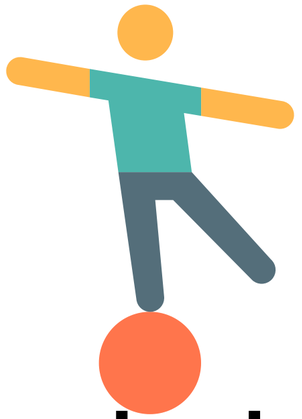
Auditory - Ears



Smell - Nose



Vestibular



Interoception



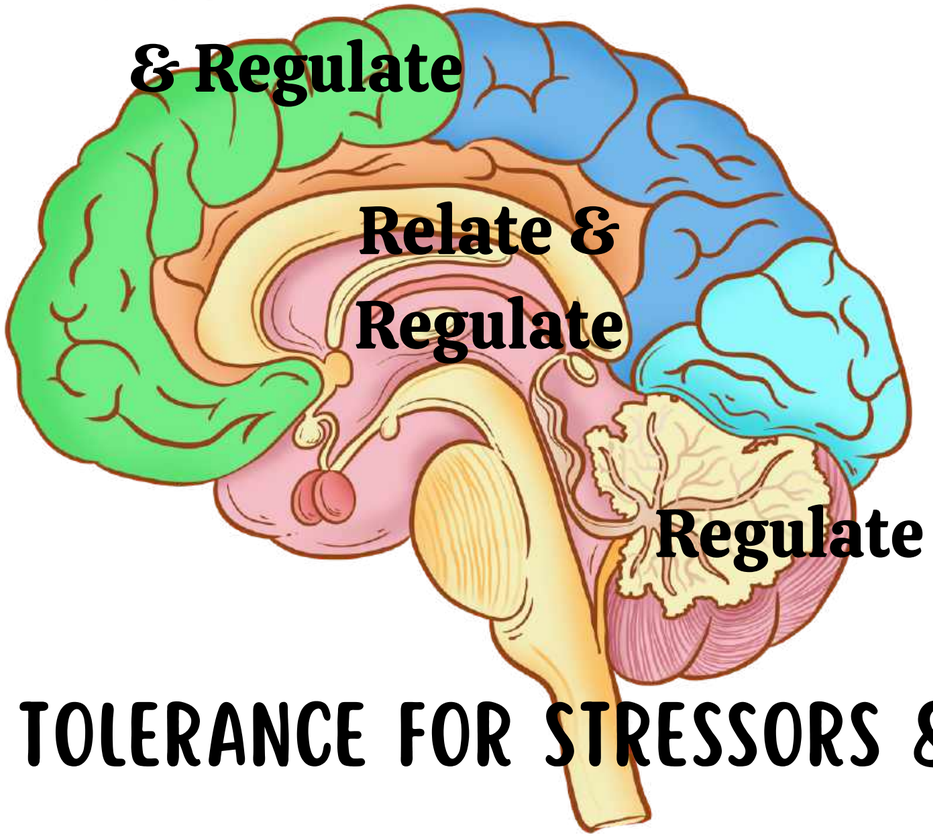
"You are _____. It looks like your body needs _____"

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CO-REGULATE





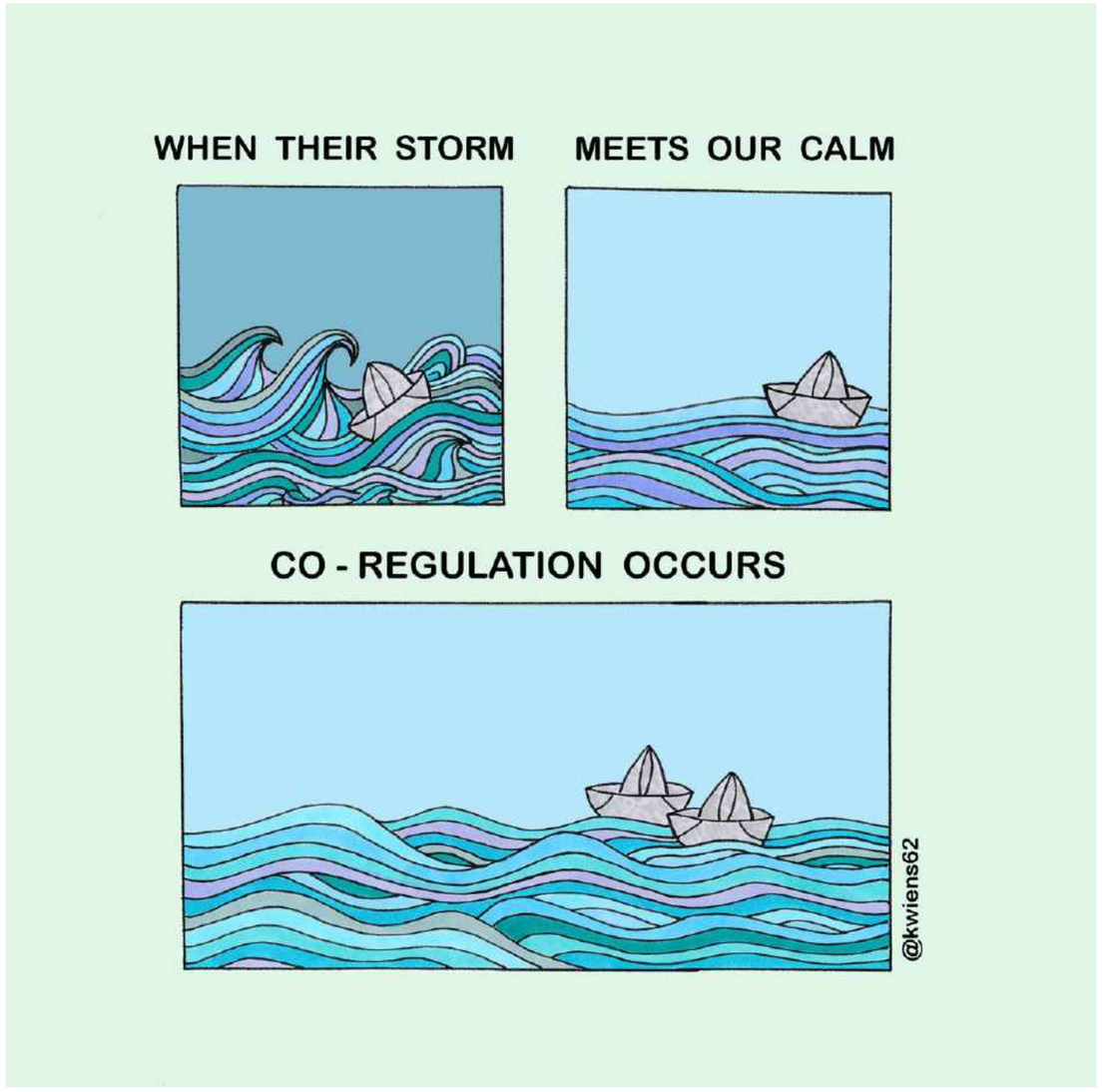


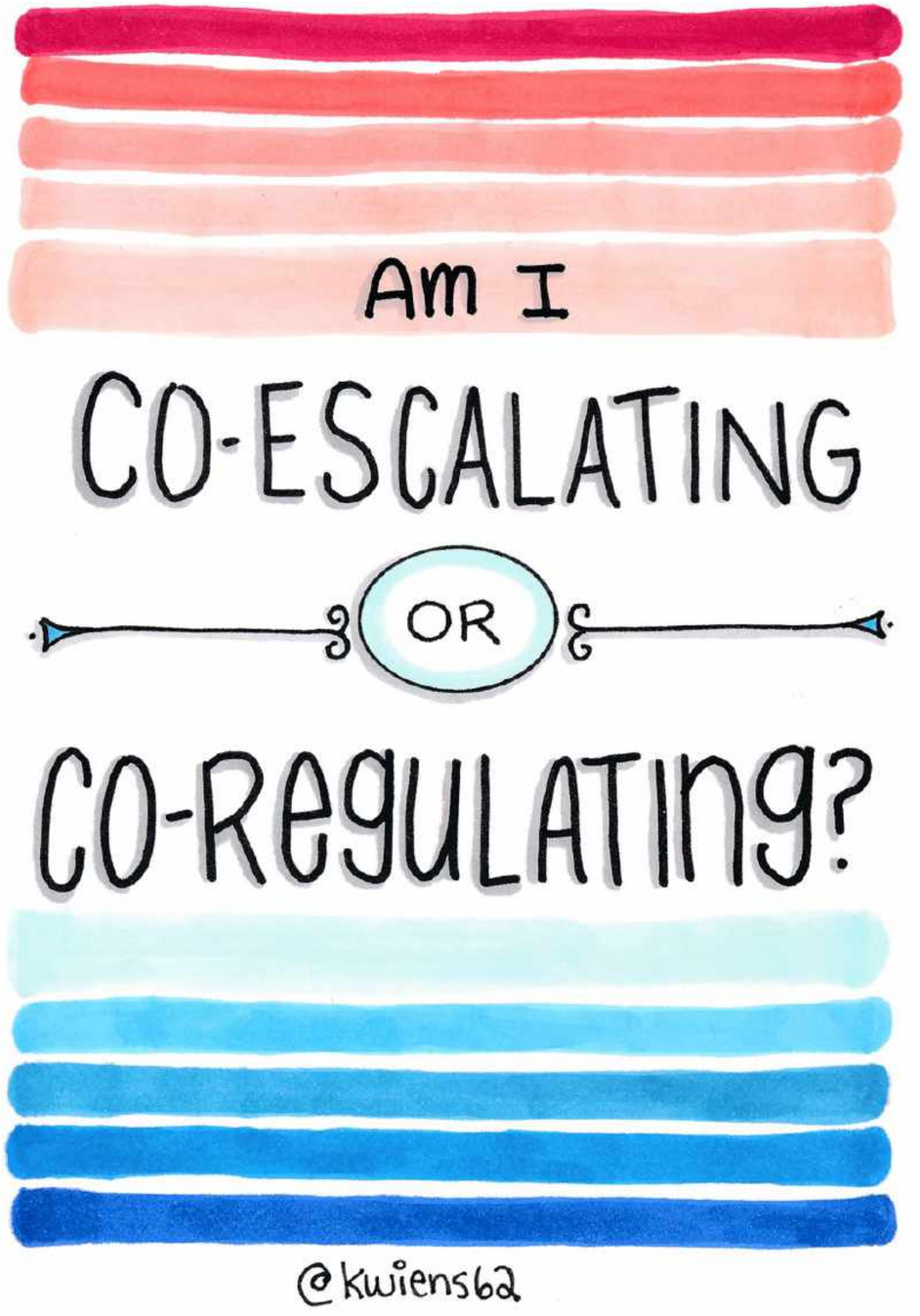
- When the brain is stressed, feeling unsafe or overstimulated
... we are not able to learn, cope, be flexible or problem solve.

- When the brain is tuned out, sleepy or under stimulated
... we are not able to learn, engage, or complete tasks.

HOW MIGHT WE BUILD TOLERANCE FOR STRESSORS & TOOLS FOR RESILIENCE?

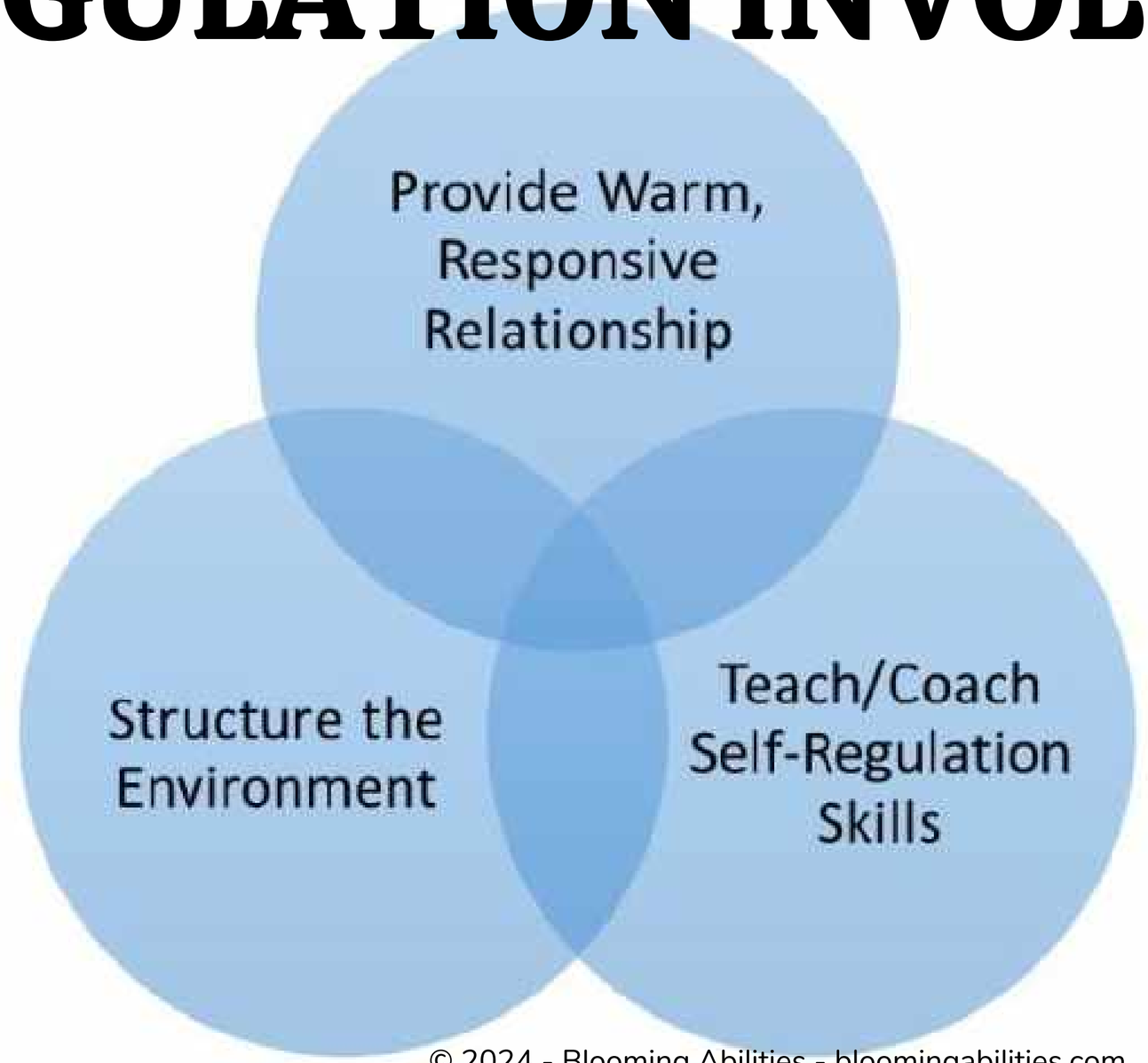
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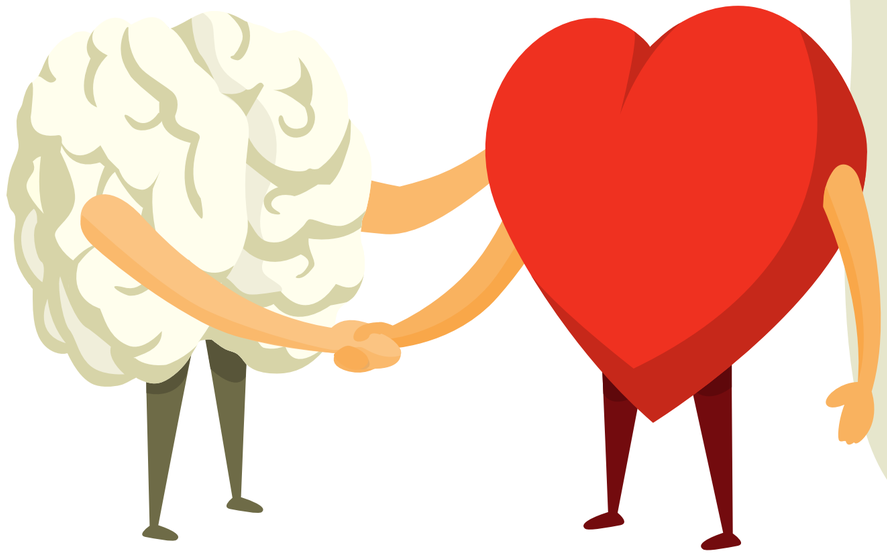
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CO-REGULATION INVOLVES:



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WHAT IS REGULATION...



Ability to deal with stress (& heightened state of emotions...in all its many forms), and recover from the energy expended.

~ Stuart Shanker

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WHAT is REGULATED?

When you are both:

- CALM and ALERT
- GROUNDED and ENGAGED
- Brain is engaged and organized
- You are able to make sense of the world around you
- Feel safe, secure and connected

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What else do we "regulate"?

- to fix or **adjust** the time, amount, degree, or rate of
  - e.g. room temperature (thermostat)
- to **bring under the control** of law or constituted authority
  - e.g. professionals
- to **bring order**, method, or uniformity to
  - our habits, our body, our emotions?

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Regulating our bodies (therefore regulates our emotions)
= taking any action that alters the intensity of an emotional experience.

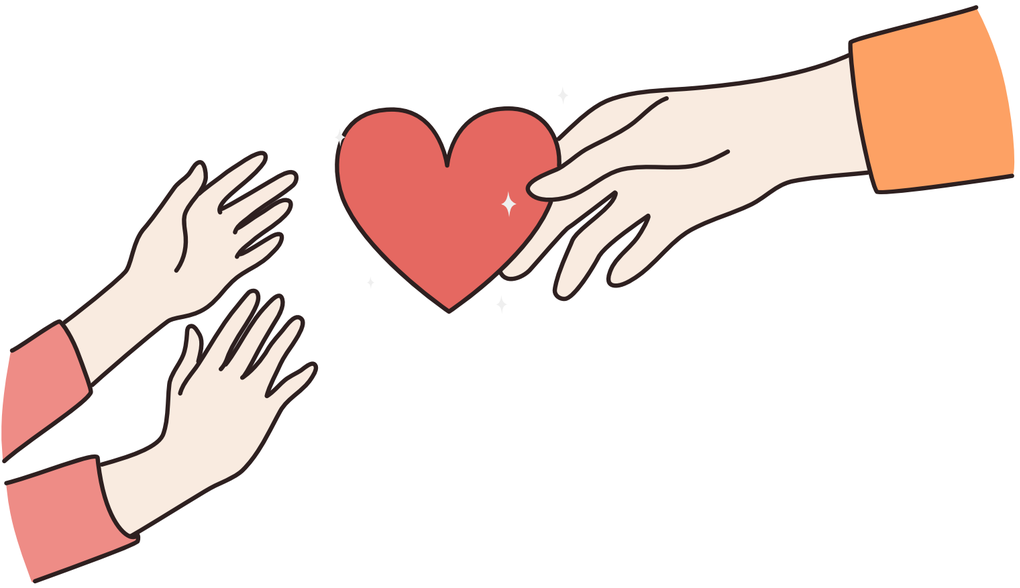
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Self-soothing (nourishing) VS. Self-numbing (feels worse)



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GOAL OF REGULATION:



CONNECT...

- with self (body & brain & heart)
- with others (especially a safe adult)
- with world (environment around them)

...until the child feels safe and calm again!

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What if you could ride the wave using...



THE 4 B'S

- BREATH
- BODY
- BRAIN
- BELIEFS

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BREATH





inhale
exhale







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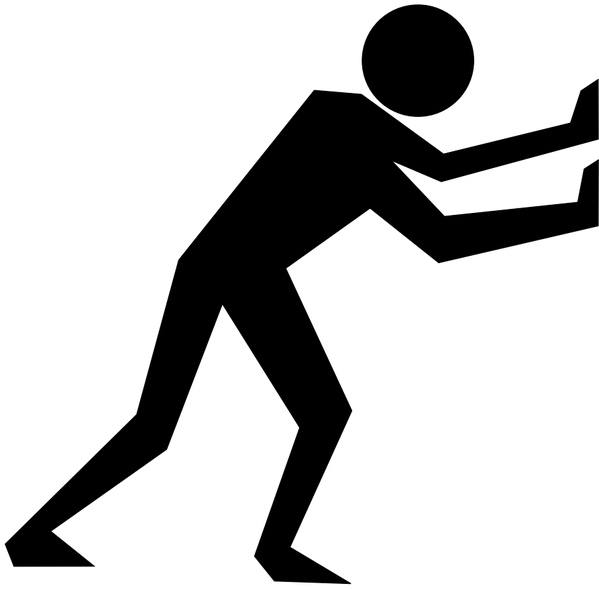
BODY













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BRAIN (mind)

- be in present moment
- mindfulness
- memories
- growth mindset
- flexibility







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BELIEFS (spirit)

- mantras
- thoughts
- expansive & spacious







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USE the 8 SENSES

Vision - Eyes



Oral - Mouth



Touch



Proprioception



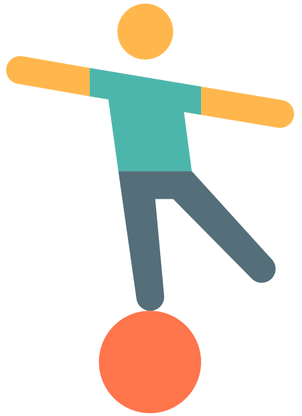
Auditory - Ears



Smell - Nose



Vestibular

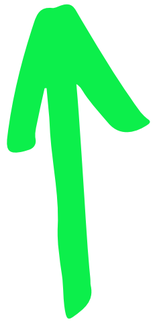


Interoception



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USE the 8 SENSES



Alert/Engage (WAKE UP)

Slow and Low
Zoned out
Sleepy or Tired
Yawning or Flopping
Daydreaming



Ground/Organize (CALM)

Amped up
Wiggly or Fidgety
Distracted
Frustrated or Confused
Worried or Anxious

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USE the 8 SENSES

Proprioception



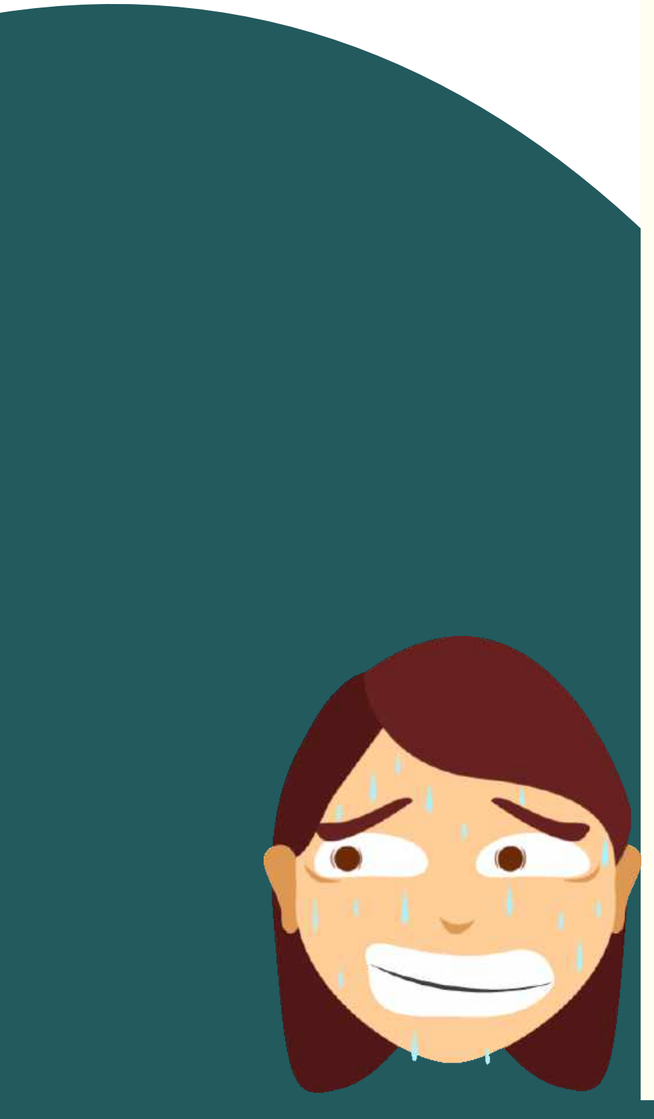
HEAVY WORK (PROPRIOCEPTIVE INPUT) **

CAN BE <u>BOTH</u>

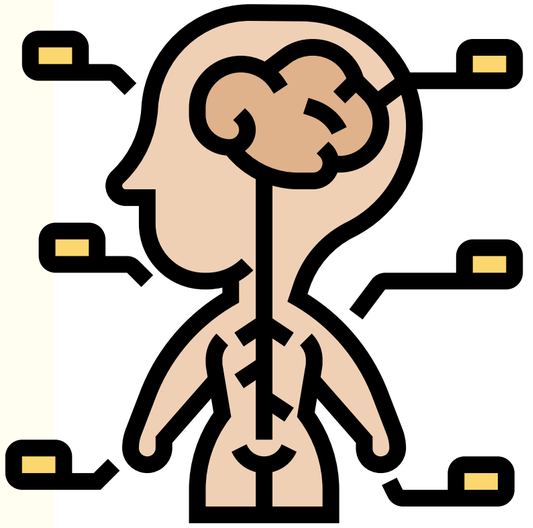
CALMING AND ALERTING!!!!

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Autonomic nervous systems (ANS) is made up of the SNS and PNS...



The sympathetic nervous system (SNS) is the “alert” system in the body (stress response).



When the SNS takes the lead for too long, you feel anxious, tired, on edge, and irritable. This is also known as the **"fight, flight, freeze response"**.

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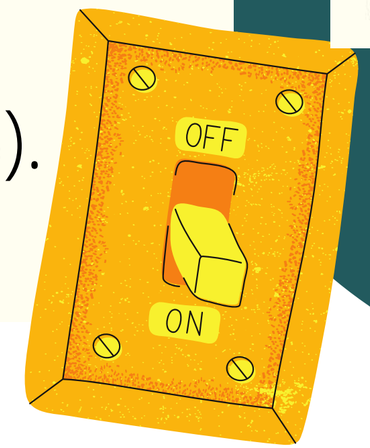
The parasympathetic nervous system (PNS), brings a sense of calm and peace to the mind and body.



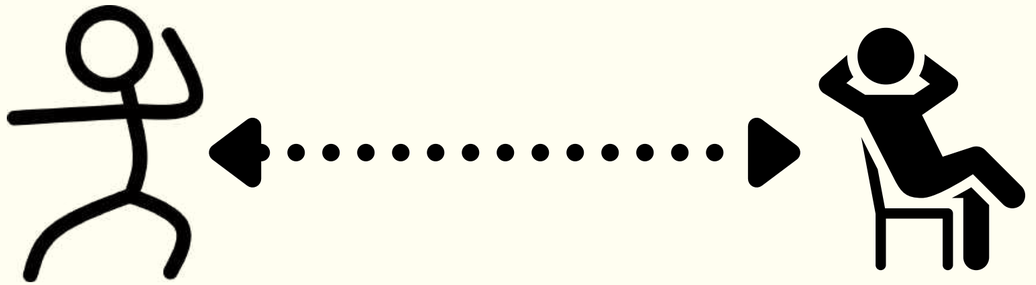
When the PNS takes over - your heart rate slows, muscles relax, and circulation improves.

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When you **apply deep pressure** to the body, the **body switches** from running its sympathetic nervous system (SNS) to its parasympathetic nervous system (PNS).



This is the so-called switch from “fight or flight” to “rest and digest”.



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* **Deep Pressure touch** is firm but gentle touch, squishing, hugs, or holding that is calming and grounding for the nervous system.

When **deep pressure** is applied to the body, the **parasympathetic nervous system is activated** which helps ***calm & ground*** you or your child.

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* **Deep pressure touch** is organizing and grounding... AND can help a child know where their body is in space - where they begin and end which can be relaxing!

This type of touch provides proprioceptive input to the entire body.



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USE the 8 SENSES

Proprioception



Heavy work / Heavy muscle work

Alert/Engage (WAKE UP)

- Push-ups
- Wall sits
- Jumping Jacks
- Shovelling
- Swimming



Ground/Organize (CALM)

- Push-ups
- Cuddle
- Hug/squeeze
- Lycra swing on Body Sox
- Yoga

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USE the 8 SENSES

Proprioception



Move & Learn (Change position)

Alert/Engage (WAKE UP)

- Stand
- Sit on ball
- Sit on moving chair
- Sit on wiggle cushion
- Jumping jacks

Ground/Organize (CALM)

- Lay on tummy
- Move away from others
- Take a break
- Sit on wiggle cushion or chair



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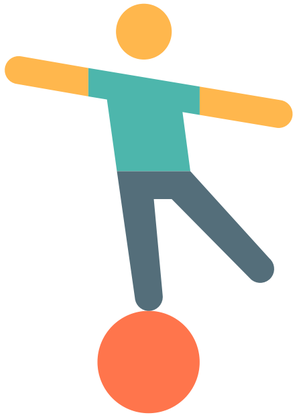




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USE the 8 SENSES

Vestibular



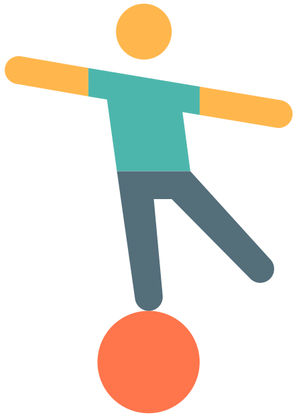
Things that will make an activity more alerting or calming:

1. **Speed** (fast vs. slow)
2. **Rhythm** (unpredictable vs. rhythmic)
   e.g. Metronome, counting
3. **Structure** (unstructured vs. repetitive)
4. **Direction** (multi-direction vs. linear)

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USE the 8 SENSES

Vestibular



Ways to Move:

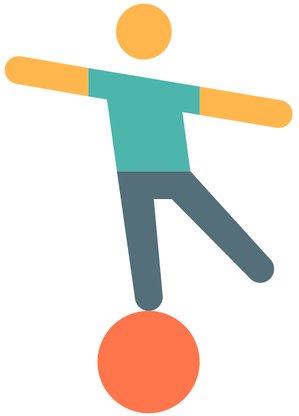
- Up & Down
- Front & Back
- Upside Down
- Circles *
- Crash & Bump

* NOTE: All unstructured movement can become overstimulating.
* Circles/spinning can quickly make a child overstimulated - check for flushed cheeks or dysregulation/overwhelm

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USE the 8 SENSES

Vestibular



Alert/Engage (WAKE UP)

- Up & Down (e.g. jumping; trampoline)
- Back & Forth (e.g. swing)
- Continuous (e.g. treadmill)

Ground/Organize (CALM)

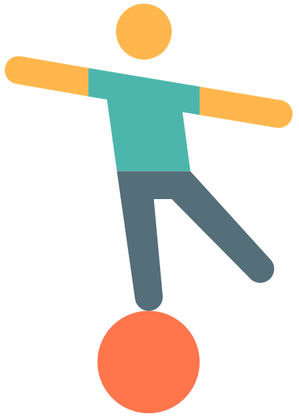
- Back & Forth (e.g. rocking chair, hammock)
- Rhythmic (e.g. bounce basketball, shoot pucks)
- Walk away (retreat)

NOTE: Any vestibular input (e.g. up/down or back/forth can quickly become dysregulating!) Watch closely!

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USE the 8 SENSES

Vestibular



Alert/Engage (WAKE UP)

- Up & Down (e.g. jumping; trampoline)
- Back & Forth (e.g. swing)
- Continuous (e.g. treadmill)

Ground/Organize (CALM)

- Back & Forth (e.g. rocking chair, hammock)
- Rhythmic (e.g. bounce basketball, shoot pucks)
- Walk away (retreat)

NOTE: Any vestibular input (e.g. up/down or back/forth can quickly become dysregulating!) Watch closely!

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USE the 8 SENSES

Vision - Eyes



Alert/Engage (WAKE UP/FOCUS)

- Visual schedule
- Bright lights
- Mandalynth
- Visual "fidgets”
  - Rainbow ball



Ground/Organize (CALM)



- Visual schedule
- Natural lights
- Visual toys
- Visual timer
- Puzzles, Maze Ball, "Where's Waldo"

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USE the 8 SENSES

Oral - Mouth



Alert/Engage (WAKE UP)

- Crunchy snacks
- Chewy snacks
- Spicy or sour foods
- Cold drinks/food
- Chewlery
- Gum
- Vibrating toothbrush

Ground/Organize (CALM)

- Crunchy snacks
- Chewy snacks
- Drinking from a straw
- Warm drinks/food
- Chewlery
- Deep breathing
- Blowing bubbles

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USE the 8 SENSES

Touch



Alert/Engage (WAKE UP)

- Light touch (e.g. tickles, feather)
- Hand fidgets (textures)
- Hands on activities (Lego, crafts, beads)
- Theraband

Ground/Organize (CALM)

- Firm, deep pressure
- Weight (e.g. lap weight)
- Hand fidgets (soft, smooth)
- Stroking a pet
- Cuddle a stuffy

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USE the 8 SENSES

Auditory - Ears



Alert/Engage (WAKE UP)

- Upbeat music
- Variable rhythms/beats
- Bells/buzzers
- Different voices
  - Robot, silly, interesting, surprise

Ground/Organize (CALM)

- Slow, quiet music
- Drumming (steady beat)
- Headphones
- Quiet place to retreat
- Stop talking (silence)
- Change voice (tone/style)

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USE the 8 SENSES

Smell - Nose



Alert/Engage (WAKE UP)

- Scents like:
  - Orange
  - Peppermint
  - Lemon
- Scented markers

Ground/Organize (CALM)

- Scents like:
  - Wood/earthy oils
  - Lavender (if not too sensitive
- Natural (e.g. cedar)
- UNSCENTED products

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USE the 8 SENSES

Interoception



Alert/Engage (WAKE UP)

- Regular routine
- Build in "quiet time"
- Notice cues
- Pause
- Breathing activities

Ground/Organize (CALM)

- Regular routine
- Build in "quiet time"
- Breathing activities
- Mindfulness & "noticing"

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4. RE-ENTER

the world regulated and ready
with the support & confidence needed

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Using at least ONE of the following:



1. Repair (relationships)
2. Relate (connect, re-assure)
3. Return (just go back)
4. Reason (make a plan for next time)
5. Reflect (as the adults, be curious about triggers and future shifts for success)

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LAST...

Review of strategies to help & support

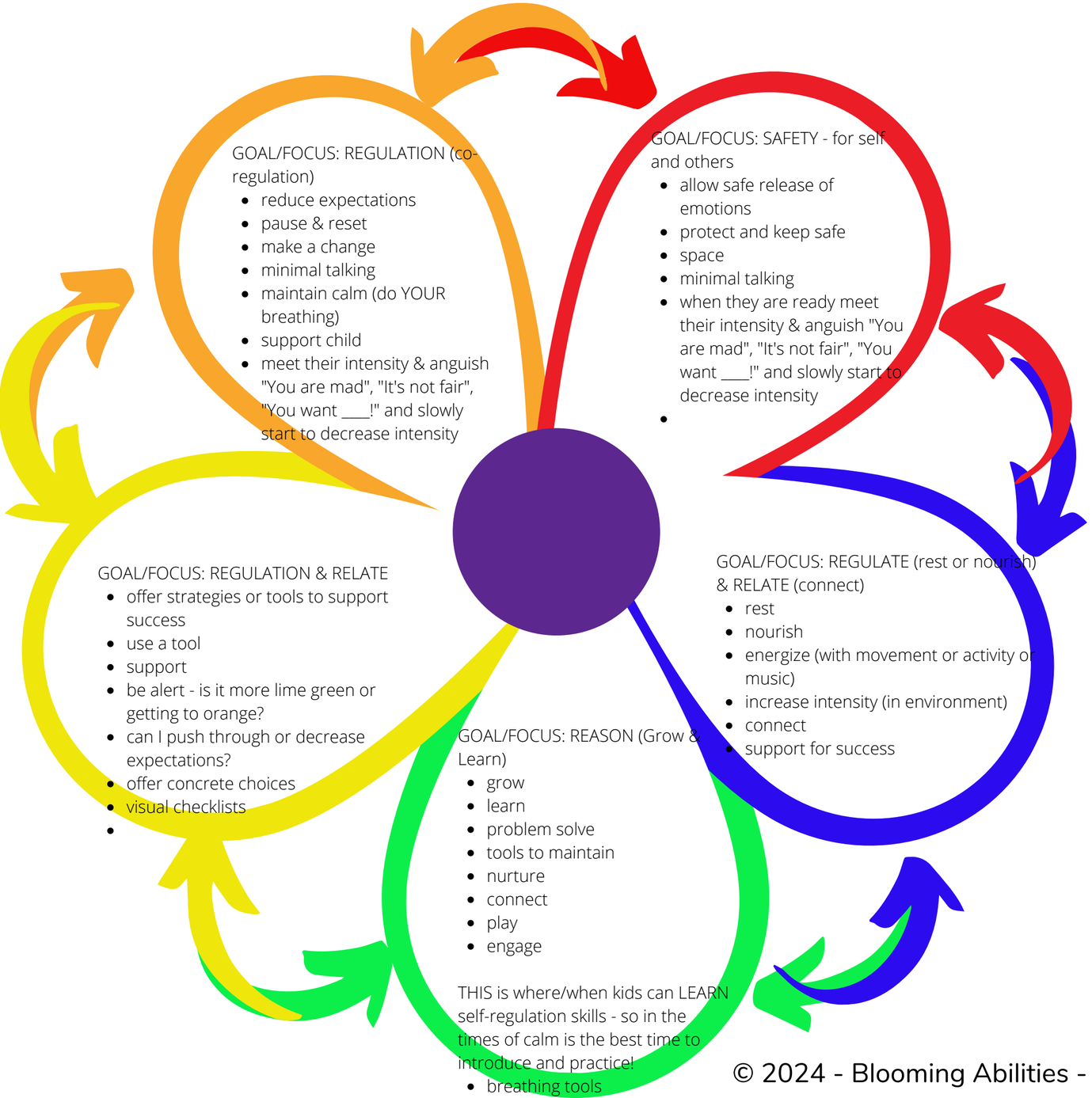
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4R's of Emotional Explorers:



1. **Recognize** emotions (and name)
2. **Respond** to emotions
3. **Release** emotions safely & **Regulate** big emotions and come back to a place of being calm & grounded
4. **Re-enter** "the world" through at least one of the following.
    - compassionate **return**,
    - **repair** relationships,
    - **reason** and problem solve for next time,
    - **relate** and support safety, connection, belonging and love OR
    - **reflect** on the deeper root for the emotions

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Ideas to help & support the child in each emotion...

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GOAL/FOCUS:

REASON (Grow & Learn)

- grow
- learn
- problem solve
- tools to maintain
- nurture
- connect
- play
- engage

THIS is where/when kids can LEARN self-regulation skills - so in the times of calm is the best time to introduce and practice!
breathing tools
body tools
brain/thinking tools
believe/mindfulness tools

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MAINTAIN "GREEN" –

USE the 8 SENSES

Vision - Eyes



- visual schedule
- checklists

Oral - Mouth



- crunchy/chewy snacks
- water bottle

Touch



- deep pressure
- fidget (listening tools)

Proprioception



- heavy work tasks
- lay on tummy

Auditory - Ears



- white noise
- quiet, calming music

Smell - Nose



- unscented products

Vestibular



- mobile seating
- movement breaks

Interoception



- pause & notice
- breathing

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MAINTAIN "GREEN" – USE ENVIRONMENT

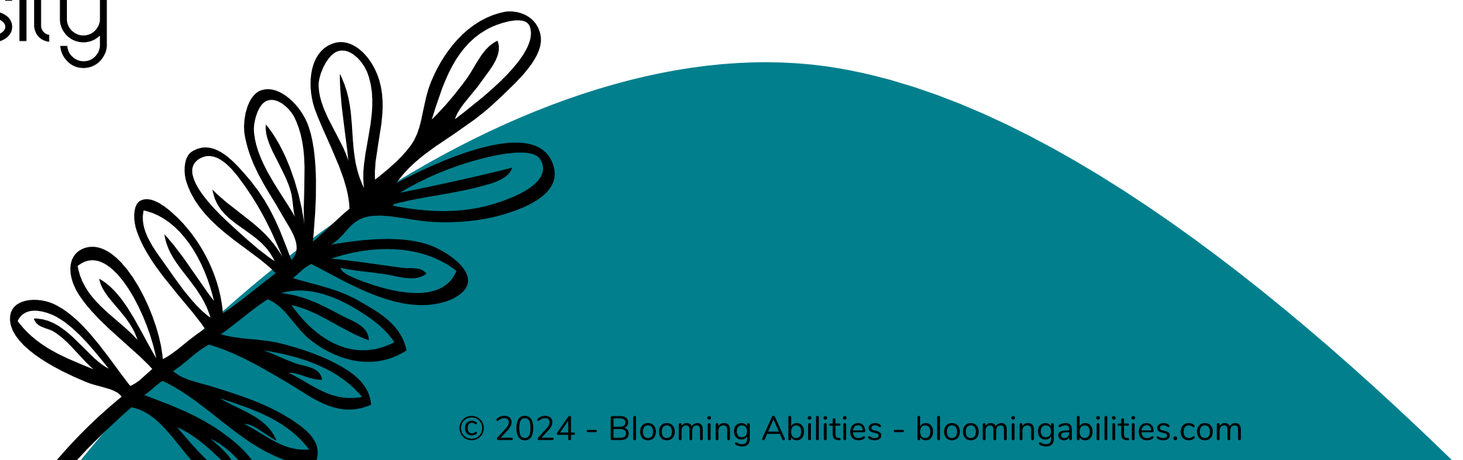
- "stabilizing" routines
- boundaries
- clear expectations
- encouragement
- positive feedback / praise
- positive reinforcement
- visual schedules, timers...

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EXPLORE SHIFTING... THE SIZE OF THE WAVE

- Frequency
- Duration
- Intensity

... of the big emotions



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HOW TO SHIFT?

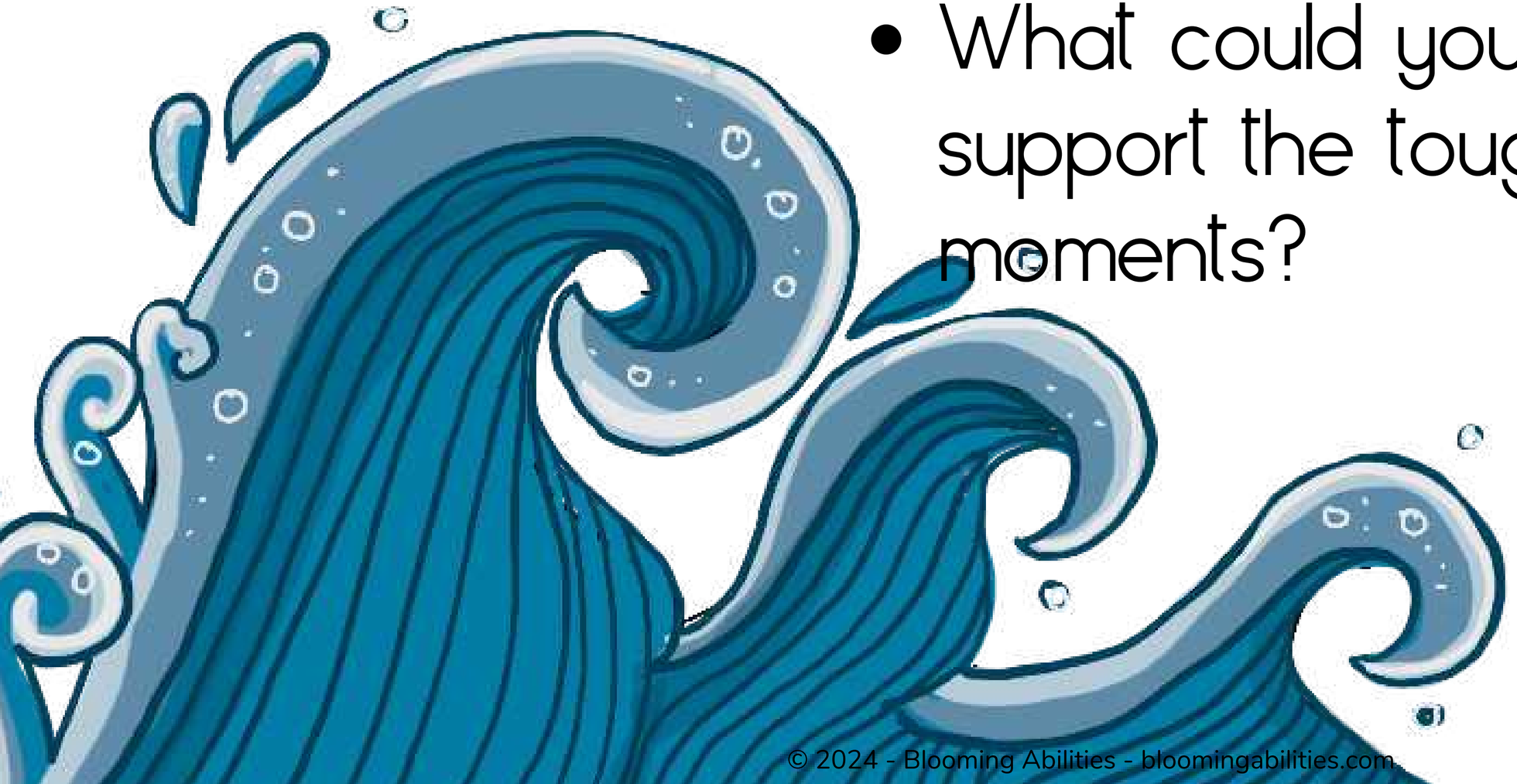
... 4 WAYS to SHIFT

1. Proactive
2. Shift Your Response
3. Ride the Wave
4. Explore & Teach New Ways and build new neuropathways /patterns/habits

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PROACTIVE

- Look for a pattern
- What could you change to support the tough times/ moments?



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PROACTIVE –

USE the 8 SENSES

Vision - Eyes



Oral - Mouth



Touch



Proprioception



Auditory - Ears



Smell - Nose



Vestibular



Interoception



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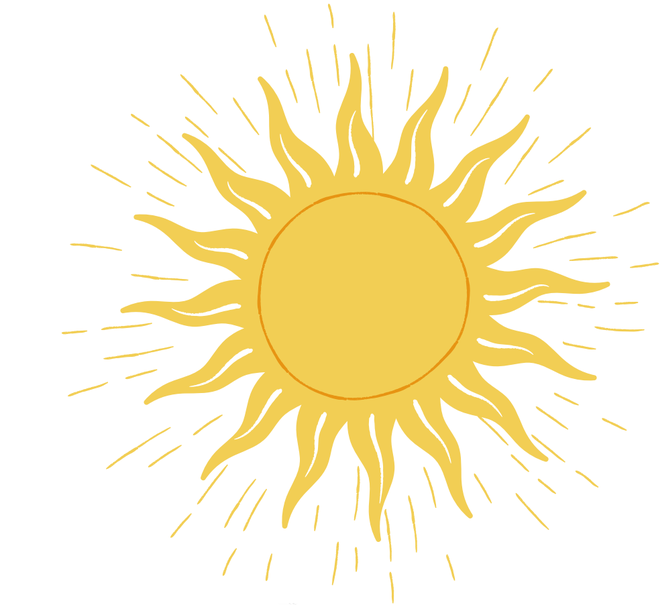


SHIFT RESPONSE

- Stay with it rest on your board
- What happens if you pause?
- What happens if you help?
- What might happen if change your reaction?

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RIDE THE WAVE



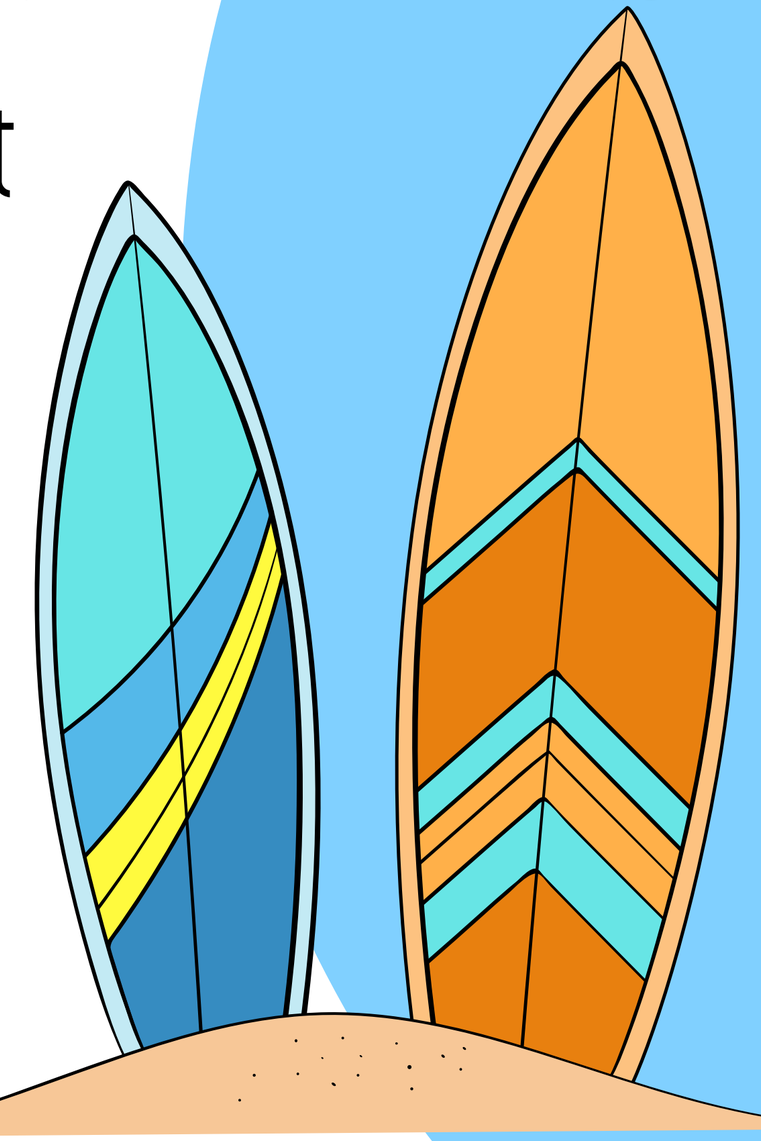


- Take care of YOU and YOUR emotions
- Breathe
- Take a break
- "This too shall pass"
- Be curious - recognize
- Respond - Name & Meet them where they are

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EXPLORE (&TEACH) NEW WAYS

- A growth mindset is the belief that one's abilities can change and improve over time.
- Try not to be afraid.
- Practice makes progress...
- Teach & practice in times of calm



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What if you could ride the wave using...



THE 4 B'S

BREATH

BODY

BRAIN

BELIEFS

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BREATH





inhale
exhale







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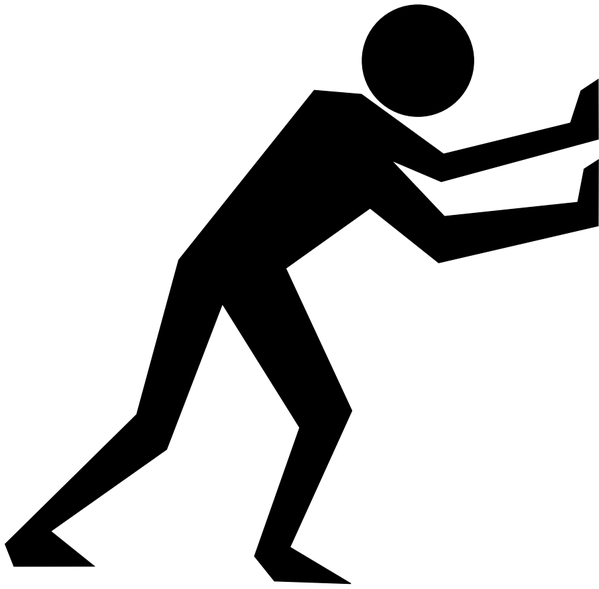
BODY

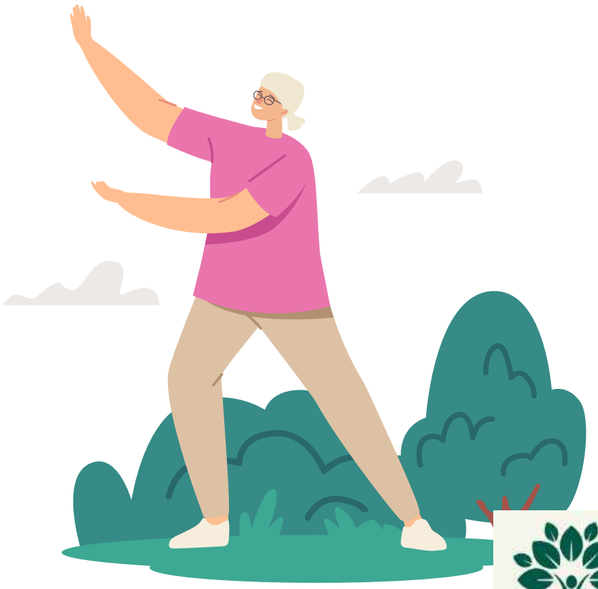












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BRAIN (mind)

- be in present moment
- mindfulness
- memories
- growth mindset
- flexibility







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BELIEFS (spirit)

- mantras
- thoughts
- expansive & spacious







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GOAL/FOCUS: REGULATION & RELATE

- offer strategies or tools to support success
- use a tool
- support
- be alert - is it more lime green or getting to orange?
- can I push through or decrease expectations?
- offer concrete choices
- visual checklists
-

GOAL/FOCUS:
REGULATE (rest or nourish) &
RELATE (connect)

- rest
- nourish
- energize (with movement or activity or music)
- increase intensity (in environment)
- connect
- support for success

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GOAL/FOCUS: REGULATION (co-regulation)

- reduce expectations
- pause & reset
- make a change
- minimal talking
- maintain calm (do YOUR breathing)
- support child
- meet their intensity & anguish "You are mad", "It's not fair", "You want ____!" and slowly start to decrease intensity

GOAL/FOCUS: SAFETY - for self and others

- allow safe release of emotions
- protect and keep safe
- space
- minimal talking
- when they are ready meet their intensity & anguish "You are mad", "It's not fair", "You want ____!" and slowly start to decrease intensity
-

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IF THE CHILD'S ONLY GOAL IS SAFETY

...from a threat, or perceived threat

or stressor!



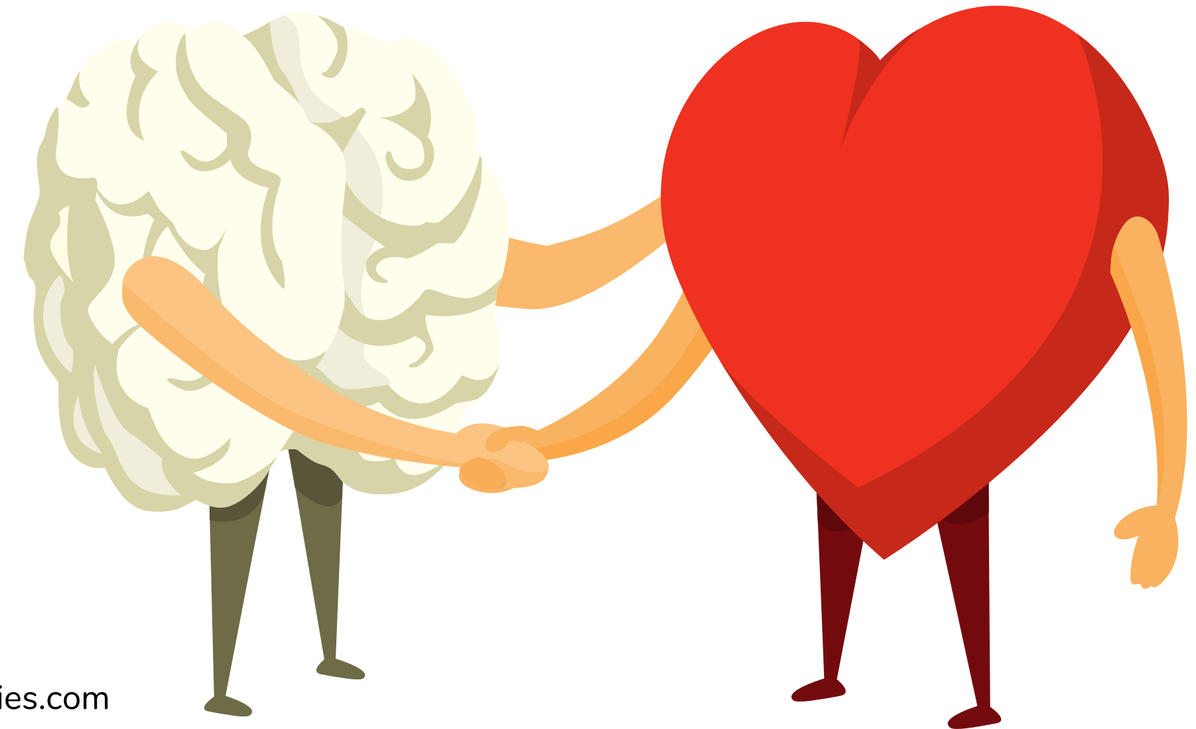
HOW DO WE CREATE SAFETY FOR OUR KIDDOS?

...LOVE, BELONGING, SECURITY

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UNTIL THE BRAIN, BODY AND HEART ARE CONNECTED

...and your child feels safe and calm again!



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Hopes & Wishes

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What's your 1 Thing?

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THANK YOU!!

How are you feeling now?

Any questions?







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