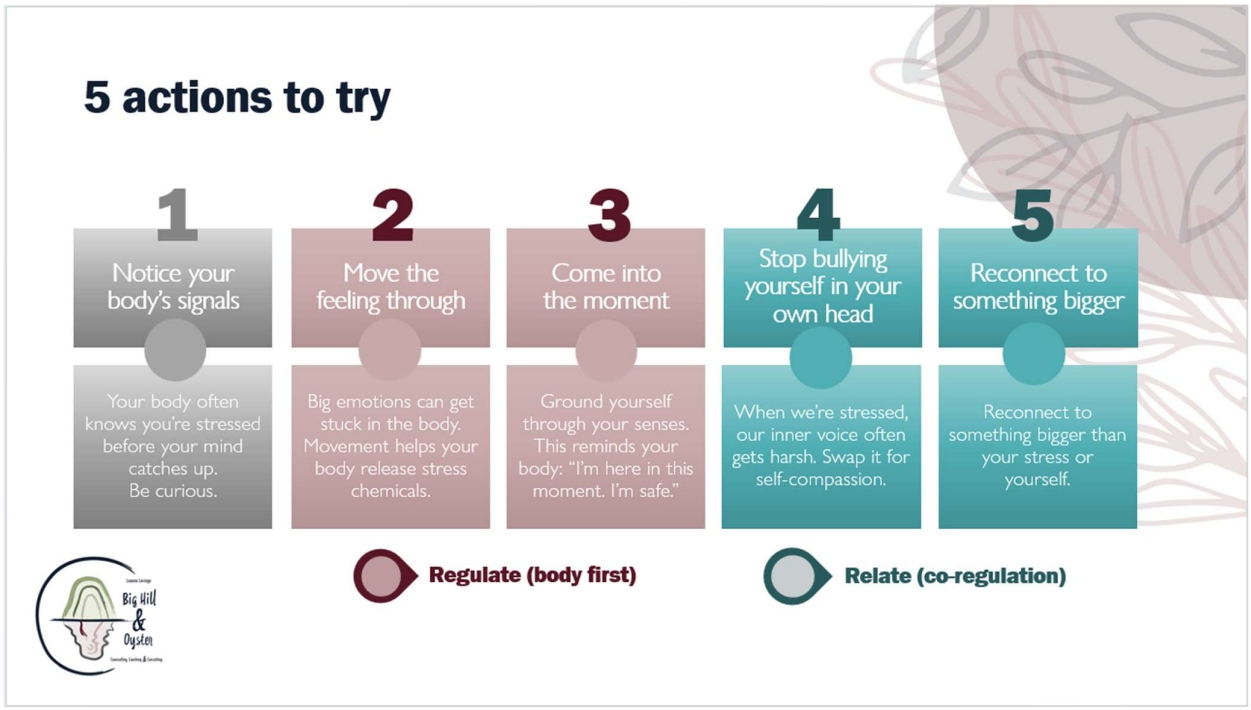
Big Hill & Oyster
Counselling, Coaching & Conversations
Explore life's big hills. Harvest oysters. Play in between.

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Queensland Youth Parliament: Staying well during QYP

When stress or discomfort is arising: 5 actions to try



Feelings are not enemies. They are signals.

They might be telling you:

- you need rest
- something matters deeply to you
- a boundary has been crossed
- you need connection
- you need support
- something in your life needs attention

Learning emotional regulation isn't about never feeling hard things.
It's about learning: **"I can survive my feelings without being controlled by them."**

Big Hill & Oyster acknowledges the Yugara/Yuggera and Turrbal Peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we are based and pay our respects to their Elders. We also pay our respects to our own Kombumerri & Ngugi Ancestors who guide us in the work we do. We honour Indigenous resistance to ongoing oppression, and we work to bridge cultural divides so we can co-create a future that is intentional and inclusive, not unconsciously inherited.

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1. Notice your body's signals

Your body often knows you're stressed before your mind catches up.

Maybe for you that looks like:

- clenched jaw
- tight shoulders
- upset stomach
- shaky hands
- wanting to cry for "no reason"
- feeling angry at everyone

Before trying to "logic" your way out of it, be curious, and ask: **"What is my body trying to tell me right now?"**

Your feelings are information, not weakness.

2. Move the feeling through

Big emotions can get stuck in the body.

Movement helps your body release stress chemicals. Sometimes the best thing you can do is:

- go for a walk
- shake out your arms (or your whole body)
- dance badly in your room (or in public)
- scream into a pillow
- put music on and move
- go to the gym / yoga
- have a cold shower

3. Come into the moment

Overthinking keeps emotions spinning. Try grounding yourself through your senses:

- hold ice
- have a hot shower
- smell something strong
- listen to music
- cook something
- pat your dog
- feeling your feet on the ground
- listening to birds, wind, water
- slow exhale breathing / straw breathing / belly breathing
- stand barefoot / lying on grass

Grounding is not about "fixing" your feelings. It's about reminding your body: **"I'm here in this moment, and I'm safe."** This allows your body to remember safety, to move out of threat, and to shift into connection.

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4. Stop bullying yourself in your own head

When we're overwhelmed, our inner voice often gets harsh:

- "Why am I like this?"
- "Get over it."
- "Everyone else handles life better."
- "I'm being ridiculous."

That voice usually makes things worse, not better.

The way you speak to yourself matters. Try swapping it for:

- "This is a hard moment."
- "I'm feeling overwhelmed right now."
- "It makes sense I'm struggling."
- "I will get through this."

5. Reconnect to something bigger

When life feels heavy, reconnect to:

- nature
- community
- spirituality / shared rituals / ceremony
- culture
- Country
- be with a safe presence / regulated person / calm voices
- relationships including family, community
- values
- purpose

Sometimes what regulates us most is remembering: **we are part of something bigger than our stress.**

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5 actions to try: My plan

1	2	3	4	5
My body's signals	My preferred movement	How I'll come into the moment	How I talk to myself	What I will reconnect to

Regulate(body first)

Relate(co-regulation)