

Self-Regulation: Gaining an Understanding



Did you know?



Did you know that Self-Regulation is *not* about controlling emotions, thoughts, and behaviour?

Self-Regulation is a process of understanding how we manage our energy in response to stress and recover from it.



Did you know that stress can be hidden *and* visible, positive *and* negative, minor *and* traumatic or toxic?

We have to become stress detectives, recognize and reduce the stressors that deplete our energy.



Do you know what helps you to restore and refuel your energy tank?

We need to reflect on what makes us feel safe, calm and recharged, and practice those activities daily.



- Reframe** behaviour by learning the difference between *misbehaviour* and *stress-behaviour* and the signs of each.
- Recognize** stressors, looking always at the totality of physical, emotional, cognitive, social, and prosocial stress and how they interact.
- Reduce** stress, addressing all five of the stress domains and not just one that may stand out.
- Reflect** on what it feels like to be calm and what it feels like to be overstressed, and when the latter, reflect on what the stressors were that led to this state.
- Respond** in a way that is not fixed on the rear-view mirror but is always forward-looking.

Adapted from Dr. Stuart Shanker's 5 Steps of Self-Reg



What is happening in the brain?



- When we are over-stressed, we lose our ability to think clearly and we become reactive rather than responsive.
- Stressors come in many forms and live in five domains/categories.
- Stress is a brain-body response to internal or external stimuli that requires us to burn energy.

Five Domains: Recognize and Reduce Stressors

Biological	Body <i>e.g. lack of sleep, lack of physical contact</i>
Emotional	Feeling <i>e.g. fear of the unknown, nervousness in new situations</i>
Cognitive	Thinking <i>e.g. lack of or too much information, learning new things</i>
Social	Getting along <i>e.g. unable to read social cues, connecting with people</i>
Prosocial	Caring for others <i>e.g. empathy, caring for others, feeling stress of other people</i>

*Amygdala – a part of the limbic system / mid-brain connected with the body's fear and stress response.