

Promoting positive behaviour and self regulation

What is regulation? (and dysregulation)



Regulation – our emotional pot

Our daily experiences fill our pot with emotions and feelings, both positive and negative.

The level of our pot is fluid – it changes as our experiences change moment to moment, day by day.

We cannot see what is in someone else's pot just by looking at it.

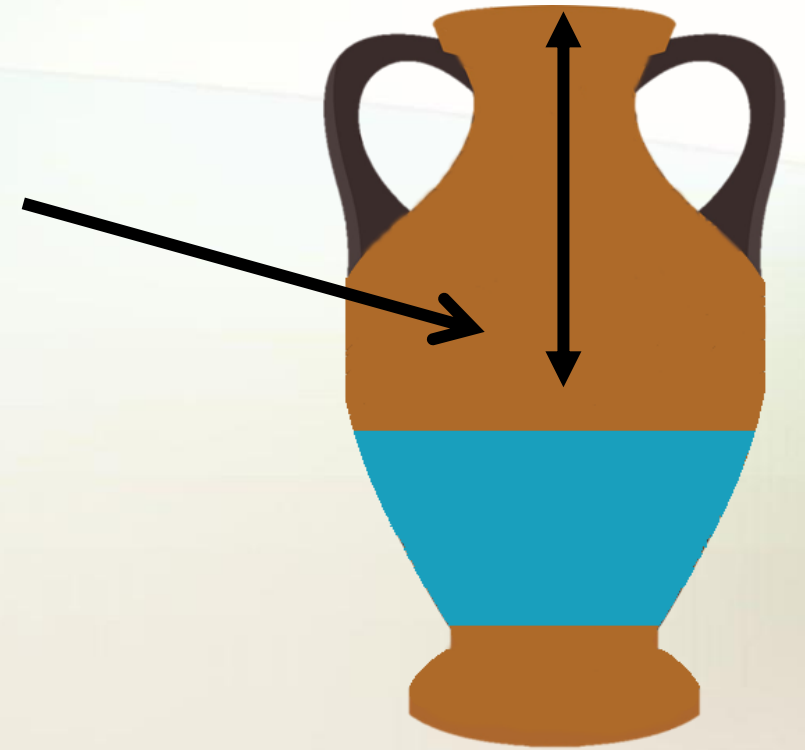


Regulation – our emotional pot

If we could open up our pot and see inside we would notice that there is an amount of space that is left between our emotions and the top of the pot.

This space can also be called our 'Window of Tolerance'

It is our ability to cope with situations - our patience, our ability to wait, to bear frustration and disappointment, to manage let downs and to think, to weigh up and make choices.



Distress

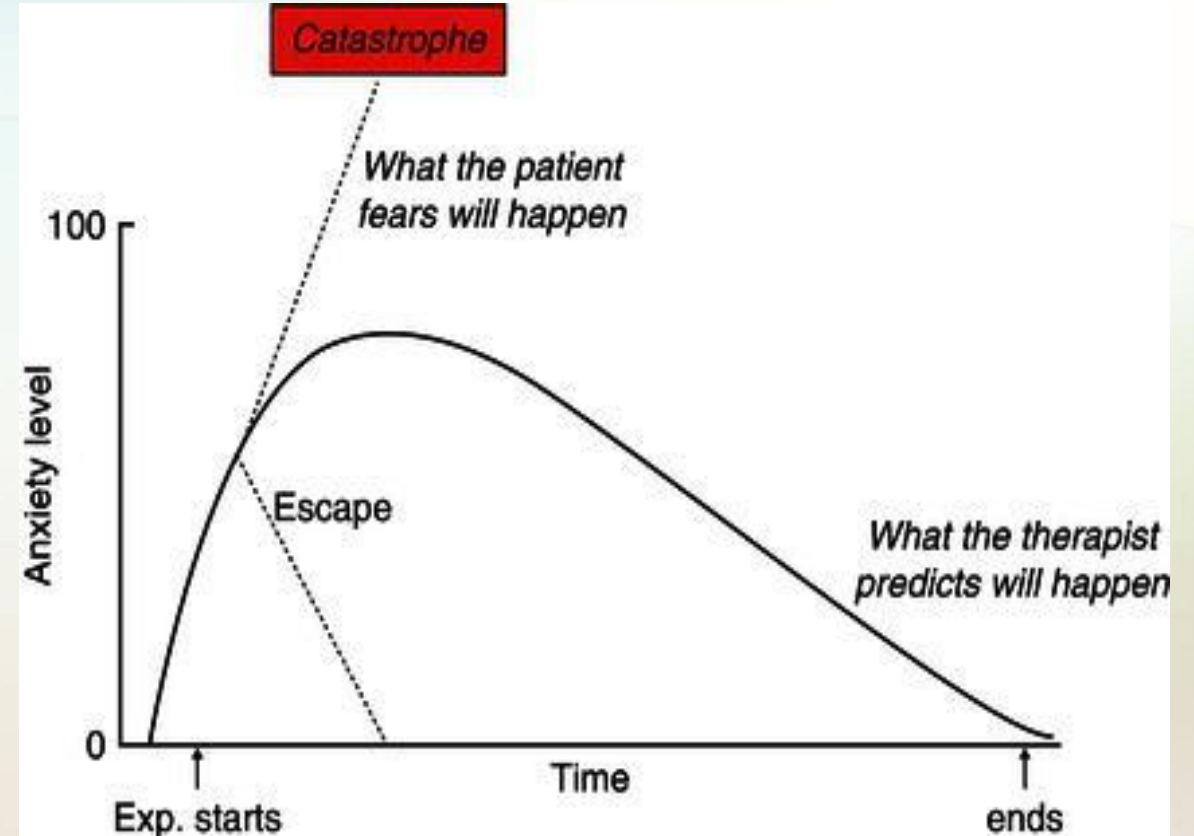
If the emotions in our pot reaches the top we are on the edge of shifting into **our survival mode (fight/flight/freeze)**

It could take just a very small thing to make our pot begin to overflow.

This is why we sometimes see really big emotional/behavioural reactions to seemingly very small (insignificant) things.



The Anxiety curve



Anxiety

What do you
think anxiety
is?

Anxiety is a feeling of
unease, such as worry or
fear, that can be mild or
severe.

Everyone experiences it

It is normal

What might make your children feel anxious?

- Going to school
- Transitions within school
- Separating from you
- Social times of school
- Getting something wrong
- Something within the environment (sensory)
- COVID

What might that anxiety look like?

- Being tearful or clingy
- Not sleeping well
- Finding it hard to concentrate
- Changes in behaviour
- 'Outbursts' of emotion
- Masking feelings
- Not wanting to do things
- Increase in seeking comfort
- Not wanting to do things

Is there anything else you've seen your children do that you think might indicate that they are feeling anxious?

What can we do?

- Don't panic!
- Talk to your children
- Normalise their worries
- Remember the anxiety curve
- Be attuned with your children
- Work with your child to find what helps
- Communicate with school

- Keep a good routine, particularly with sleep
- Help them do the daily things we know are important
- Exercise, eating for your health, drinking water and being surrounded by loved ones
- Spending quality time together
- Talk about what is good

ELEPHANT BREATHING



Stand with your feet wide apart and your arms dangling in front of your body like an elephant's trunk. As you breathe in deeply through your nose, raise your arms up high above your head. Then slowly swing your arms down again as you breathe out through your mouth.

BUBBLE BREATHING



Sit comfortably with your eyes closed. Begin by imagining you are holding a bubble wand. Breathe in deeply and then, as you breathe out slowly and gently, imagine you are blowing bubbles into the room. Imagine the bubbles are filled with peace or love or happiness and that you are filling the whole room with a peaceful, happy feeling. As you keep breathing slowly and blowing your imaginary bubbles, feel your body become calm and relaxed.

Worry time.



Can we tell people not to worry?

Of course not!

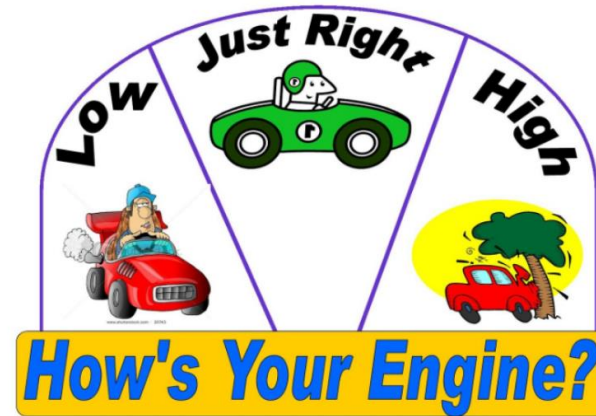
But we can help structure worrying.



Worry Box and Worry Time can support young people to manage their worries and help you manage them too.

AROUSAL LEVEL & BEHAVIOUR

○ The Cup Effect:



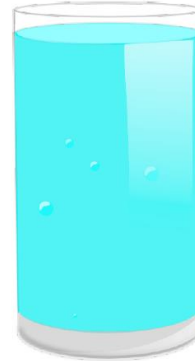
Example of child who: is over-sensitive to noise, touch and under-sensitive to muscle input



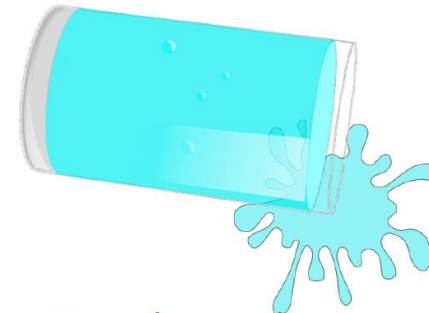
Good
night's
sleep



Upset getting
dressed,
noisy bus
ride



Busy lunch hall,
didn't like
food, lining up
and busy
playground



Teacher asks
child to get
coat....
MELTDOWN

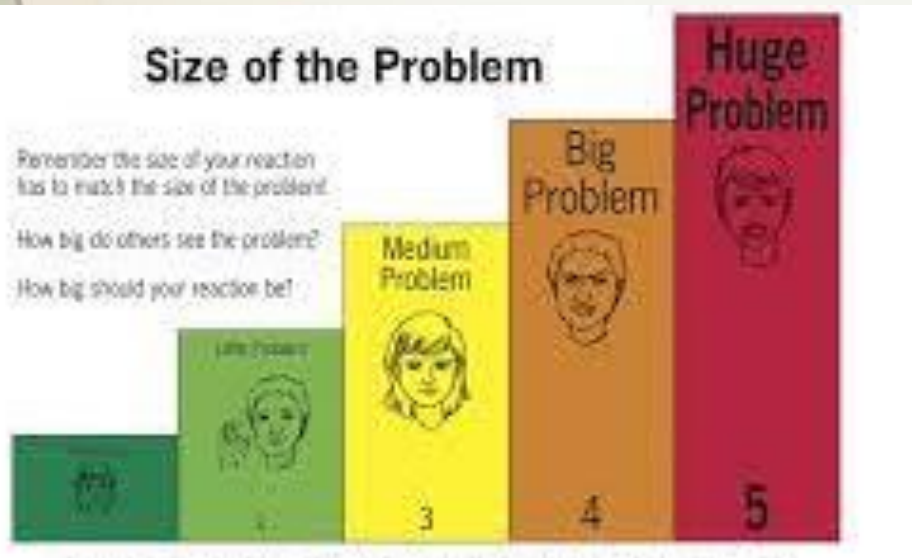


What can we do?

- Reasonable adjustments in the classroom (and at home) are often enough to support the needs of the majority (give examples)
- Some children may need more regular and specific support – e.g. sensory diet, ear defenders
- Also important to consider underlying anxiety and what may support with that

In school we use - Zones of Regulation

- A curriculum used in many contexts to encourage self-regulation and wellbeing
- Self-regulation means a child can help themselves – either proactively to stop them coming out of their window of tolerance, or reactively to help themselves calm down or move into a more regulated space.
- The zones of regulation 'size of the problem' teaches children to consider the size of their problem in contrast to the size of their reaction. It is an emotional regulation tool that can guide children to self regulate their emotions, in order to respond appropriately.



| Size of the Problem | | What to do |
|---------------------|--------|---|
| 5 | HUGE | CALL 000 Get an adult NOW |
| 4 | BIG | Get an adult. |
| 3 | Medium | Stop. Think. Try to fix it. Ask for help. |
| 2 | Small | Think. Fix yourself. |
| 1 | tiny | Let it go. |

Rewards at home

- What rewards do you use at home and work?