

Promoting Self-Regulation in Adolescents with a Tier 1 Program Integrating Mindfulness and Cognitive Behavioral Skills Training: Strategies to Take With You



Advancing School Mental Health Conference
November 9, 2019

Rachel Mills-Brantley, MSW, LCSW
Desiree W. Murray, PhD

Acknowledgements

UNC Research Team

Desiree W. Murray, PI

Rachel Mills-Brantley, Intervention
Specialist/Teacher Trainer & Coach

Jill Hamm, Co-PI

Karen Bluth, Mindfulness Consultant

Alyson Cavanaugh, Project Manager

Leslie Babinski, Co-PI (Duke)

Consultants

John Lochman

Patricia Broderick

Caroline Boxmeyer

Nicole Powell

Catherine Bradshaw

Shari Miller

Disclosure

Support for this project is provided by the Institute of Education Sciences (R305A170172)

The contents of this presentation are those of the authors and do not represent views or policies of the IES



Objectives

At the end of this training, participants will be able to:

1. Explain how stress can negatively affect self-regulation in adolescents.
2. Identify at least two features of the Be CALM program's design and approach that support self-regulation development in adolescents.
3. Practice three mindfulness strategies to teach adolescents to manage their stress.

Agenda

Norms for Participation & Warm-Up Exercise

Adolescent Stress and Self-Regulation

The Be CALM Program

Exploring Mindfulness

Questions & Closing

When you see this star,



it means this is an activity or material from the
Be CALM Curriculum.



Norms for Participation

As we try new things, I will...



Notice when I am feeling uncomfortable and **Press the Pause**. Take a deep breath.



Tune In my full attention to what I am learning and doing in this moment.



Check It Out by being curious and having an open mind about what is happening, like a scientist. Be open and willing to try new things.



Be Kind to myself and others.

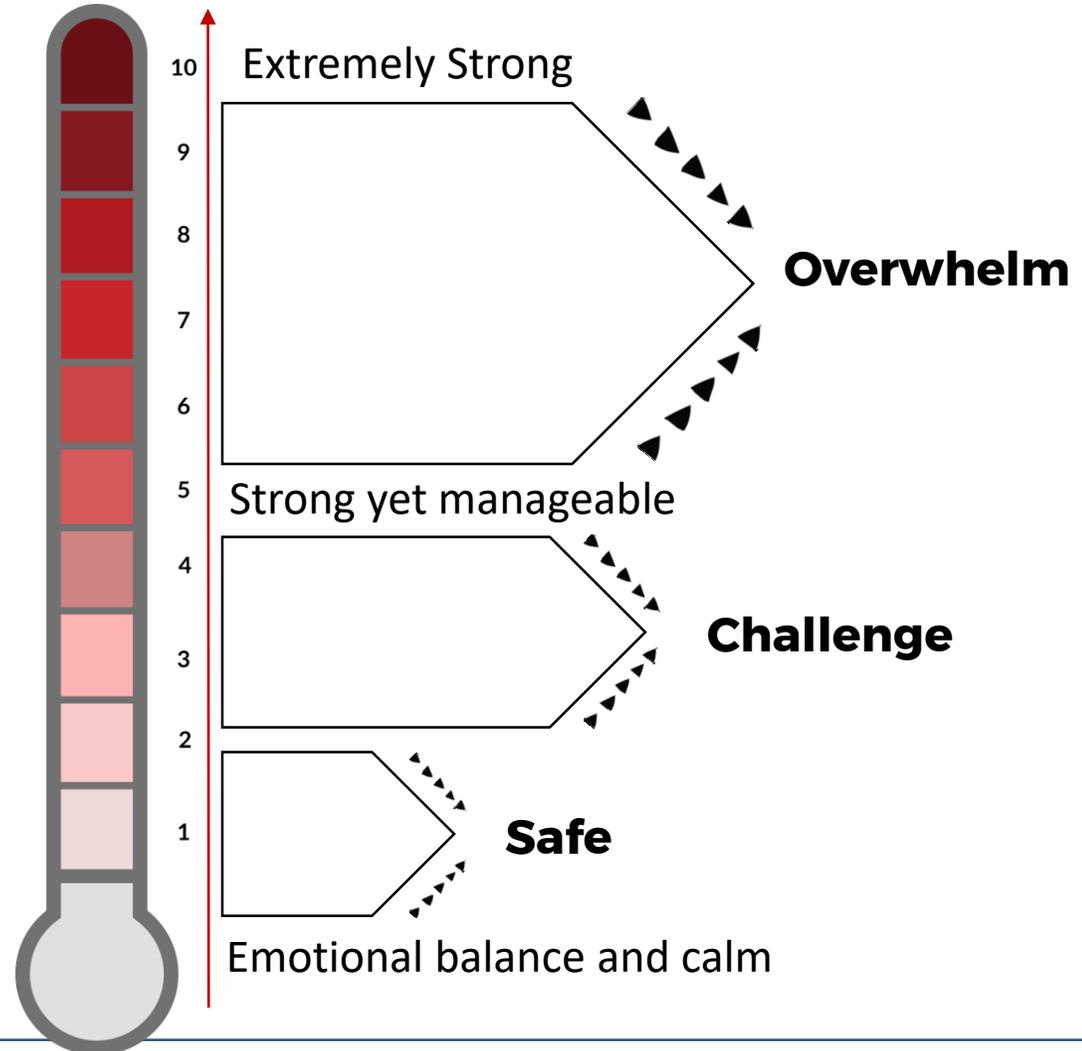
Be Mindful of your own Thermometer

Guidelines for Safe Practice

1. Invite participation
2. Option to lower gaze (vs. eyes closed)
3. Keep light on
4. Option to stop participating in practice at anytime

Overwhelm → Challenge → Safe

1. Stop - open your eyes or lift your gaze
2. Orient self to space - What do you see? What do you hear? Feel your feet. Feel the desk.
3. Orient self to time - What time is it? What day of the week is it?



Adolescent Development



Mindful Speaking and Listening

“What were you like in middle school?”

“What did you need in middle school?”





ACTIVITY:
Middle School Experience



What insight did this activity give you about adolescents' strengths, needs, and development?

What insight did it give you about approaching and responding to adolescents?

Key Intervention Opportunities in Early Adolescence

Dramatic brain changes

Opportunity to build neural connections for lifelong emotional balance

Reward sensitivity is high

Motivates seeking new experiences; opportunity to encourage “healthy risk”

Peers have a powerful influence

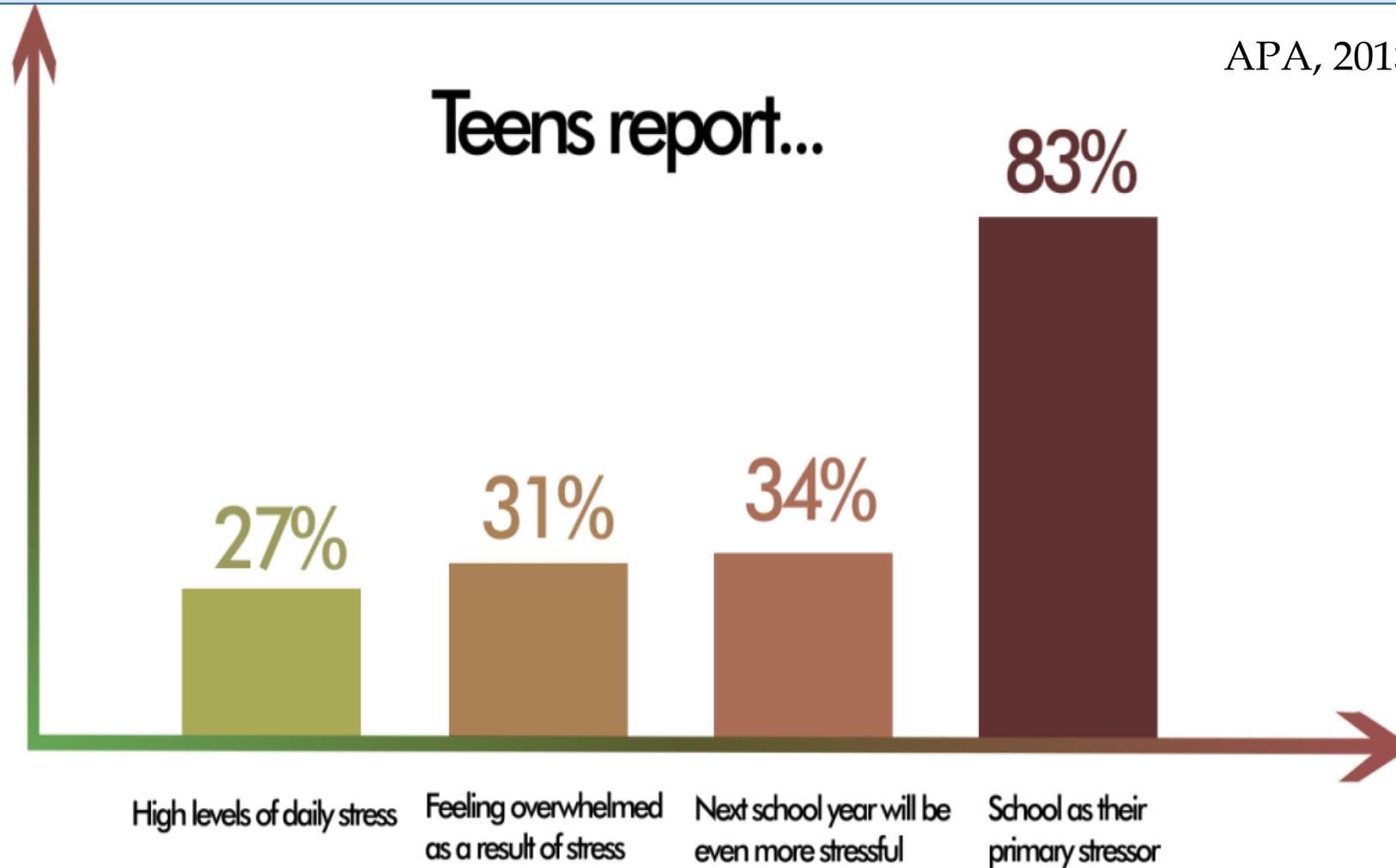
Opportunity to leverage positive influence and shift classroom norms



Stress in Adolescence

Stress in Teens

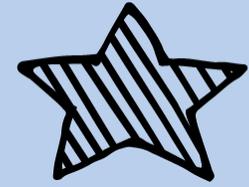
APA, 2013



Stress can be Healthy

Stress can motivate students, teach problem-solving, and build coping skills





Be CALM
Feeling
Thermometer

How are you feeling?

How strong is your feeling?



10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1



Extremely Strong

Strong yet manageable

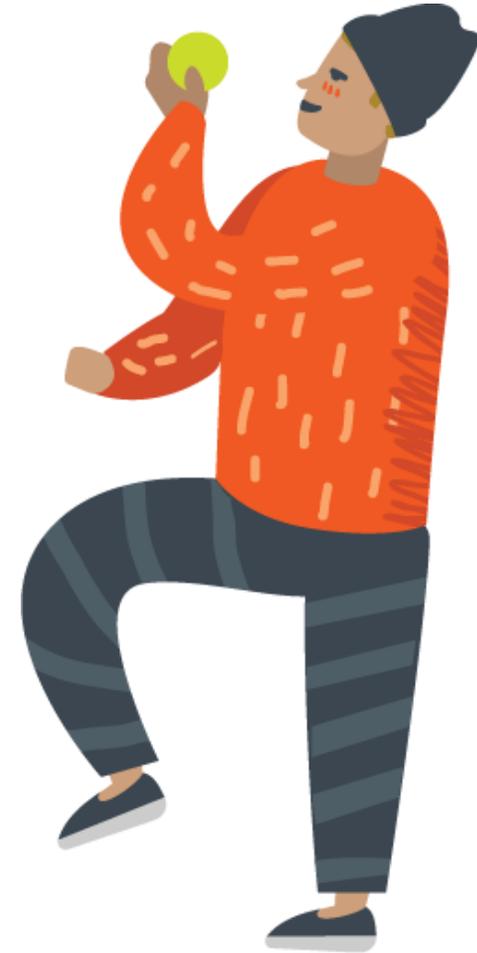
Emotional balance & calm

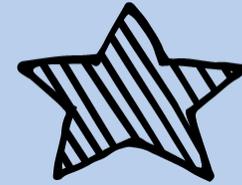


ACTIVITY: How Much Can You Handle?



1. Tap your right foot; keep it going.
2. Using your left hand, throw the ball up in the air and catch it as you tap your right foot.
3. Start bending to the front and to the back, as you tap your right foot and throw the ball in the air with your left hand.
4. Keep everything going!
5. Swing your right arm in circles. Keep bending and tapping.
6. Now begin to count backward from one hundred by twos as you swing, bend, and tap.

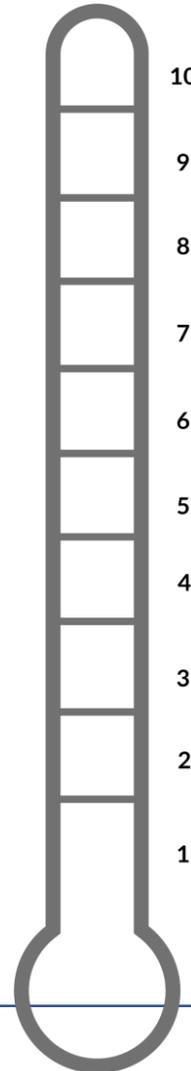




Be CALM
Feeling
Thermometer

How are you feeling?

How strong is your feeling?



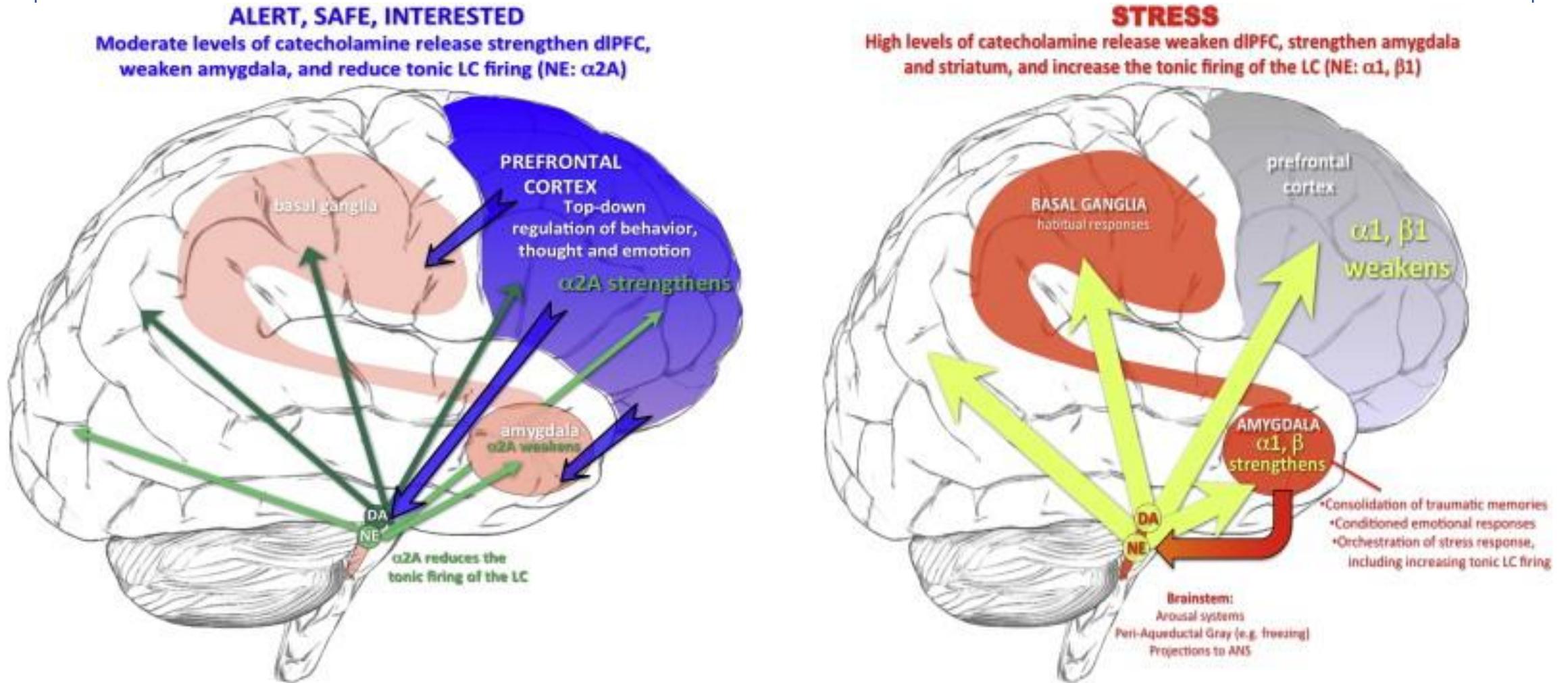
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1

Extremely Strong

Strong yet manageable

Emotional balance & calm

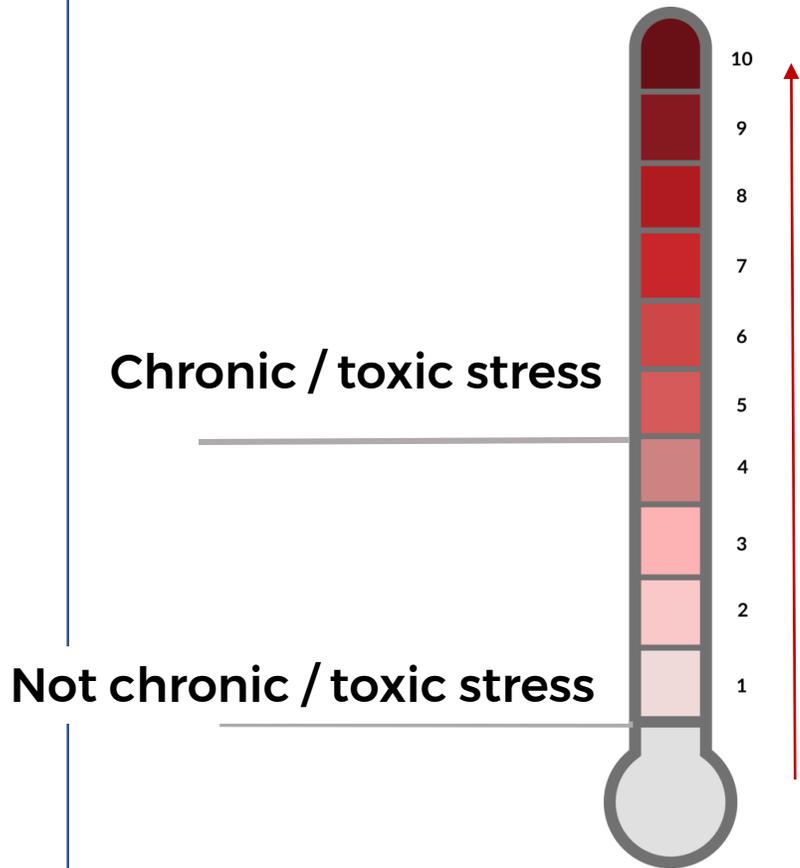
Stress Interferes with Self-Regulation



Operating Temperatures & Stress

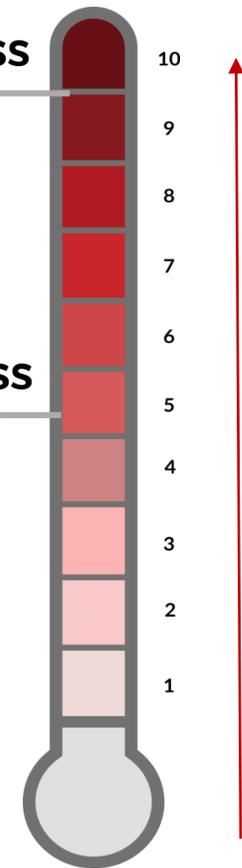
Typical Operating Temperatures

Reaction to Acute Stressor:
Fight, Flight, or Freeze



Chronic / toxic stress

Not chronic / toxic stress

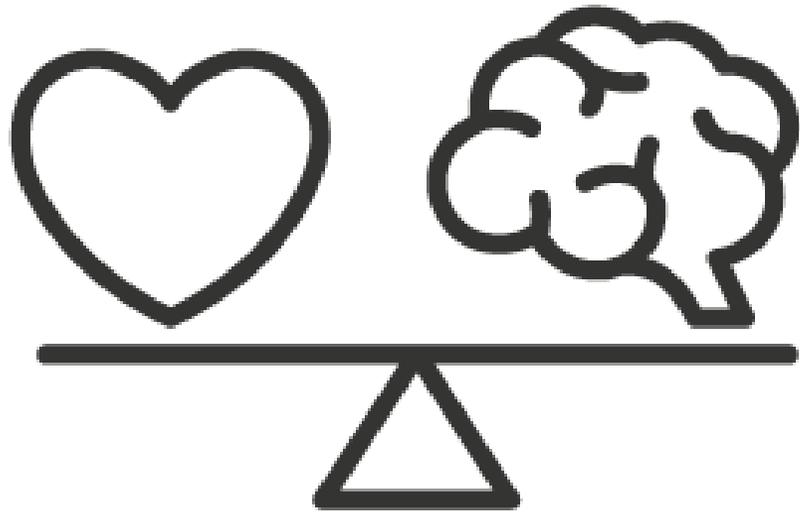


Finger Breathing Exercise



Self-Regulation in Adolescence

Self-Regulation Occurs when the Thinking Brain and Emotion Response Systems are Balanced



Self-regulation is managing our thoughts and feelings to support resilience in the face of stress and achieve goals aligned with our values.

Self-Regulation Skills Developing in Adolescents

Cognitive

Goal-setting and commitment
Future orientation
Planning and organization to achieve goals
Self-monitoring
Perspective-taking
Complex problem-solving

Emotional

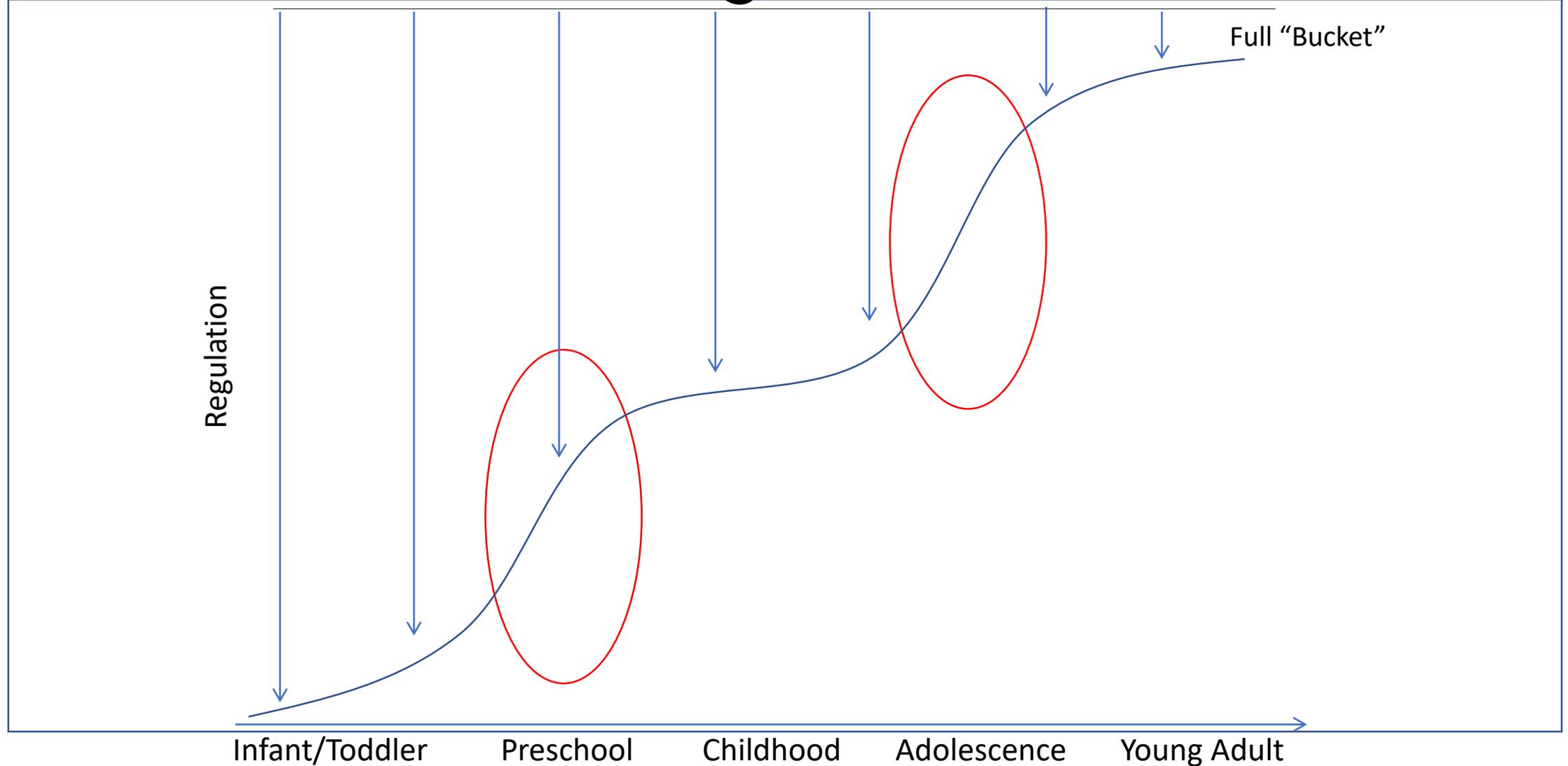
Recognizing and accepting emotions
Tolerating distress



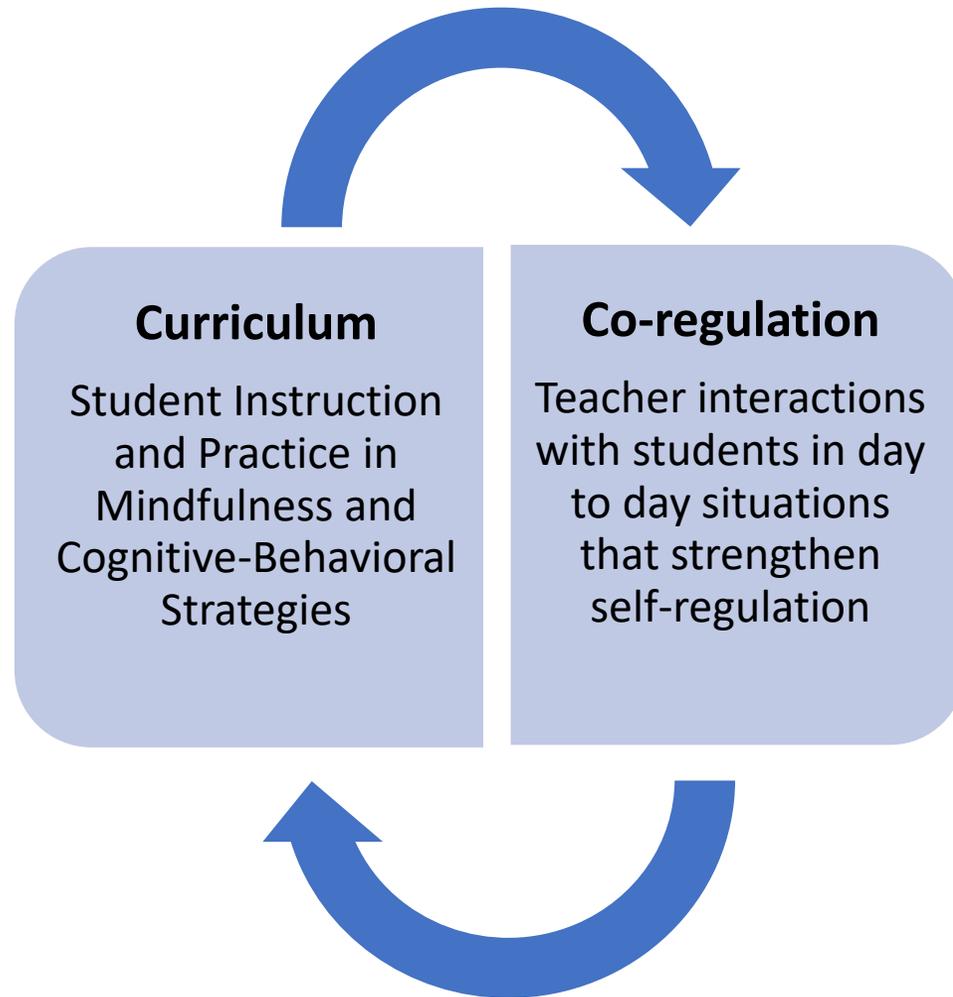
Behavioral

Delay of gratification and persistence towards long-term goals
Using healthy coping strategies to manage stress
Making decisions that align with values and reflect concern for others

Adolescents need Caring Adults to fill their Self-Regulation Buckets



Be CALM Approach

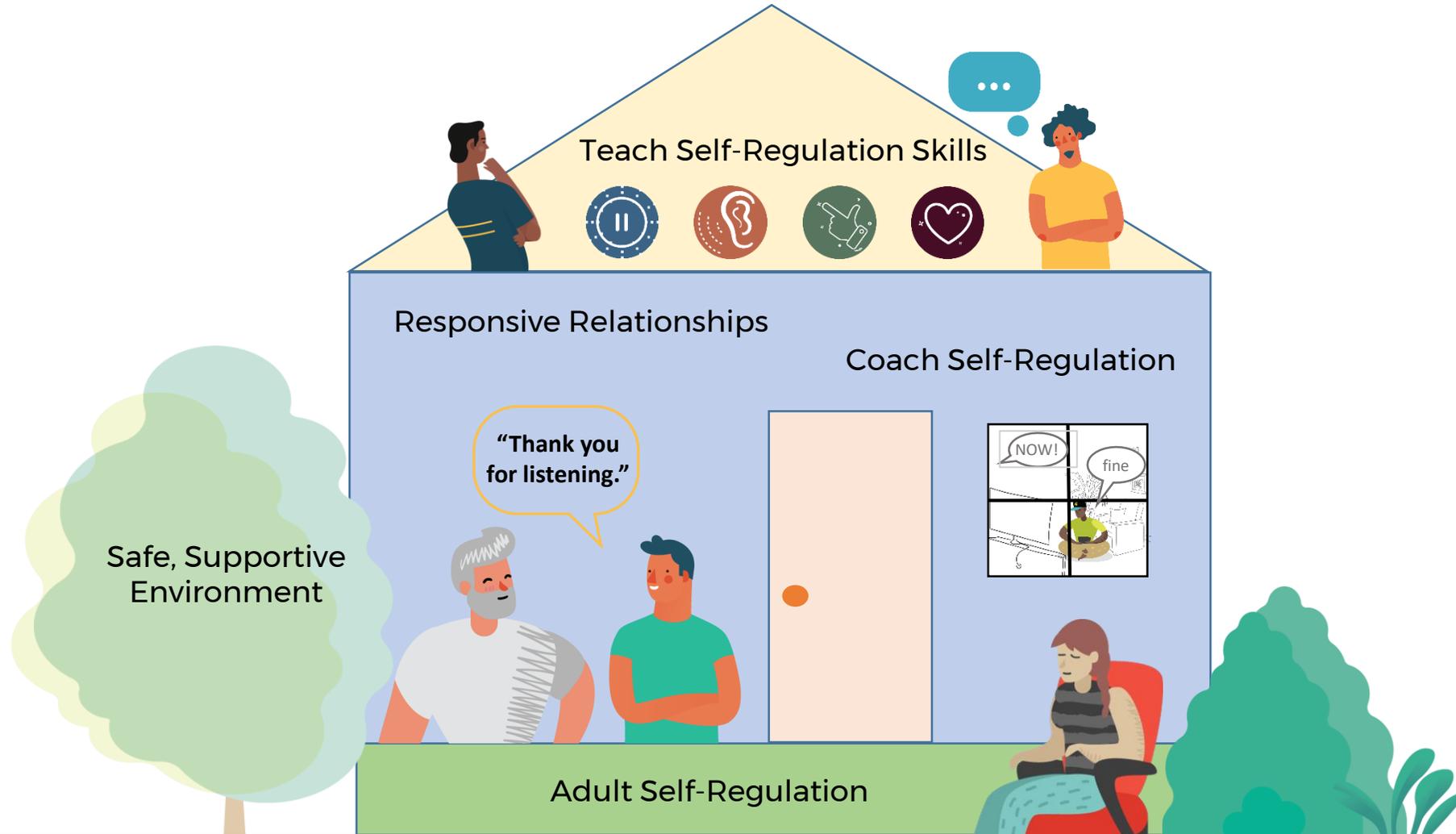


Strong professional development to support teachers' co-regulation practices and personal stress management and self-care

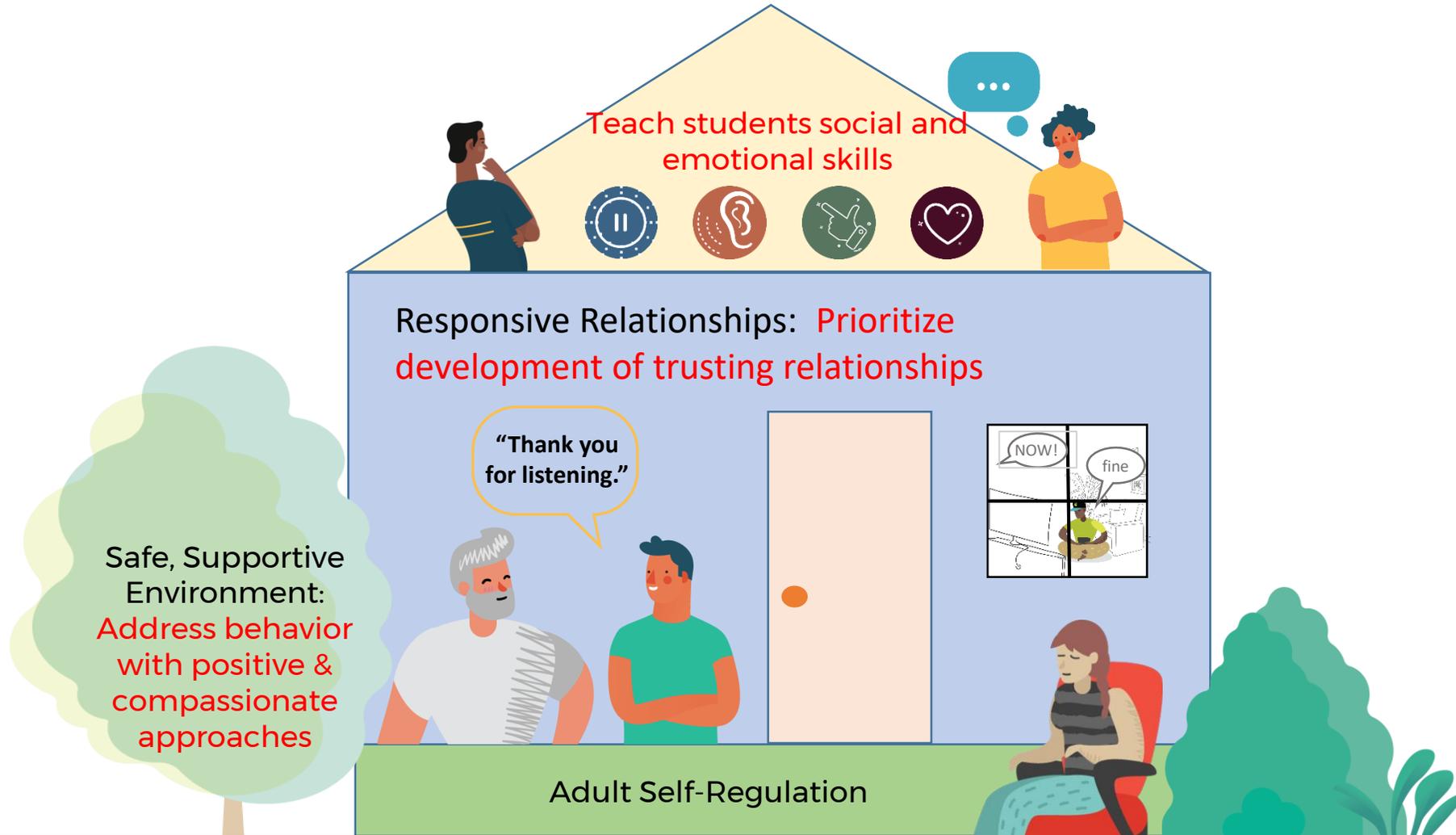
Skills instruction for students through delivery of 12 session curriculum and self-regulation coaching

Student support staff involvement to support those students who need extra practice and individualization

CO-REGULATION as a framework for supporting students

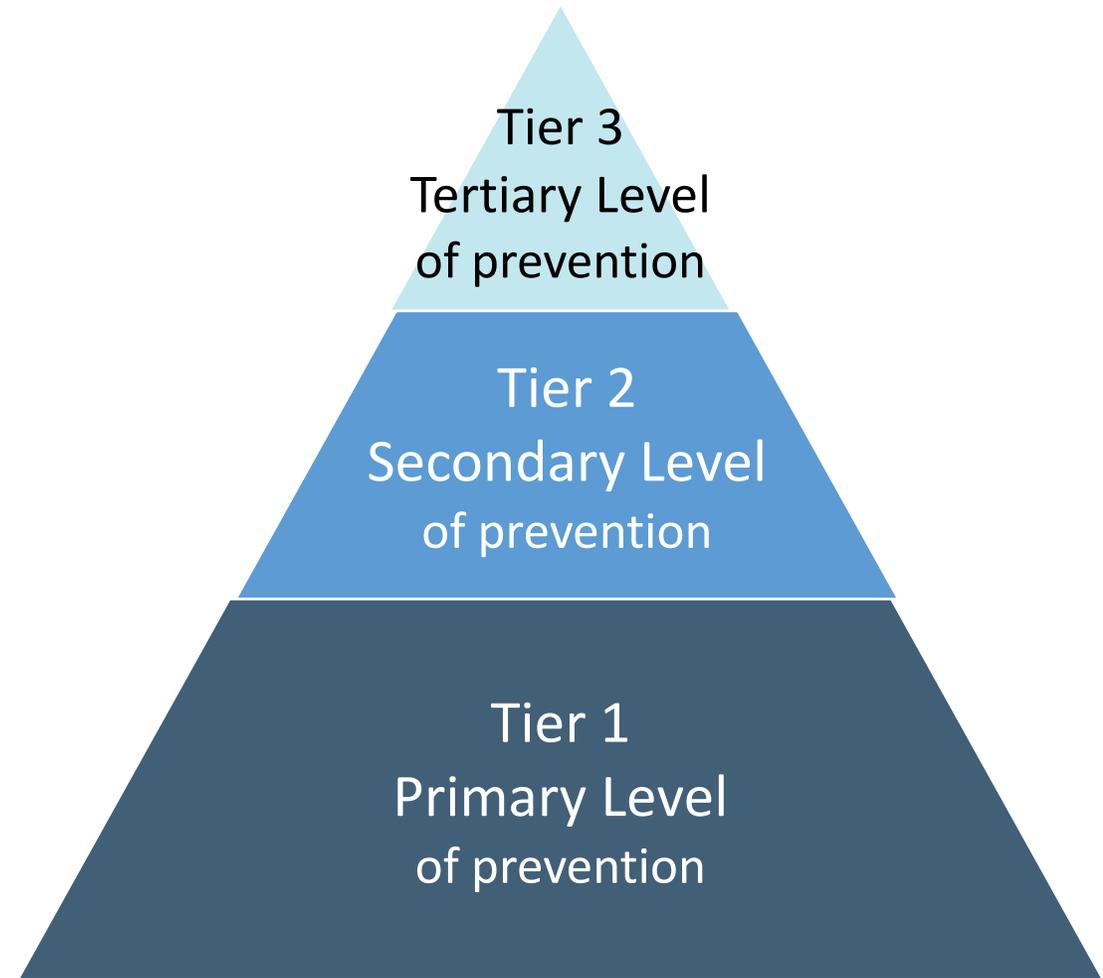


Alignment with trauma sensitive schools



**Be CALM:
An Innovative Self-Regulation Program
for Middle School Students**

Be CALM: A Tier 1 Intervention Program

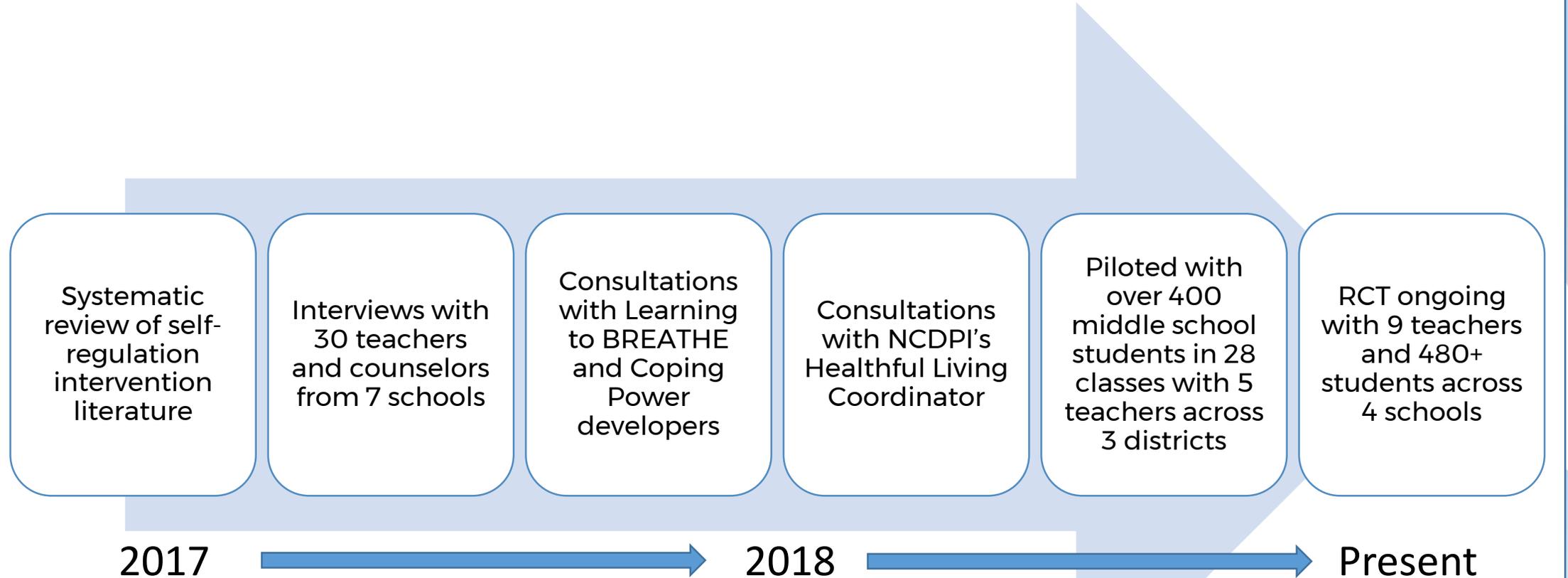




Be CALM Self-Regulation Goals

C is for COOL	Staying emotionally balanced and calm, especially during times of stress.
A is for ATTENTIVE	Staying focused in the moment without reacting to distractions.
L is for LOGICAL	Keeping values in mind and solving problems with a cool and curious mind.
M is for MATURE	Making decisions that support long-term goals and reflect kindness.

Be CALM Program Development



Student Feedback from Year 2 Pilot ($n = 392$)

What was the most helpful thing you learned in the Be CALM program?

Definitely the coping strategies.

To be kind to others and to follow your goals.

How to use my breath to calm me down.

The activities and stretches when we got to stand because we sit all day.

Being able to focus on the current situation without stressing as much.

How to think before I do things.

Building from Current Evidence-Based Work

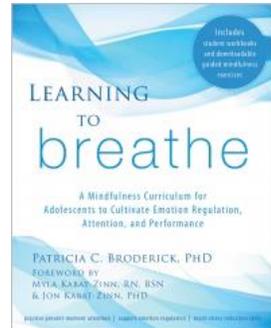
Mindfulness

- Relatively new & rapidly growing area of intervention research
- Stress is one of most consistent outcomes that improves
- Positive changes in areas of brain involved in emotion regulation and perspective-taking
- Increasing use of schools
- Evidence that teacher implementation is feasible & effective

CBT

- Large, well-established research base
- Impact on coping skills, mental health/stress, achievement, and behavior problems
- Incorporated into many school-based SEL programs, with effective delivery
- Often limited attention to emotion knowledge, awareness, & distress tolerance

Integrates cognitive and emotion regulation, drawing strategies from **two evidence-based** programs



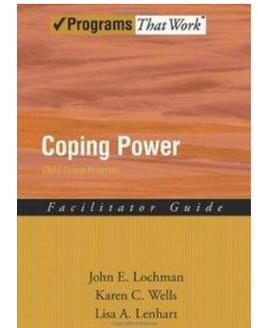
Mindfulness

Way of being
Non-striving
Cultivates
nonjudgmental
awareness
Distress tolerance



CBT

A technique or tool
Goal-focused
Evaluates thoughts &
feelings in an effort to
change them
Problem-solving



Strong professional development

addresses a gap in current middle school self-regulation programs

Interactive Training Workshops

18+ hours training for Health/PE teachers in:

- Mindfulness
- Adolescent development and peer ecology
- Co-regulation for supporting student self-regulation skills
- Teaching the Be CALM curriculum

11+ hours training for School Mental Health staff in:

- Mindfulness
- Co-regulation for supporting student self-regulation skills
- Supporting the Be CALM curriculum delivery

Be CALM Coaching

- Weekly/bi-weekly meetings with teachers
- Supports teachers with curriculum delivery
- Supports personal and professional growth using Be CALM principles and strategies
- Facilitates collaboration between Health/PE teacher and student support staff

Soles of the Feet for Teens



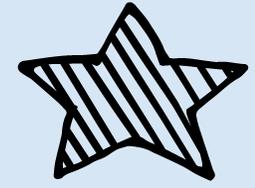
Bluth, K. 2017. *Making Friends with Yourself* – Adapted from the work of Dr. Nirbhay Singh

10 minute BREAK

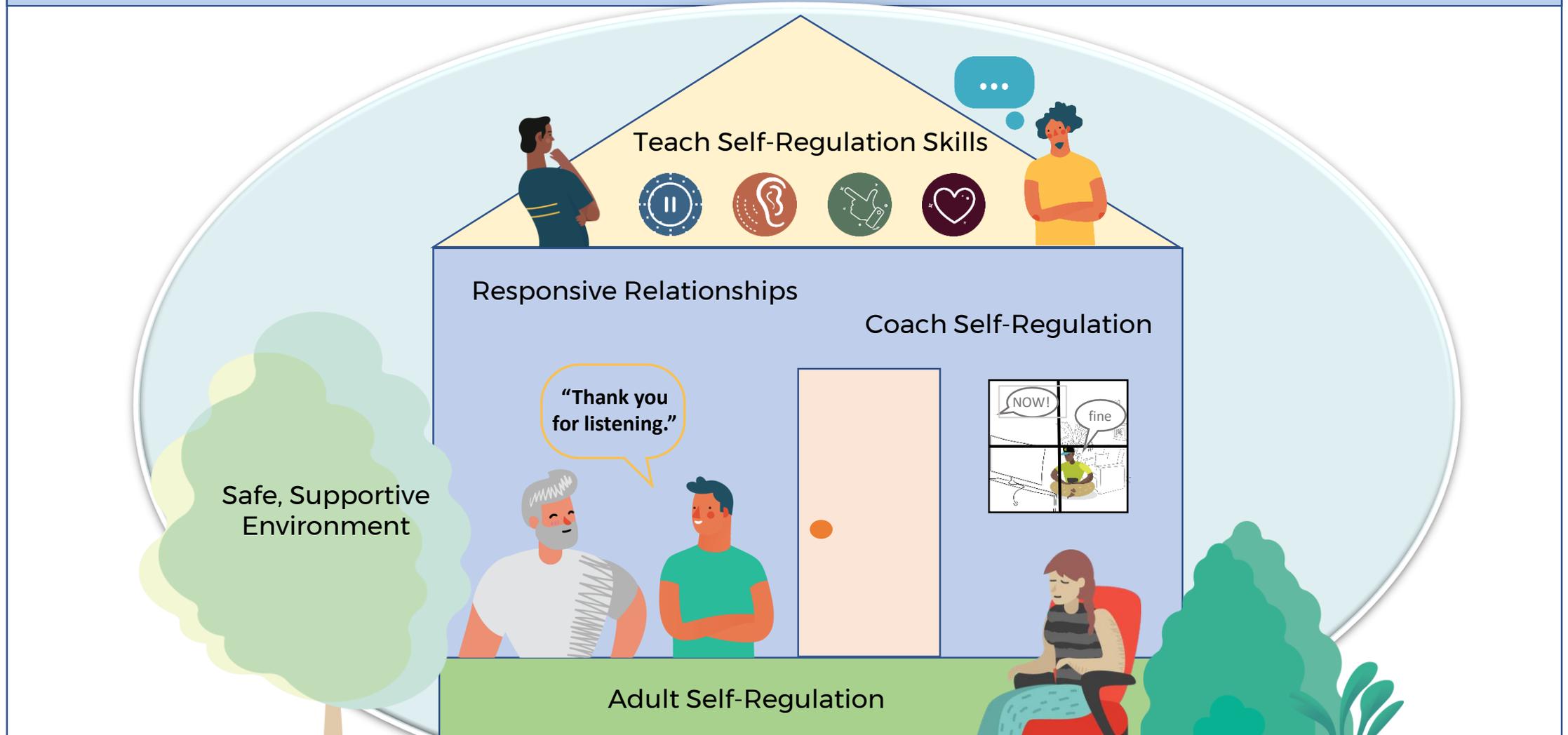
What is Mindfulness?

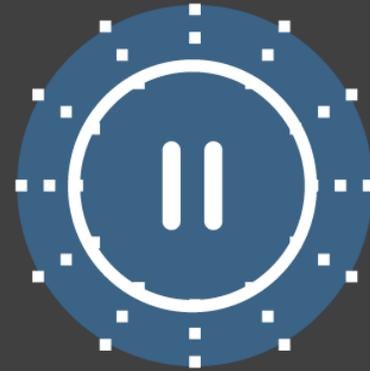


ACTIVITY:
Sweeping Sky, Scooping Earth



Mindfulness is Omnipresent





**Press the Pause on
whatever you are
thinking or doing**



**Tune In to the
present moment**



Mindfulness is...



Tuning In to the present moment, on purpose,



and **Checking Out** what is happening



with a curious and **kind** attitude.

Mindfulness is paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and without judgment. (Kabat-Zinn, 1991)

Acceptance Component of Mindfulness...



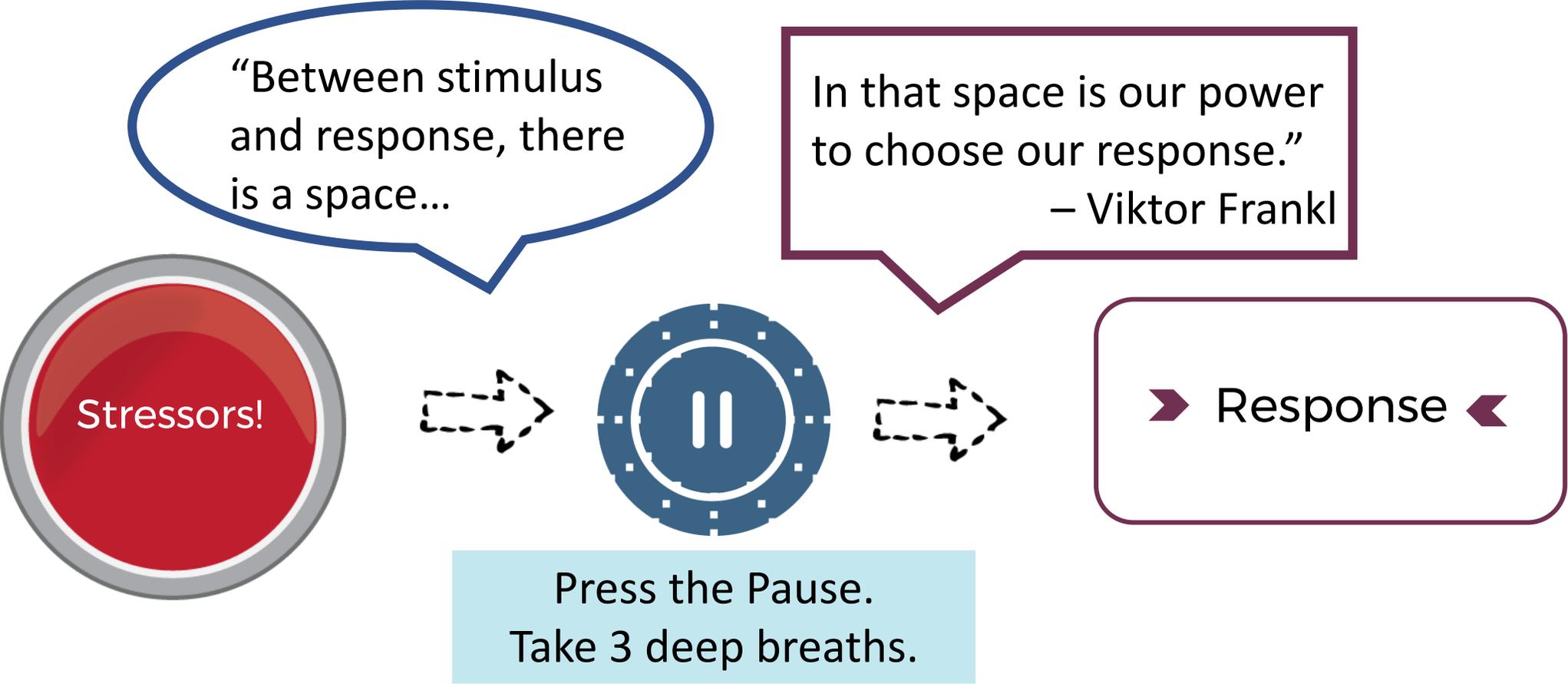
Check it out.

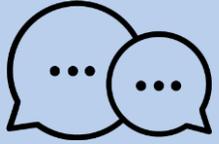
Notice what is happening with curiosity.



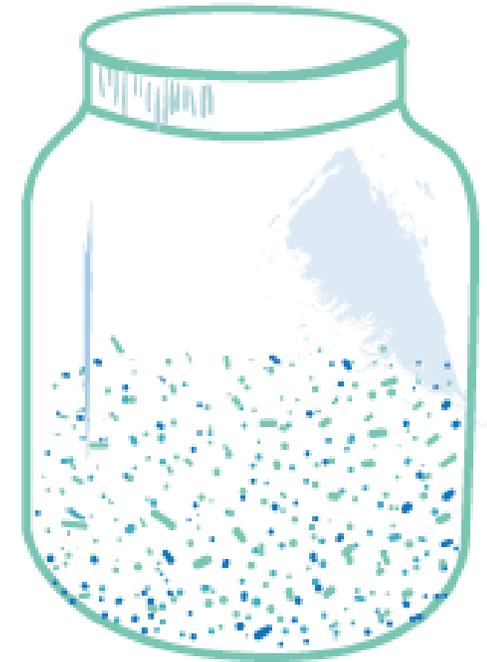
Mindfulness does **NOT** equal Indifference

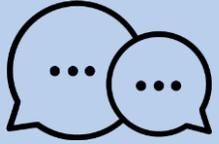
Mindfulness Increases Capacity for Impulse Control & Healthy Decision-Making





DISCUSSION: Give Up or Try Again





DISCUSSION:

Facilitating Curiosity & Awareness



Scene: Teacher is introducing smells to students to encourage their curiosity and nonjudgmental awareness of sensations.



DISCUSSION: Questions for Reflection

What is the value in encouraging students to simply notice their experiences and sensations without judging them?

What impact might this have on how they regard and treat others?

How is framing experiences and emotions as “pleasant” or “unpleasant” different from labeling them as “good” or “bad”.

A Developmentally and Trauma-Sensitive Approach

Exteroception: the ability of our senses to receive and transmit information from the external environment.

Proprioception: the ability to sense movement in the body and determine where the body is in space.

Interoception: the ability to receive stimuli originating from the interior of the body.





Mindful music practice





REFLECTION : Mindful Music Practice



What did you notice about how your body reacted to the music?

Where in your body did you feel the music?

Was this experience pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral?



Additional Activities to Check It Out



Mindfulness of Smells*

Mindfully eating*

Mindful Drawing*

Exploring Sandpaper*

Mystery Object (Water beads)*

Sense Doors**

Mindful Walkabout**

* Be CALM program activities; scripts available in your handouts

** Activities can be found in the book *Learning to BREATHE* (Broderick, 2013)

Acceptance Component of Mindfulness...



Be kind

To yourself and others.



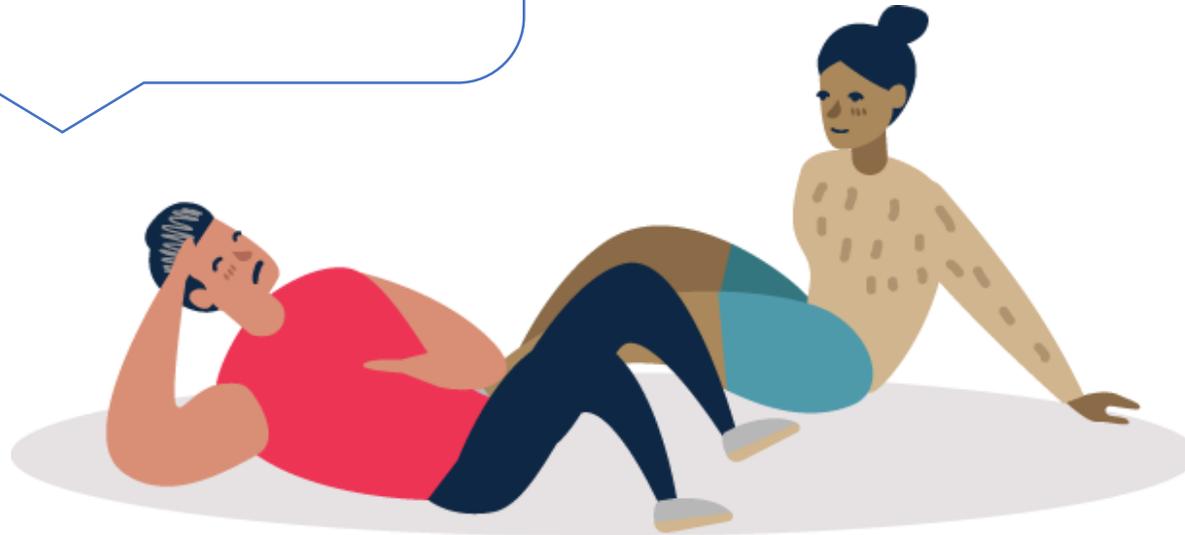


ACTIVITY: Practicing Kindness



I feel pretty bad, like
worthless and just
want to give up.

What would you
say to your friend?





ACTIVITY: Practicing Kindness



Now, think of a time when you felt pretty bad. Think about what you said to yourself in that situation, or what you would say to yourself.





Research actually
shows that

78%

are kinder to others
than they are to themselves
during difficult times.

“Compassion for
others begins with
kindness to ourselves.”
- Pema Chödrön



Practicing Kindness



What I Wish for Myself

How do you wish to practice kindness toward yourself?

Which habits of self-care do you wish to strengthen?

A Lesson from Trees



The Hidden Life of Trees: What they Feel, How they Communicate
(Wohlleben, 2018)



3-2-1 Exercise

3-minute Loving-Kindness Practice



2 good things that happened this week



1 act of kindness



<https://centerhealthyminds.org/join-the-movement/try-the-5-3-1-practice>



Facilitating Mindfulness practices



Be Kind

To yourself
and others

Create the conditions for the practice with your tone, pacing, and engaging in it yourself

Invite student participation

Respond calmly to student disruptions

Practice the script ahead of time so you can follow it naturally

Facilitate reflection about the practice



Ready, Set, Action

1. Form groups of 3-4 people.
2. Take turns leading a practice of your choice.
3. Reflect on your experience (either as facilitator or as group member being guided through the practice) using the following questions:
 - Facilitator – What was that experience like for you? What did you notice as you did it?
 - Group member – What was that experience like for you? What did you notice as you were guided through the practice?

What is one thing you will take with you?

Dr. Richard Davidson, a neuroscientist at the University of Wisconsin, speaks about “every behavioral intervention being a biological intervention.”



A young person's repeated experiences in school are powerful for building and sustaining healthy habits as new neural pathways in the brain.

Objectives

At the end of this training, participants will be able to:

1. Explain how stress can negatively affect self-regulation in adolescents.
2. Identify at least two features of the Be CALM program's design and approach that support self-regulation development in adolescents.
3. Practice 3 mindfulness strategies to teach adolescents to manage their stress.