

## Self-Regulation: Script

Copyright Pastel Education Inc. 2020

(with special thanks to Dr. Stuart Shanker and the MEHRIT Centre)

### **B6T0: Introduction to Module**

Hi there! Welcome to this module on Self-Regulation, and thank you for tuning in. This module was created in partnership between 1 Million Teachers and Pastel Education, and is part of our Creating Inclusive Classrooms learner pathway.

When we look at the school environment from the perspective of our students, there is a lot to handle. School comes with stressors from the environment, academics, and socially. Student must be able to manage all of this while remaining calm, managing behaviours, and focused on learning. Some students have better developed skills to do this, while many others have less developed self-regulation skills, impacting their motivation, behaviour, and ultimately, their learning.

In this module we will focus on the topic of self-regulation. Parts of this module will draw on the work of Dr. Stuart Shanker, and the MEHRIT Centre, one of the leading researchers and organizations in self-regulation. We want to thank the MEHRIT Centre for their willingness to share their information and handouts in this module.

Through this module, we will cover the following topics: what is self-regulation?, performance & arousal, domains of stress, stress behaviour, the Shanker approach to Self-Regulation, and how we can support the development of self-regulation in children. In addition, we will discuss some teaching strategies and supports that can help support self-regulation skills for our students.

As a disclaimer, Pastel Education is not a licenced provider of the official Shanker Self-Reg, and if you're interested in more information, we highly recommend that you visit the MEHRIT Centre at <https://self-reg.ca>.

When students have developed strong self-regulation skills, they are able to remain calm and focused in the learning environment. They become more motivated, independent, more persistent, and take initiative.

Whereas self-regulation refers to a person's ability to manage the stressors they experience, there is another closely tied topic of Self-Regulated Learning. Self-regulated learning is the application of self-regulation in a learning environment, contextualized to the classroom and specific learner. The focus is for students to become masters of their own learning. To keep this module from being too long, we will be discussing Self-regulated learning in the next module.

As always, we challenge you to think about this module on self-regulation through the lens of our three guiding principles: understanding the individual, empathy, and patience. These are three pillars that are fundamental to designing instruction, and thus, the success of our students.



We hope you enjoy this module as much as we did making it. To start off this module, we will be covering some basics in What is Self-Regulation? Thank you for watching!

### **B6T1: What is Self-Regulation?**

Hi there, thank you for watching this module on self-regulation. To begin, let's take a look at *what is self-regulation?*

Self-regulation refers to a person's ability to manage their own thoughts, behaviours, and emotions. This involves a student's ability to deal with stressors in an effective way that allows them to return to a calm and focused baseline. Not only does this allow students to successfully navigate their learning environment but helps students build independence and ownership of their learning as well.

#### *Why is self-regulation important?*

More and more evidence is pointing towards the importance of self-regulation for success in school. Students that have limited self-regulation skills can become increasingly resistant to school work, and also struggle with following directions, controlling attention, and their learning. In fact, self-regulation is predictive of academic performance. Since self-regulation is tied to one's ability to handle stress, when students become over-aroused or under-aroused, this can lead to challenging behaviours. As we will discuss later in this module, there is a big difference between stress behaviour and misbehaviour. It is important for us to understand self-regulation to appropriately approach these scenarios.

Children with learning disabilities and other exceptionalities, such as Autism Spectrum Disorder or ADHD, tend to struggle with self-regulation in comparison to their peers. This can help explain some of the academic and social challenges experienced by these students in school. However, self-regulation is not just an area that applies to children with exceptionalities. It is estimated that roughly 50% of students entering kindergarten experience difficulties with self-regulation that limited learning. As an educator, when we see students struggling academically, socially, emotionally or behaviourally, we can ask ourselves: Why is a student behaving a certain way? How might self-regulation be affecting this behaviour? Acting early and supporting the development of self-regulation can help all students overcome challenges and succeed in their learning.

#### *The self-regulated learner*

Developing skills in self-regulation allows students to take on environmental stressors and academic challenges while maintaining calmness. They are able to understand their own feelings, intentions, and thought processes. Not only do children become better at modulating and appropriately directing emotions, but build resiliency, allowing them to better overcome disappointment and challenging situations.

So how does self-regulation relate to self-control? Self-control is about inhibiting and restricting impulses to restrict surface behaviours. Our ability to self-control is actually dependent on ability to self-regulate. On the other hand, self-regulation focuses on how we manage stress. Self-regulation is about identifying and reducing the causes of problems in mood, thought and behaviour. This in turn makes self-control more achievable. As psychologist Dr. Stuart Shanker puts it: "*Self-control is about inhibiting strong impulses; self-regulation [is about] reducing the frequency and intensity of strong impulses by managing*



*stress-load and [recovery](#). In fact, self-regulation is what makes self-control possible, or, in many cases, unnecessary.”*

Since self-regulation is closely tied to stress, let’s take a closer look at stress itself. In the next video, we will take a look at stress and performance. Thank you for watching!

### **B6T2: Yerkes-Dodson Law: Performance & Arousal**

To better understand the importance of self-regulation, we need to understand how stress can affect learning. To help with this, let’s take a look at the Yerkes-Dodson Law.

The Yerkes-Dodson Law shows the relationship between arousal and the level of performance. In school this performance is related to learning. Most of the tasks students engage in are more complex and difficult tasks. As the Yerkes-Dodson Law states, at low arousal states, performance is low. This is because the individual is not stimulated enough, motivated, and focused to perform the task.

As arousal increases, performance reaches an optimal point, where a student is alert, calm, and focused on the task. This allows them to think through what they are doing, and enhances performance. When arousal increases past this, performance begins to decrease again. At this time, we tend to lose our calmness, and people can get feelings of nervousness, anxiety, and distraction that take away from their ability to stay focused on the task.

How does this relate to self-regulation? Well stress directly affects arousal. Physiological and mental stress directly impacts arousal states, and thus directly impacts academic performance.

If a student is experiencing too much stress, or unable to self-regulate in response to stressors they can be too aroused for optimal performance. Once a certain point is reached, they can be overloaded with stimuli, emotions, and thoughts, becoming unable to focus on learning.

So to recap, low arousal states may be when a student is bored or sleepy. Because of their lack of energy and focus, they are not motivated in their learning. Our responsibility as an educator is to engage and motivate the student to bring them up and focused in learning. We can do this by: Providing a hands-on activity, Providing a multimedia approach to learning, and taking a physical activity break.

When students experience too much arousal, they can become nervous, anxious, and have difficulty performing. This is often due to stressors that may or may not be directly related to the learning material. I like to think of stress in two stages: The input of stress, and the handling of stress.

Self-regulation is about handling stress, but as an educator, we can also support self-regulation by trying to reduce the stress that our teaching, instructional materials, and environment puts on the individual. In the next video we will discuss the Shanker 5 domains of self-regulation, looking at types of stressors and how they may impact students. Thank you for watching!

### **B6T3: Shanker’s 5 Domains pt 1**



Hi there, in this video we will gain a deeper understanding of stress and self-regulation by looking at the 5 domains of self-regulation. This work is credited to Dr. Stuart Shanker and the MEHRIT Centre. As a disclaimer, Pastel Education is not an official provider of Shanker Self-Reg training, these concepts are important to understanding self-regulation, and the MEHRIT Centre has kindly allowed us to use some of their handouts which we have linked below! For more information and opportunities to learn Shanker Self-Reg, please visit: [self-reg.ca](http://self-reg.ca).

For this module, let's take a look at this great model. Within the Shanker Model, self-regulation is divided into 5 domains and also works for potential stressors: Biological, emotional, cognitive, social, and pro-social. For each domain, we will briefly discuss what this means for students, and how we might be able to help as educators.

Beginning with the biological domain, this relates to regulation of physical body or biological factors, as the name suggests. This includes our physical health, ability to deal with distracting stimuli in the environment, our energy levels, and healthy habits such as diet, sleep and exercise.

Potential stressors to this domain might be bright lights in the classroom, loud crowds in the hallway, and lack of sleep. Students that are having difficulty with regulation in this domain may have challenges staying calm and focused when distractions are present, may have trouble remaining seated in the classroom, and become over-aroused or under-aroused.

One strategy we can utilize to help with this domain is to try to create a learning environment free of distracting stimuli, ensuring everything has a purpose for learning. We might also have a quiet area in the class for students to down-regulate or participate in quieter activities. In addition, we can have sensory breaks for students that need them, and have activity breaks where we do a fun physical routine for 2 minutes, such as jumping jacks or dancing. When students have a variety tools, and spaces to help them regulate, they learn to utilize the ones that work best for them.

The second domain is the emotional domain. Ability to regulate in the emotional domain allows students to modulate strong emotions and have the desire to pursue new goals. In addition, emotional self-regulation helps student recover from adversity and build perseverance.

Emotional stressors may include strong emotions, either overly-positive or overly-negative, such as fear or anger. As instructors, we can look for signs of these strong emotions in a child's behaviour and help them to regulate. Some strategies we can utilize are to encourage students to talk about their emotions, engage the class in meditation or mindfulness exercises, teach breathing techniques, and teach positive self-talk.

The cognitive domain relates our thinking. Potential stressors may be having difficulty understanding certain information, having struggles with questions, or high work load. The cognitive domain involves a student's mental processes such as concentration and focus, problem solving, ability to switch tasks, memory, ability to consider multiple perspectives, and more. Self-regulation in this domain begins with the foundation of these processes: the roots of attention. We should acknowledge that sustained attention requires high-degree of energy and that attention can be strengthened. As educators, we can look towards processing and integration of sensory information of students, and how this can be regulated. Many times,



difficulties with attention can stem from sensory integration differences that can be difficult to identify.

Students that struggle with this domain might have difficulty remaining focused on a task, give up easily, difficulty understanding content and daydreaming during class. We should also realize that a child that is uncomfortable in other domains due to other stressors will have to work harder to remain calm and focused on a learning task. We can try varying the ways we provide instruction, utilizing task analysis to break down tasks, provide visual instructions, utilizing graphic organizers, and encouraging self-reflection.

To keep this video from being too long, let's stop this one here. In the next video, we will continue our discussion of Shanker's 5 Domain, looking at the social and prosocial domains.

### **B6T4: Shanker's 5 Domains pt 2**

Hi there! Let's continue our discussion of Shanker's 5 Domains of Regulation, moving on to the social domain.

The social domain involves interacting with others and understanding the thoughts, feelings, and intentions of other people. Self-regulation in this area helps people adjust their actions and responses in a socially appropriate way. Thus, when students have difficulty with this domain, they may respond inappropriately to situations, have difficulty reading social cues, have difficulty reading social situations, have trouble taking responsibility for their actions, and have difficulty listening to others. Certain types of social situations may be more stressful for students, especially with unfamiliar people and environments. This can lead a child to feel overwhelmed and less likely to engage with others.

Urging students to try harder to make friends can be very discouraging, and instead, we should focus on enhancing the capacity of connectedness for these students. Not only can we teach children to read social cues and what appropriate behaviour looks like, but we can also organize collaborative group activities, and class activities to support socialization towards a common goal.

Lastly, we have the pro-social domain. This domain involves caring for others, developing empathy, understanding of other people's feelings, and putting the needs of other above their own. In short, pro-social domain involves helping others and wanting to do "the right thing." A stressor in this domain might be helping with another person's stress, or viewing an action as unjust.

Children that have difficulties with this domain might feel overwhelmed by others' emotion, and may demonstrate signs of this by ignoring, walking away, inappropriate social responses, have difficulty understanding what others are feeling, and have difficulty entering certain social situations.

As educators, one primary way we can support this domain for our students is to build a sense of community and a culture of openness. We can encourage when students help others, and hold classroom meetings to talk about feelings. We can check-in on students we may be concerned about, or talk with a student outside of class. Depending on the nature of



challenges experienced by students, we could also implement anti-bullying and social inclusion programs such as peer-buddies.

Before we end, we need to recognize that socialization is one of the natural ways people are designed to deal with stress. Difficulties with the social and prosocial domains, can lead to situations in which students perceive socialization as stressful, and thus are unable to regulate other stressors through social interaction.

Anti-social behaviour is not the norm for children, and is due to increased stress creating a dominating fight-or-flight response. Stress overload shuts down the areas of our brain that control communication and empathy, making children unable to communicate and unaware of how others feel. In these situations, instead of seeking socialization to regulate stress, a more ancient part of our brain dominates, making behaviour more aggressive and anti-social, or a fight-flight-or-freeze response.

Some children may be more susceptible to these sorts of responses, and other's may feel the emotions of others to a degree that leads to these responses. What is most important, is how we deal with these types of behaviours, and this begins with recognizing and understanding stress-behaviour. We will discuss this later in the module.

With that, we have covered all of Shanker's 5 domains of Self-regulation. All domains are inter-related, and when students are stressed in one domain, it can impact their ability to regulate the others. By understanding which domain a student is having difficulties with, we can engage with them to regulate, develop self-regulation, and implement classroom strategies to help. We hope this gives a better understanding of stress, self-regulation, and how we can help as educators. Once again thank you to the Dr. Stuart Shanker and the MEHRIT Centre for help with this information, and please visit their website at [self-reg.ca](http://self-reg.ca). Thank you for watching, and in the next video, we will discuss the effects of stress.

### **B6T5: Effects of Stress**

Hi there, in this video we will take a look at effects of stress on the body. To help with this, we should look at what happens when we experience acute stress and chronic stress.

Acute stress is short-term stress. It creates a fight-or-flight response, and our bodies should return back to normal in about 90 minutes after the stressor is dealt with or removed. So, what is happening to our bodies during this time?

When we face a stressor, our hypothalamus in our brains signals our body to release two stress hormones, adrenaline and cortisol. Adrenaline helps to coordinate our blood flow, heart rate, and breathing to ready our muscles to respond to emergency situations. Cortisol increases the sugar levels in our blood, and curbs bodily functions that are not currently necessary to respond to fight-or-flight situations. This helps us respond to emergency situations. Evolutionarily, this helps us to keep us alive, like running away from a lion. Once the stressor passes or is dealt with, our central nervous system is supposed to then shut down this stress response, and allows our body to go back to normal.

But as we all know too well, in the modern world, our stress response doesn't always get a chance to return to normal. As adults, we have to deal with paying bills, work stress, traffic,



and other events that continue to keep us stressed. It is often easy to overlook that children can also be experiencing chronic stress as well. Homework, academic expectations, social situations, social media, and many other stressors can have the same negative effects as with adults.

Our stress hormones, primarily cortisol, remains increased and can have negative effects on both our body and brains. Symptoms of chronic stress include anxiety, depression, irritability, headaches, sleep problems, impaired memory, impaired concentration and eating problems among other effects. As educators, we should consider, how might chronic stress be affecting our students? How might chronic stress be affecting regulation of students?

To better understand how our body reacts to acute and chronic stress, let's take a look the General Adaptation Syndrome Model that was created by Dr. Hans Selye. General Adaptation Syndrome is simply just the 3 stages of stress.

The first stage is the Alarm Stage. When we first are exposed to a stressor we mount a fight-or-flight stress response as we discussed previously.

The second stage is the resistance stage. After the initial response, the body begins to repair itself. Cortisol levels are still elevated but begin to reduce, as well as our heart rate and breathing. Instead, we remain on high-alert for other stressors. In situations of chronic stress, where we continue to be exposed to a stressful situation, our body begins to adapt to living with higher stress.

Often times, we are unaware of the changes our body makes to cope with stress. During this time, people are able to resist the stress, but is utilizing adaptive energy stores in the background. Although it might seem like the individual is doing well, cortisol levels remain elevated and this stress is putting a continuous wear and tear on their systems. In this stage people can experience irritability, frustration, poor concentration, poor memory and sleep disturbances.

If the individual is still unable to resolve their chronic stress, this can lead to the exhaustion stage. Our body has battled with chronic stress and now no longer has the physical, mental, and emotional energy to keep fighting. At this point in time, a person's situation begins to feel hopeless, leading to fatigue, depression, and anxiety. Once individuals have reached this stage, they also become increasingly sensitivity to stress. This means that other stressors may greater impact the individual and also lead to inappropriate responses to these situations. This is the last and final stage of stress.

One of the reasons why it is important to include these stages of stress is to help us recognize the progression of stress in ourselves and our students. We need to ask ourselves, what stage of stress might our students be in? How might this be affecting their behaviour?

That concludes this video, and these questions lead us directly into our next topic, stress behaviour vs mis-behaviour. Thank you for watching and see you in the next video!

## **B6T6: Stress Behaviour vs Mis-behaviour**



Hi there, in this video we will talk about a very important concept in Shanker Self-Reg, stress behaviour vs misbehavior. Once again, we would like to credit this work to Dr. Stuart Shanker and the MEHRIT Centre and have linked a handout from them on the topic.

So what is the difference between stress behaviour and misbehavior? Misbehaviour involves decisions that are made in a rational state. Misbehaviour is an intentional choice and has to do with self-control. Someone knows they shouldn't do something, but chooses to do it anyways. On the other hand, stress behaviour involve decisions made in an emotional state. This has to do with self-regulation, the individual cannot self-regulate and is acting out because of this. Stress behaviour stems from an inability in choice due to an arousal state.

Why is it important to understand this difference? Understanding the nature of behaviour shapes how we should respond. Since the intent behind the behaviour is different, we can't treat stress-behaviour like we would treat misbehaviour.

Discipline or efforts to explain why their behaviour is wrong are not-advised and can be worse for students. The behaviour is not due to a lack of self-discipline, the child has not made an intentional and rational decision for their behaviour. Not only can discipline and punishment not improve the situation, but might actually make it worse.

When we are responding to behaviour, a child that is demonstrating a stress-behaviour because they are in an overwhelmed state will have less capacity to evaluate, monitor, and modify their emotions. In addition, they have less capacity to hear, comprehend, and respond to what we might be saying. Instead, since the behaviour is due to over-arousal, our approach should be focused on calming a student down.

When we help a child find calm, try to respond based off of the signs the student is showing. If they are in a flooded state, they may have a high breathing rate, dilated pupils, and tense muscles, we know they are less able to hear and comprehend what others say. We should avoid increasing stimulation the child is receiving. As they begin to find calm, we can then respond accordingly and help regulate the student.

Some tips provided by the MEHRIT Centre are to:

- 1. Figure out and reduce the stressors
- 2. Help the child learn what it feels like to be calm
- 3. Help the child develop strategies to help them return to calm

These same three steps can be continuously applied in the classroom to develop and help students with self-regulation.

So now that we know the difference between stress behaviour and misbehaviour, how can we recognize stress behaviour? Let's go through some signs of stress behaviour. We should not necessarily just look at the behaviour itself but also before the behaviour occurs.

Remember that stress behaviour is our fight-or-flight response taking over, and we can look for signs of this in our students. They may have contracted muscles, increased respiration rate, decreased eye contact and changes in skin colour. In addition, they might have difficulty ignoring distractions, be fidgeting, and have difficulty sitting still.



As we discussed previously, stress behaviour is made in an emotional state, and we can look for signs of this as well. They may have heightened impulsivity, trouble listening, mood swings, and see everything negatively. When stress reaches a certain level, all facial expressions seemed threatening. Because they are experiencing strong emotions, children may also say things that are less coherent or don't make sense.

Lastly, when we are looking for these signs of stress behaviour, we should not be fooled by smiling and laughing. This could be nervous laughter, as a defense mechanism against stress.

Through this video, we have looked at what is stress behaviour, how it is different from misbehaviour, and some ways we can help calm students. In addition, we looked at recognizing signs of stress behaviour, such as impulsivity and mood changes. Thank you again to Dr. Stuart Shanker and the MEHRIT Centre for their work in self-regulation and thank you for watching. In the next video we will take a look at the 5-steps for self-regulation.

### **B6T7: Shanker's 5 Steps for Self-Regulation**

Now that we have learned about stress, the domains of self-regulation, and stress behaviour, we must ask, how can we self-regulate?

This is where Shanker's 5 Steps for Self-Regulation comes into play, and once again we would like to thank Dr. Stuart Shanker, and the MEHRIT Centre for providing this content. This method goes through the 5 step process of: Read the signs of stress and reframe the behaviour; Recognize the stressors; Reduce the stress; Reflect; and Respond. Let's take a look at each one, as well as how we can use these principles to help our students regulate.

The first step is to read the signs of stress and reframe behaviour. This begins with asking the questions:

- "why am I seeing this behaviour?"
- "why am I seeing this now?"

For students, this helps them to acknowledge the signs of stress in their bodies and how this might be influencing how they are acting. By reframing the behaviour, it causes a cognitive shift: we go beyond the surface behaviours and dig deeper to the root.

For educators, these same benefits of reframing the behaviour are true. It helps us recognize stress behaviours and respond appropriately. When students are flooded and overwhelmed, we need to realize that nothing will be learned – it is not a teaching opportunity. By taking this perspective of reframing, we can replace our own frustration, guilt and anger with compassion, patience and empathy. Opens up potential approaches and methods to support others. This also guides us to remain calm, as our demeanor reflects onto the students we support.

The second step is to recognize the stressors. Stressors and how we respond changes depending on context, and they are often hidden, dynamic, interwoven, and person specific. For example, someone with increased sensitivity to sound might find the buzzing noises of florescent lights to be a stressor. Being in this environment, with the combination of academic pressure, might make social interaction more stressful as well.

As educators, we can actively look for hidden stressors, and remember to take the perspective of others when thinking about how certain stimuli might affect a person. We can apply our



knowledge of domains of stress in this area, looking at biological, emotional, cognitive, social and pro-social causes of stress.

The third step in to reduce the stress load. As we discussed previously, social engagement is one of the first responses to stress, and helps a child to co-regulate with their friends and peers. When social co-regulation is denied, the stress response then shifts towards a fight-or-flight response. We also talked about how stress is dynamic, and interwoven, which means so is self-regulation. Focus on reducing stressors that can be controlled to help cope with the ones we cannot.

One activity that students can try is to list the stressors that they can and cannot control. Then underneath have them list and brainstorm strategies to help them deal with this stress. Restorative sleep, trusting relationships, adequate nutrition, feeling safe, and adequate exercise are all ways that individuals, including ourselves, can increase our capacity to self-regulate.

As educators, we can help create a learning environment that is considerate of self-regulation. Having less clutter, dedicated quiet spaces, activity breaks, and tools to support regulation can help students feel comfortable in the space. When students have a variety tools, and spaces to help them regulate, they learn to utilize the ones that work best for them.

The fourth step is to reflect, with the purpose of increasing stress awareness. Especially at younger ages, many kids don't know how to recognize the feeling of calm. Often times they can confuse calm with tired. Other times a child's understanding of calm is based off of self-control and their actions, such as staying silent, or sitting still. However, as we know self-regulation is different than self-control, and calm is about the internal state that allows for these actions.

We can help our students learn to reflect on their stress by: asking how they feel mentally and physically before, during and after activities; having students identify arousing tasks and calming tasks; utilizing a rating scale or mood board for how they feel; and teach students about muscle tone, heart rate and respiration rate.

As educators we should reflect on our response to the situation, and our ability to recognize stress of ourselves and students. We gain the same benefits of self-regulation as well!

The last step is to respond, and our goal is to develop, practice and implement personalized strategies to reduce stress. We can help with this by teaching students strategies to reduce stress. We can discuss how, when, and where these are useful and encourage creativity and self-advocacy in students' ability to develop and find the strategies that work best for them. We should support, praise, and reinforce efforts that students make to utilize these strategies when we see them.

With that, we have covered the Shanker Self-Reg Method. All credit goes to Dr. Shanker and the MEHRIT Centre and for more information about self-regulation and the 5-step method, please visit [self-reg.ca](http://self-reg.ca)



Thank you for watching this video and in the next video, we will discuss ways we can support self-regulation skills.

### **B6T8: Supporting Self-Regulation Skills**

In certain scenarios, it can be very beneficial to teach students self-regulation skills/strategies in a more explicit way. The Shanker Method that we covered in the last video can be helpful for this as well, but for those that are looking for another framework we will go through a different one in this video.

The first aspect we need to understand is the purpose of explicit teaching of self-regulation. There are three main scenarios to provide explicit instruction:

- To help younger students that are still developing basic self-regulation strategies. As we discussed earlier, roughly 50% of students entering kindergarten have less developed self-regulation skills, so providing some explicit instruction at lower grade levels can help all children further build this skill set.
- To help students with exceptionalities impacting self-regulation or students that struggle with self-regulation learn strategies for managing emotions and behaviours. An example of this might be a student that has challenges in controlling impulsive behaviour.
- And lastly, to help students handle environmental stressors. As we know students with sensory integration differences may experience the learning environment differently. Students that are hypersensitive may need to learn specific strategies for taking breaks or calming down, while students with hyposensitivities may learn strategies to help stay focused.

Teaching self-regulation begins with teaching self-awareness – students need to be recognizing the feelings and emotions within them to be able to regulate them. We can teach self-awareness through a process of identifying stressors, and naming feelings. As an example, we might work with a student with difficulties focusing during classroom activities. We might help them identify the stressor as peers talking, and have them describe what they are feeling, naming this feeling as “distracted.”

Following this, we can teach self-regulation by identifying responses, understanding consequences, and reinforcement. We could ask the student of different ways they might handle these scenarios or explicitly teach strategies to manage these feelings. One strategy may be to politely ask his peers to talk more quietly or another may be to move to a quieter area of the class. Next, we can discuss the consequences of these responses, focusing on how they might help improve the situation. If the student is responding in less appropriate ways, we can identify those responses and explain why those consequences are less ideal. During this time, we can have them reflect on their experiences, the decision-making processes that they have used, and what strategies have worked for them. Lastly, when students practice and use the self-regulation strategy, we should reinforce that behaviour through acknowledgement and praise.

To quickly summarize, we can explicitly teach basic self-regulation through a 5-step process of:

- Identifying stressors
- Naming feelings
- Identify responses



- Understanding consequences
- Reinforcement

There are other effective teaching strategies we can use to teach self-regulation as well. We can utilize circle time activities with the entire class, in which students can brainstorm and share appropriate responses to different types of feelings. For example, if we can prompt students by asking “what can we do when we are feeling angry?” and have students go around and share what they can do, such as “take a step back” and “taking a deep breath.”

Modelling is a very effective way to teach students specific regulation strategies. This involves demonstrating a behaviour for the student and having them repeat it. For example, we can teach boxed breathing, a breathing technique to help relieve stress, feelings of anxiousness, and manage emotions. This involves slowly inhaling for three seconds, holding for three seconds, slowing exhaling for three seconds, and holding again for three seconds. We can first model this for the student, then have them practice following your lead, and then practicing on their own.

Lastly, it can be effective to check-in on students and how they are doing. Not only does this help develop self-awareness but gives us an idea of the emotional state and energy levels of the class. We can do this for specific students or for the entire class. One visual support that we can utilize is a mood board, in which students place a marker to show what emotional state they are currently in.

That concludes this video on teaching self-regulation. Thank you for watching and in the next video we will look at some more strategies to support self-regulation.

### **B6T9: More Strategies for Self-Regulation**

Let’s take a look at some strategies to support students in developing their self-regulation skills. In the last video, we discussed how we can support students in developing self-regulation through circle time teaching, modelling, boxed breathing, and checking-in. The three that we will look at in this video are utilizing sensory breaks, positive time away, and cuing.

For students that have sensory integration disorders, we can allow students to take sensory breaks. These are breaks where a student can go to a quiet area to address their sensory needs. For example, a student that is hypersensitive to auditory stimuli might get increasingly uncomfortable during a classroom activity where there is a lot of noise. This student can take a sensory break to escape these external stressors and allow themselves to maintain calmness and refocus for learning. A student that is hyposensitive may engage in self-stimulatory behaviours, and can use a sensory break to practice these behaviours in private or in a way that is undistruptive to others.

Positive Time Away are similar but not specific for sensory integration challenges. Students that may be stressed, overwhelmed, frustrated, anxious, or experiencing other emotions can go to a designated quiet area to take a break and utilize self-regulation strategies. This helps build self-awareness as this is a space that students can use when they recognize signs of stress to reset and refocus.



Let's say we have a student Amanda, that has a learning disability and is working on an activity on writing about the members of her family. Amanda has challenges with writing sentences and can become frustrated when she struggles with an activity. We have worked with her to establish some self-regulation strategies she can use to handle this stress, but she often forgets to use them. How can we remind her to use these strategies?

This is where cuing can be very effective. This simply involves signalling a reminder for students to utilize their self-regulation techniques. We can do this by verbally cuing Amanda when we notice she is starting to become upset, and utilize a visual cue card that lists some strategies for her to self-regulate. For example: "Ways to Calm Down:" Counting to Ten, Take a Time-Out, and Boxed Breathing. When we notice Amanda utilizing these strategies either independently or cued, we can reinforce this behaviour through praise. Over time, we can fade out the prompts, and leave her with only the visual cue card.

Another option could be to have an anchor chart in the classroom that lists self-regulation strategies that have been discussed with class. Students are then able to reference the chart when necessary, and we can also cue students to look at the strategies during these times. That concludes this video on strategies for supporting self-regulation and this module on self-regulation.

Through this module, we looked at what is stress and how it affects us. We learned about the domains of stress, stress-behaviour, and the Shanker Method for Self-regulation. Lastly, we discussed some ways to support development of self-regulation for students and some strategies we can utilize in the classroom. Thank you so much for watching, and as always, thank you for supporting Pastel Education.

