



Emotional Regulation & Sensory Issues

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(She/her/hers)



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Emotional regulation

What is it, why we need to know about it, and how is it linked with how our brain works

Emotional regulation is the ability to recognise, manage, and respond to our emotions

When we don’t know how to regulate our emotions, we can become emotionally overwhelmed, and this can impact the way we relate to ourselves, others, and the world in general.

Emotional regulation is an important tool for mental well-being and protects our relationships with others



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Understanding our brain



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Parts of the Brain & their Function



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Parts of the Brain & their Function

Neocortex (Thinking)

- Newest, most advanced
- Rational thinking
- Higher level thinking
- Language, imagination, ideas

Limbic System (Feeling)

- Emotions, feelings, dreams
- Habit control
- Memories
- Interaction with others

Amygdala

- Oldest
- Survival brain
- Fight, Flight, Freeze
- Fear, Pleasure, anxiety, anger

Reptilian Brain - Instinctive

- Basic body functions
- Unconscious

We can't learn/listen/engage when:

- the amygdala is activated
- we are in fight/flight mode
- we are distressed or dysregulated
- we are disconnected from our thinking brain

Emotional regulation, feelings, and behaviour

When we ARE emotionally regulated we can

- feel balanced and in control of our reactions
- manage stress
- listen to others and are aware of their needs
- express our needs in constructive ways
- act appropriately in a range of situations
- stay calm during challenging situations
- don't take things personally
- protect important connections/relationships

When we ARE NOT emotionally regulated we may

- feel off kilter and out of control
- feel stressed
- are unable to listen or think
- express our needs in destructive ways
- act inappropriately
- lose our cool
- take things personally
- damage relationships or connections

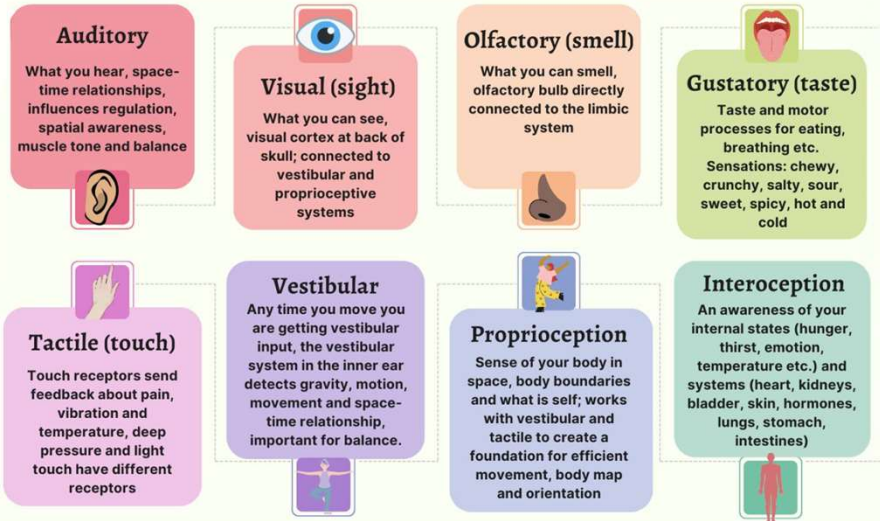
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Emotions the link with sensory issues

The 8 Sensory Systems



chronic Resilience Lived Experience OT; Content created with support from resources by Tina Champagne and Kelly Mahler



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Emotional Intelligence



Emotional regulation is a skill we can learn and is part of our emotional intelligence (EQ)



EQ is our ability to learn about ourselves and use that knowledge to understand and relate to others



Emotional intelligence (EQ) is essential for good mental health and healthy relationships



It may be even more important than IQ because it is linked to our happiness

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Emotional Intelligence has 5 components



- Self-awareness
- Self-regulation
- Motivation
- Empathy
- Social Skills

Improving any of these components can potentially increase our happiness!!!

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Strategies

Awareness & Understanding



Sensory Processing



Masking



School Environment



Unique Strengths and Talents of Neurodivergent Individuals

“Having a parent, teacher, partner, or manager who understands your skills/strengths can be the difference between understood and supported in life and in the workplace, rather than being misunderstood and placed at risk, because you are forced to play to your challenges, rather than to your significant strengths”.

(Smith & Kirby 2021)

Strategies to Support Emotional Regulation



Co-regulation is essential until these skills develop



1. Regulate



2. Relate



3. Reason

Step 1

**Check in:
Recognise & Feel it**

Sense your emotions/your child's emotions.



Step 2

Name it

Sense your emotions/your child's emotions.



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Step 3

Express it

Sense your emotions/your child's emotions.



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Strategies to support Emotional Regulation & Sensory Issues

Suppression

Venting

Avoidance

Distraction

Relaxation

Problem-Solving

Cognitive Reappraisal

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AUTISM RESEARCH INSAR

RESEARCH ARTICLE
Emotion Regulation in Children and Adolescents With Autism Spectrum Disorder
Andrea C. Samson, Antonio Y. Hardan, Rebecca W. Podd, Jennifer M. Phillips, James J. Gross
First published: 23 May 2018 | <https://doi.org/10.1002/aur.1387> | Citation: 137

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Environment

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Sensory Strategies

- **adapting the environment**
- **avoidance**
- **increasing predictability in tasks**
- **mental preparation**
- **talking through experiences**
- **counteracting and confronting fears and behaviours.**

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Organisational & Time Management Strategies

- Research shows that 20 to 50% of classroom wall space should be kept clear, to provide a learning environment that is visually stimulating, but not overwhelming.
- Way finding - Colour code systems, e.g. Covid Sign
- Use coaching & cognitive strategies to support learning & organisation
 - Support students to prioritise first - brainstorm
 - Prompt; Plan; Praise, Review
- Email reminders with a clear plan
- Calendars
- Assistive Tech/Mobile Apps



Thank you



Workplace Wellbeing

Evidence-based strategies, without the waffle.
Did you know? Grants of up to €20,000 are available for Neurodiversity Awareness and Neuroinclusion training.

Do you want to be seen as a caring employer who is taking steps to support, improve and enhance workplace well-being, making your company a better place to work?

Your team members are getting bored and frustrated with those generic EAP programmes and the lack of a personal touch to workplace wellbeing, and you know it.

You can help employees with the things that are adversely affecting their wellness, whether that's in the workplace or outside it, by giving them access to an expert that can help them with personal circumstances that may be negatively impacting their performance and productivity.

Ask me for a brochure!

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