

# 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.



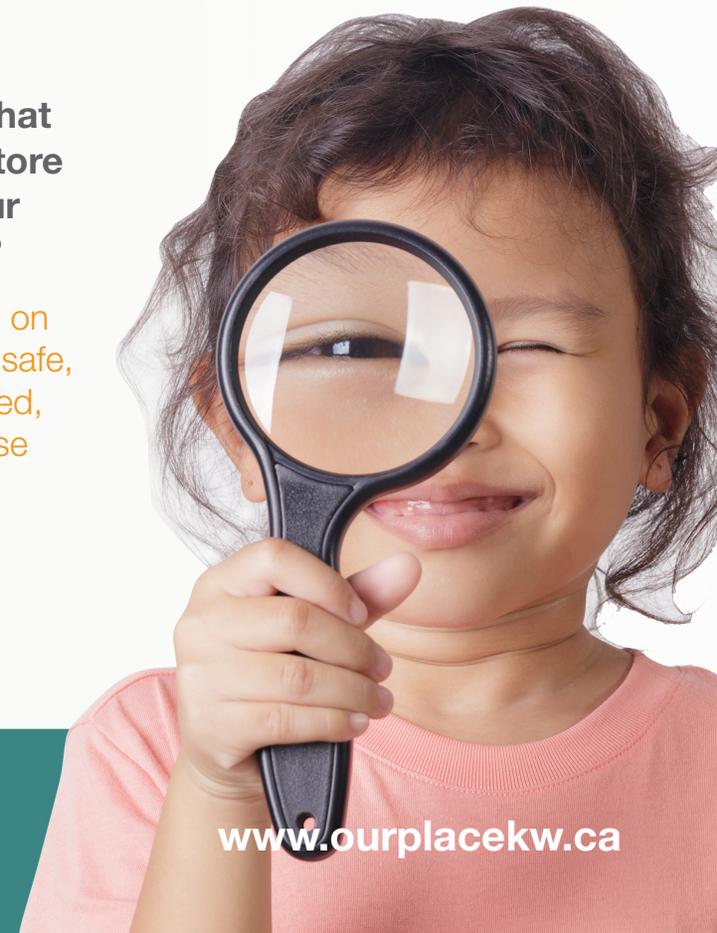
**Did you know that stress can be hidden *and* visible, positive *and* negative, minor *and* traumatic or toxic?**

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

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

For more information please contact  
**Anna Borozynets, RECE at [reception@ourplacekw.ca](mailto:reception@ourplacekw.ca)**