



COREGULATION

Coregulation is the interactive process between two people in a supportive relationship. This could be between a caregiver and child, teacher and student, or therapist and client.

Coregulation involves the sharing of emotional and physical energy between two individuals who are engaged in an ongoing interaction. It involves the ability to regulate oneself while also influencing the regulation of others. In essence, coregulation is the ability to use social support to help manage one's emotions and behaviours.



When working with children, coregulation evolves as the child develops and grows. Did you know our own emotions are contagious to those around us? When we are flustered or angry, our children pick up on this and their nervous system can match our own.

Positive coregulation can facilitate the development of confidence to approach new skills and situations and can assist our children to recover from mistakes.

It can assist us to build:

RESILIENCE, KINDNESS, EMPATHY, FLEXIBILITY

The moments that we find the most challenging as a parent, where we feel overburdened, overwhelmed, and confused are actually the moments we can see as opportunities to help our kids learn the above skills.



Strategies OTs implement to support coregulation are:

- **Name it to tame it:** naming your emotions to assist you in overcoming negative thoughts and feelings.
- **Zones of regulation:** a curriculum developed to assist children to become aware of their emotions and to regulate their actions.
- **Size of the problem:** a social skills concept to assist children to identify the severity of their problems which then allows them to choose an appropriate reaction.
- **The 5-point scale:** assists children to learn appropriate ways to respond and interact in difficult situations.

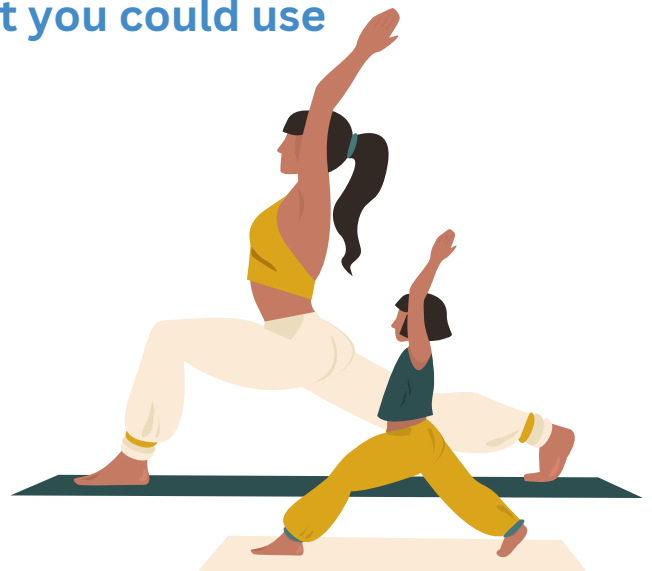
Additionally you can:

- Model good methods of regulation (such as self-talk, deep breathing, removing self before a meltdown) to help us remain calm
- Talk about our feelings or write them down using a journal (remembering that feelings are ok, but behaviours need limits).
- Consider how your routines are contributing to your self-regulation.
- Create a predictable consistent environment with clear expectations.
- Review your child's response to your routines and adjust these routines as necessary.

Relaxation/Calming strategies that you could use include:

- Mindfulness
- 5 senses exercise
- Colouring
- Deep breathing/finger breathing
- Yoga and proprioception

REMEMBER



When practising these skills remember:

This process takes time. You are building a relationship in a different way, and in the process, you are learning more about your child.

It takes work, self-awareness and practice to keep yourself regulated. Be patient with yourself and your child.