



Self-Regulation

Self-regulation is the process of managing one's thoughts and feelings to enable goal-directed actions for success in school, relationships, and the workplace. Self-regulation is important not only for students, but for teachers as well! Self-regulation is necessary for successfully navigating school, relationships, and the workplace. Self-regulation isn't just something that individuals practice on their own; it actually develops through interactions with other people.

There are three main elements to self-regulation:

- Pay attention to your own feelings and reactions during stressful interactions with a student. We often focus on validating student feelings, but it's equally important to validate the teacher's feelings in a stressful situation. Co-regulation calls for the recognition of a teacher's own impulses, which can be hard during a stressful incident.
- Pay attention to how you interpret the behavior of others, to your own thoughts and beliefs about their behavior.
- Develop and model strategies to self-calm and respond effectively and compassionately. Take a moment for some deep breaths or self-talk. Stop and wait before responding, to allow time to recognize your own emotions and model the self-regulation your students need to see. Responding calmly to a student can help to keep the student's feelings from escalating.

Self-Regulating Strategies: breathing exercises, muscle relaxation break, movement breaks (yoga, exercise, walk), mindfulness moments, meditation, and gratitude journals.

One powerful mode of teaching regulation skills is to explicitly model your own regulation skills. Let students hear your thinking whenever possible, so they can understand what is going on internally as well as externally.

Verbally **label** your emotions and discuss your **indicators** with your students. Then model a **calming strategy**. "I am going to take a couple deep breaths." Invite the class to join and lead the class in two or three rounds of a breathing exercise.

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