

Am I Doing It Right?!

Parent Support Manual

A Playful, Practical Guide to Understanding Yourself and Your Kids

(Spoiler: you're asking the question — that's already most of the answer.)

Based on the RAR Framework — Reflect · Align · Restore

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How to Use This Guide

Welcome, brave human. You picked up this manual, which means you're already doing the most important thing: paying attention. This guide is not about being a perfect parent — perfection is a myth invented by people who have never been peed on at 3am.

This manual is organized into 12 modules that build on each other. You can read it cover to cover, or jump to whatever module is on fire today. Each module ends with reflection prompts, and the full printable worksheets are collected at the back.

A Note Before We Begin

This guide is grounded in neuroscience, trauma-informed care, and polyvagal theory. It is designed for parents navigating anxiety, trauma histories, ADHD, autism, or just the general chaos of being alive and responsible for tiny humans.

This is not medical advice. If you are in crisis, please reach out to a mental health professional. You deserve real support, not just a worksheet.

MODULE 1

Meet Your Nervous System (It Means Well)

Let's start with some good news and some mildly inconvenient news.

The good news: your brain is an incredible, complex organ that has kept you alive through some genuinely difficult stuff.

The mildly inconvenient news: that same brain sometimes treats a pile of laundry like a threat to your survival.

What Is the Nervous System?

Your nervous system is your body's communication network, the biological system that processes everything happening inside and outside you and decides what to do about it. Think of it as the world's most overworked IT department running on about four hours of sleep.

There are two key branches we care about here:

- **The Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS):** your gas pedal. It fires up in response to threat — real or perceived. This is the system that makes your heart race when your kid knocks over a full cup of juice on your laptop.
- **The Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS):** your brake. It helps you rest, digest, connect, and recover. This is what you're trying to access when you take a deep breath and count to ten.

Polyvagal Theory: A Brief (Non-Boring) Explanation

Dr. Stephen Porges developed Polyvagal Theory in the 1990s, and it changed how we understand stress responses. The theory describes three states of the nervous system (Porges, 2011):

State	What It Feels Like
Safe & Social	Connected, calm, able to think clearly. You can read a room, make eye contact, solve problems.
Fight or Flight	Activated, defensive. Your brain has decided there's a threat and is mobilizing resources to deal with it.
Freeze / Shutdown	The system overloads and shuts down. You go numb, dissociate, feel foggy or checked out.

Here's the key insight: when you are dysregulated (in fight/flight or freeze), your access to empathy, reasoning, and flexibility is genuinely compromised. It's not a character flaw. It's biology.

Science Moment

The prefrontal cortex is the part of the brain responsible for logic, empathy, and planning, actually goes partially offline during states of high stress. (van der Kolk, 2014). It isn't drama, it is neurobiological.

Why This Matters for Parenting

You cannot pour from an empty cup. But you also cannot pour from a cup that is currently on fire. Understanding your nervous system is step one. Not so you can feel guilty about your reactions, but so you can start to see the pattern and interrupt it.

Co-regulation is the foundation of child development. Research shows that children learn to regulate their own emotions primarily by being in relationship with regulated caregivers (Schoore, 2001). That's not pressure, that's the reason this work matters.

MODULE 2

The Window of Tolerance: Your Personal Operating Range

Imagine your emotional capacity as a window. When you're inside the window, you're in your optimal zone: regulated, responsive, able to think and feel at the same time. When something pushes you above the window (hyper-arousal) or below it (hypo-arousal), that's when things get harder.

This concept was originally developed by Daniel Siegel (1999) and expanded significantly in trauma therapy. It's now a cornerstone of somatic and trauma-informed work.

The Three Zones

Zone 1: Optimal Zone (Inside the Window)

This is your sweet spot. The best! You feel:

- Present, grounded, and reasonably calm
- Able to access empathy and logic — at the same time
- Capable of flexible responses (rather than just reactions)
- Physically: steady breathing, relaxed jaw and shoulders, open posture

The Edge / Stretch Zone

This is the 5-10% outside of optimal and on the edge of hyper-arousal - where growth happens, but only if you have enough support. You feel:

- A bit activated, but still capable
- Mildly uncomfortable, but open
- Energized without being overwhelmed

This is where therapy tools, new parenting approaches, and emotional learning can land. Not in Zone 3. Not when you're in survival mode or depleted.

Zone 2: Hyper-Arousal (Fight or Flight)

You've gone above the window. You feel:

- Angry, anxious, restless, or agitated
- Like you need to escape, argue, fix, or control everything
- Easily triggered by noise, mess, demands, or even eye contact
- Physically: racing heart, shallow breath, tension in jaw/chest/hands

Your brain is in survival mode and it feels like it is melting. It is MOST unpleasant. This is not the time for deep conversations, discipline plans, or self-improvement. This is the time for stabilization.

Zone 3: Hypo-Arousal (Freeze / Shutdown)

You've gone below the window. You feel:

- Numb, foggy, dissociated, heavy
- Like you're watching your life from underwater
- Unable to move, care, respond, or act
- Physically: cold extremities, low muscle tone, slowed thinking

This is your nervous system's protection response — pulling you out of a situation that feels too overwhelming. It is not laziness. It is not weakness.

Neurodivergence Note

ADHD and autism can affect the size and shape of your window of tolerance.

Many neurodivergent individuals have narrower windows due to sensory processing differences, interoceptive challenges, and nervous system wiring. This is not a personal failure- it's neurology. (Price, 2022; Kerns et al., 2015)

MODULE 3

Reflect: What Throws You Off?

Welcome to Module 3, where we stop pretending that everything is fine and start getting curious about what's actually happening. Reflection is the 'R' in RAR: Reflect, Align, Restore. It is the foundation of everything that follows, because you cannot change what you cannot see.

What Are Triggers?

A trigger is any sensory input, memory, situation, or interaction that activates your stress response. "Triggering" is a neurological process - it's your brain making very fast, largely unconscious pattern-matches based on past experience (van der Kolk, 2014).

Common parenting triggers include:

- **Specific sounds:** crying, whining, loud repetitive noises
- **Sensory overload:** multiple demands at once, crowded spaces
- **Sleep deprivation or hunger** (basic needs, chronically unmet)
- **Your child's behavior** that mirrors your own struggles or past
- **Feeling unseen**, unappreciated, or unsupported
- **Transitions and unpredictability**

The Body Keeps Score

Triggers don't just live in your thoughts. They live in your body. Bessel van der Kolk's landmark research showed that traumatic memories and stress patterns are stored somatically (in the body) not just cognitively (van der Kolk, 2014).

Learning to read your body signals is one of the most powerful regulation skills you can develop. When you notice 'my jaw is tight' before you notice 'I am furious,' you have more choice. That gap between sensation and reaction is where everything changes. Starting to notice (not judge).

Common Body Signals by Zone

Body Signal	Zone
Tight jaw or clenched fists	Fight/Flight (Hyper)
Racing heart or pounding pulse	Fight/Flight (Hyper)
Shallow or held breath	Fight/Flight (Hyper)
Shoulders up near ears	Fight/Flight (Hyper)
Cold hands and feet	Freeze (Hypo)
Foggy thinking or 'going blank'	Freeze (Hypo)
Heavy limbs, low energy	Freeze (Hypo)
Feeling disconnected from body	Freeze (Hypo)

MODULE 4

Align: Getting Back to Yourself

Alignment is the second letter in RAR. It asks: what brings you back into connection — with yourself, your values, and the parent you want to be?

This is not about toxic positivity ('just think positive!') or white-knuckling through hard moments. This is about developing a toolkit of real strategies that work for your specific nervous system. It also includes an original in-the-moment reset tool — B.R.E.A.T.H. — developed specifically for this framework.

Co-Regulation First

Here is an uncomfortable truth: regulation strategies don't work very well when you try to use them alone in survival mode. The most powerful regulator for humans is other humans: safe, attuned, present humans (Porges, 2011; Schore, 2001).

This is called co-regulation, and it's not a weakness. It's biology. We are wired to regulate through relationship.

Self-Regulation Strategies That Actually Help

Physiological Sigh

Double inhale through the nose (the second inhale inflates the alveoli in your lungs), then long exhale through the mouth. This is the fastest evidence-based way to downregulate the stress response (Balban et al., 2023).

Cold Water / Temperature Shift

Splashing cold water on your face, or running cold water over your wrists, activates the dive reflex and stimulates the vagus nerve, creating a rapid parasympathetic response.

Grounding (5-4-3-2-1)

Name 5 things you can see, 4 you can touch, 3 you can hear, 2 you can smell, 1 you can taste. This activates sensory pathways and pulls your attention into the present moment rather than the activated past/future.

Deep Pressure

A heavy blanket, a firm hug, or simply pressing your hands flat on a hard surface can signal safety to your nervous system through proprioceptive input.

Movement

Shaking, walking, dancing, stretching — movement metabolizes stress hormones and helps discharge the activated energy from the fight/flight response (Levine, 2010).

The B.R.E.A.T.H. Reset

When things are escalating, your nervous system needs a signal that it's okay to downshift. The B.R.E.A.T.H. Reset is an original tool developed within the RAR framework — a short, body-first sequence you can use in under two minutes, anywhere.

B.R.E.A.T.H. — Your In-the-Moment Reset

B — Body first: put both feet flat on the floor. Feel the ground.

R — Recognize what's happening: 'My nervous system is activated right now.'

E — Exhale long and slow (longer out than in — this is the brake pedal).

A — Ask one question: 'What does this moment actually need from me?'

T — Temperature check: am I in fight/flight, freeze, or just stretched?

H — Here: name one thing you can see, hear, or feel right now. You are here.

Sample script: 'Feet down. I notice I'm activated. Long breath out. What does this moment need? I'm in fight mode — stretched, not broken. I am right here.'

MODULE 5

Restore: Filling Your Cup (Not Someone Else's Idea of Your Cup)

Restore is the third pillar of RAR. And it is, frankly, the one most parents skip, because it feels indulgent, because there's no time, because someone always needs something.

Here is the science-backed case for taking it seriously: chronic nonrestorative stress changes the structure of the brain, impairs emotional regulation, and reduces capacity for empathy and connection (McEwen, 2007).

Restoration is not optional self-care. It is neurological maintenance. We need this more than we know.

What Restoration Actually Looks Like

Restoration is not necessarily a spa day or a weekend retreat (though if you can arrange either, we support you entirely). It is the daily and weekly habits that help your nervous system recover from the demands placed on it.

Research on recovery from stress highlights several key domains (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007):

- **Psychological detachment:** mentally stepping away from stressor-related thinking
- **Relaxation:** low-demand activities that reduce physiological arousal
- **Mastery:** doing activities where you feel competent and autonomous
- **Control:** choosing how you spend your recovery time

Restoration Ideas (Organized by Available Time)

Under 15 Minutes	30 Minutes or More
Three deep breaths before getting out of the car	A longer solo activity: a bath, a creative project, a workout
A mug of something warm, without looking at a screen	Time with a friend who makes you feel seen (not judged)
A ten-minute walk outside, alone if possible	Movement that feels joyful, not punishing
Journaling for five minutes: no editing, no audience	Rest: actual, horizontal, no-productivity rest

Notice what fills you up - not what you think *should*. Restoration is personal. Introverts and extroverts restore differently. Sensory-sensitive people restore differently. There is no universal answer.

MODULE 6

The RAR Framework in Action

Now that you understand each piece: Reflect, Align, Restore, let's look at how they work together in the wild (also known as: Tuesday afternoon with two kids, no snacks, and an overdue work email).

The RAR Cycle

The framework is not linear. It's a cycle, and you might enter it at any point:

- **Reflect:** You notice something. A sensation, a reaction, a pattern. All of it. Curiosity for their experience, and for yourself. You get curious rather than critical.
- **Align:** You use tools and strategies to come back into connection- with yourself, your values, or another person.
- **Restore:** You rebuild. You fill what was depleted. You don't just survive- you soften and return.

What This Looks Like in Real Life

Scenario: The Tantrum at the Grocery Store

Your four-year-old has decided that the middle of the cereal aisle is an ideal location for a full emotional collapse. People are watching. You feel your face get hot.

REFLECT: You notice you are moving into fight/flight. Chest tight. Jaw clenched. The watching eyes feel threatening. You've been here before. Your body remembers.

ALIGN: You take a physiological sigh. You lower your voice instead of raising it. You crouch down. You say 'That feels really big. I'm right here.'

RESTORE: Later, after everyone is home and the groceries are (eventually) put away, you write one sentence in your phone about what you felt. You eat something. You text a friend. You count it as a win — because it was.

When You Don't Get It Right

You will not always get it right. You will yell when you meant to whisper. You will shut down when you meant to stay present. This is human, and it is also not the end of the story.

Repair: the act of returning, acknowledging, and reconnecting after a rupture — is one of the most powerful things you can model for your children (Siegel & Hartzell, 2003). Kids don't need perfect parents. They need parents who come back.

Repair Can Be

Repair does not require a script; it requires honesty and presence. Here are some starting points you can make your own:

1. Name what happened without blame: 'That was a hard moment for both of us.'
2. Acknowledge your part simply: 'I got really big there. That was mine, not yours.'
3. Restate the relationship: 'Even when things get hard, you are safe with me.'
4. Invite reconnection: 'Can we start over? I would like to try again.'

MODULE 7

Sensory Processing and Why the Tag in the Shirt Matters

Let's talk about sensory processing, because whether or not you've heard the term, it's probably playing a significant role in your household.

Sensory processing refers to the way your nervous system receives, organizes, and responds to sensory information from the environment. For most people, this happens in the background, like good wifi... reliable and invisible. For others (many neurodivergent individuals, trauma survivors, and anxious people), sensory processing can be the difference between a manageable day and a genuinely overwhelming one.

The Eight Senses

Most of us learned about five senses in school. There are actually eight:

- Vision, Hearing, Smell, Taste, Touch (the classic five)
- **Proprioception:** the sense of where your body is in space (that satisfying feeling of being under a heavy blanket. Delicious.)
- **Vestibular:** your sense of movement and balance (why some kids need to spin constantly!)
- **Interoception:** the sense of your internal body state: hunger, thirst, heartbeat, emotional sensations (Hey, gotta pee!)

Sensory Sensitivity and Dysregulation

Sensory processing differences are common in ADHD (Bijlenga et al., 2017), autism (Marco et al., 2011), and trauma (van der Kolk, 2014). This means that environments many people find neutral (a loud restaurant, a scratchy fabric, bright fluorescent lights) can be genuinely activating or painful for others.

This includes your kids. And you. And possibly both of you, in the same small car, running late.

Building Your Sensory Rescue Kit

A Sensory Rescue Kit is a curated collection of sensory tools that help you (and your child) regulate. These are not indulgences. They are functional regulation supports.

Ideas for Your Rescue Kit

1. Something **soft**: a small piece of fleece fabric, a soft plushie, a comfort item
2. Something **scented**: a rollerball of lavender, peppermint, or a familiar scent
3. Something to **chew** or suck: chewy snacks, gum, a silicone chewing necklace
4. Something to **squeeze** or tap: a stress ball, putty, a textured fidget
5. Something **visual** or grounding: a calming image, a jar of glitter in water, a candle

MODULE 8

Parenting Through Trauma History

This module is written with care, because what follows touches on something tender: the way our past shows up in our parenting, even when we work hard to keep it out.

If you grew up in a home with instability, emotional unavailability, abuse, neglect, addiction, or unpredictability. You are parenting from a body that learned to survive those things. And sometimes that survival wiring gets in the way of the parent you want to be.

This is not your fault. It is also not a life sentence.

Intergenerational Patterns

Attachment patterns are transmitted across generations. Not through genetics alone, but through the ways we were treated, the models we internalized, and the stress responses we developed (Bowlby, 1988; Main & Hesse, 1990). Recognizing the pattern is the beginning of interrupting it.

The Dual Awareness Skill

Trauma responses often involve the past and present colliding. Your child's tantrum triggers something older than this moment. Dual awareness means learning to hold both: 'I am here now, and something from before is being activated.'

Practice: When you notice an outsized reaction, ask yourself:

- Is this a 10 on the scale of what's actually happening right now?
- Or is some of this 10 borrowed from before?
- What do I know to be true about right now?

A Note on Professional Support

Trauma work is real work, and a good therapist, particularly one trained in somatic, EMDR, or IFS approaches. This can make an enormous difference. You do not have to figure this out alone. Seeking support is the bravest, most parent-like thing you can do.

MODULE 9

Parenting Mantras and the Inner Critic

Somewhere along the way, most of us developed a very loud internal voice that has a lot of opinions about our parenting. This voice tends to show up at the worst possible moments - usually when you're already exhausted, and says things like 'You're ruining them' or 'A good parent wouldn't have done that.'

This module is about noticing that voice, understanding where it came from, and building some counterweight.

Cognitive Distortions in Parenting

Several common thinking patterns tend to amplify parental guilt and shame:

- All-or-nothing thinking: 'I yelled once, so I'm a bad parent.'
- Mind-reading: 'My child thinks I don't love them.'
- Fortune-telling: 'This will scar them forever.'
- Should statements: 'I should be able to handle this.'

These distortions are normal, and they are also not accurate. They're the brain's stress response expressing itself in narrative form.

Thought Replacements That Are Actually True

Old Thought	True Replacement
"I'm ruining them."	"I'm showing up. Connection, not perfection."
"A good parent wouldn't struggle like this."	"Struggling means I'm doing hard, real work."
"I should have this together by now."	"I'm not behind. I'm healing."
"My child needs a perfect parent."	"My child needs a calm, present me."

Writing Your Own Mantra

A short phrase that redirects you toward what's true when the inner critic is loudest. The best are specific to you and grounded in something you actually believe (or working towards).

"Messy is still sacred."
"I am doing the work. That counts."
"This is a hard moment, not a hard life."
"I am allowed to be human in front of my child."
"I can repair. I always come back."

MODULE 10

Creating a Rhythm That Holds You

One of the most underrated regulation tools for both adults and children is predictable rhythm. Not a rigid schedule that collapses the moment someone gets sick- a flexible structure that provides enough predictability to create felt safety.

Research on family routines shows that consistent daily rhythms are associated with lower parental stress, better child behavioral outcomes, and improved sleep quality for the entire household (Fiese et al., 2002).

Micro-Regulation Moments

A micro-regulation moment is a brief, intentional pause built into your day that helps your nervous system recalibrate. Think of these as pit stops, not overhauls. They don't fix everything - they prevent the slow accumulation of dysregulation that eventually becomes a blowup.

Examples of micro-regulation moments:

- Three deep breaths in the parking lot before school pickup
- A brief sensory reset before the after-school rush (stepping outside, washing hands with cool water)
- One minute of stillness after the kids go to sleep, before opening your phone
- Humming or singing while you make dinner (vibrates the vagus nerve — yes, really)

Joyful Things Matter

Your weekly rhythm should include things that bring you actual joy. Not 'productive rest' or 'educational enrichment.' Joy. Delight. The thing you would do if no one was watching.

Research on positive emotions shows that experiencing positive affect doesn't just feel good. It builds psychological resources over time, creating resilience that serves you during hard moments (Fredrickson, 2001).

MODULE 11

Mapping Your Personal RAR Profile

In this module, you'll integrate everything from the previous sections into your own Personal RAR Map. A self-reflection tool that helps you understand your regulation patterns so you can work with them instead of against them.

The Personal RAR Map is built on three core questions:

- Reflect: What throws me off? What are my triggers, my body signals, my dysregulation patterns?
- Align: What helps me come back? What tools, people, and practices help me regulate and reconnect?
- Restore: What fills me up? What genuinely restores my energy, my sense of self, my joy?

Why Mapping Matters

Self-knowledge is not navel-gazing. It is operational data. When you know your patterns in advance, you can prepare, communicate your needs to people who support you, and intervene earlier in the dysregulation cycle, before you've lost your window entirely.

Partners, co-parents, and caregivers can also benefit from sharing and comparing their maps — not to judge each other, but to understand each other and build cooperative plans.

An Honest Note About Knowing Yourself

Many people — especially those with trauma histories or neurodivergence — find interoception (knowing what's happening inside their body) genuinely difficult.

If you struggle to identify what you feel or what helps, that's okay. Start small.

Notice one thing. Then one more. This develops over time with practice and support.

The worksheets at the end of this manual walk you through each section of your Personal RAR Map step by step. Take your time with them. You don't have to fill them in all at once.

MODULE 12

You Are Not Alone: Community and Ongoing Support

We saved this for last, but it might be the most important module of all.

Parenting is relational work. And healing — whether from your own history, from burnout, from the accumulated weight of doing hard things mostly alone — is also relational. Humans heal in community. We regulate through connection. We restore through being witnessed.

Finding Your People

Not everyone in your life needs to understand every part of your journey. But having even one person who 'gets it' — who has lived in a body, raised a kid, struggled with regulation — makes a measurable difference in resilience and wellbeing (Holt-Lunstad et al., 2015).

This might look like:

- A parent support group (in person or online)
- A therapist who is trauma-informed and neurodivergence-affirming
- A trusted friend who you can text when things get hard
- A community built around a shared experience (single parenting, ADHD, anxiety, grief)

Professional Resources

If you are navigating significant trauma, a mental health diagnosis, or parenting a child with complex needs, professional support is not a luxury. Consider:

- Individual therapy (especially EMDR, somatic experiencing, IFS, or DBT-based approaches)
- Parent coaching or behavior support for specific child-related challenges
- Occupational therapy for sensory processing concerns (for you or your child)
- Psychiatry if medication is part of your support plan

A Final Word

You are not broken. Your reactions make sense given what you've been through and what you're carrying. Your nervous system is doing its job - a job that may need some updating, some support, and some gentleness.

You are doing something extraordinary: you are paying attention. You are trying to understand. You are choosing, over and over, to come back.

That is everything.

Yes. You Are Doing It Right.

Not perfectly. Not always. But showing up, learning, and coming back

- that counts. **References & Citations**

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Further Reading & Resources

Books

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- Siegel, D. J., & Bryson, T. P. (2011). *The Whole-Brain Child* — Practical neuroscience for everyday parenting.
- Levine, P. A. (2010). *In an Unspoken Voice* — Somatic approaches to trauma healing.
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- Price, D. (2022). *Unmasking Autism* — A compassionate exploration of neurodivergent experience.
- Rosenberg, M. B. (2003). *Nonviolent Communication* — Connecting needs and feelings in relationships.
- Brown, B. (2010). *The Gifts of Imperfection* — Shame resilience and wholehearted parenting.
- Siegel, D. J., & Hartzell, M. (2003). *Parenting from the Inside Out* — Integration of attachment and neuroscience.
- Perry, B. D., & Winfrey, O. (2021). *What Happened to You?* — Conversations on trauma and resilience.

Online Resources

- SupportingCommunityTogether.com — The home of the RAR Framework and Angela Taylor's work.
- The Polyvagal Institute (polyvagal institute.org) — Free resources on polyvagal theory.
- PESI (pesi.com) — Continuing education resources on trauma-informed parenting.
- Understood.org — Research-backed resources for neurodivergent children and their families.
- Psychology Today therapist finder — Search by specialty (trauma, ADHD, autism, parenting).

Podcasts

- The Neurodiversity Podcast — Evidence-based conversations on ADHD, autism, and learning differences.
- Good Inside with Dr. Becky Kennedy — Attachment-based parenting in everyday situations.
- Therapist Uncensored — Deep dives on polyvagal theory and relational neuroscience.
- Parenting After Trauma — Specific support for parents navigating their own histories.

Worksheet 1: Personal RAR Map

Use this map to identify your patterns across all three pillars of the RAR framework. Take your time. Come back and update it as you learn more about yourself.

REFLECT — What Throws Me Off?



Situations, Sounds, or Behaviors That Trigger Me

What situations tend to activate my stress response?

What sounds, textures, or environments are difficult for me?

Are there specific behaviors (in my child or others) that feel particularly activating?



What My Body Feels Like?

Where in my body do I first notice dysregulation?

What are my early warning signals? (jaw, shoulders, heart rate, breathing?)

When I am in fight/flight, I tend to...

ALIGN — What Brings Me Back?



Tools and Strategies That Help Me Regulate

What helps me feel safe again when I've been activated?

Who helps me shift out of a reactive state?

What aligns me with the kind of parent I want to be?

RESTORE — What Fills My Cup?



My Restoration Practices

What genuinely fills me up? (Not what should, but what actually does.)

What restores my energy or sense of self after a hard day?

What gives me hope or joy?

Worksheet 2: My Personal Window of Tolerance



When I'm in My Optimal Zone...

I tend to feel:

My body feels:

I'm able to:



When I'm at the Edge (Stretch Zone)...

I might notice:

I need support with:



When I'm in Fight / Flight (Hyper-Arousal)...

My signals are:

I tend to:

What helps me de-escalate:



When I'm in Freeze / Shutdown (Hypo-Arousal)...

My signals are:

I tend to:

What helps me return gently:

Worksheet 3: My Sensory Rescue Kit

Build your own regulation kit with sensory tools that work for your nervous system. Circle, check, or write in what applies to you.



My Rescue Kit Includes...

Something soft (e.g., a piece of fleece, a plushie, a comfort item):

Something scented (e.g., lavender, peppermint, a familiar smell):

Something to chew or suck (e.g., chewy snacks, gum, chewing jewelry):

Something to squeeze or tap (e.g., stress ball, putty, a textured fidget):

Something visual or grounding (e.g., a calming image, a glitter jar):

My secret weapon (whatever works for me that isn't on this list):

Keep these in a calming bag or bin, clearly labeled. Make one for yourself and one for your child (with age-appropriate items). Knowing your tools in advance means you don't have to invent them in the middle of a meltdown.

Worksheet 4: My B.R.E.A.T.H. Reset Plan

Fill this in and keep it somewhere visible — the fridge, the bathroom mirror, your car visor. You want to see it before you need it.



My B.R.E.A.T.H. Reset — Personalized

B — What does 'Body first' look like for me? (feet on floor, hand on chest, wall?)

R — How do I Recognize I'm activated? (what's my earliest body signal?)

E — What's my go-to Exhale strategy? (slow breath, hum, sigh?)

A — What does this moment usually Actually need from me?

T — Which zone do I land in most often — fight/flight or freeze?

H — What grounding anchor brings me back Here? (a sight, sound, or sensation)



My Repair Approach

When things go sideways, the first thing I want to do is:

How I tend to reconnect with my child after a hard moment:

What I want my child to know, even on the hardest days:

Worksheet 5: My Parenting Mantras

Write 3–5 mantras that feel true to you, or that you want to practice believing. Post them somewhere you'll see them.



My Mantras

Mantra 1 (something I want to believe about myself):

Mantra 2 (something I want to remember when it's hard):

Mantra 3 (something I'm proud of, even if it's small):

Mantra 4 (something I want my child to someday know about me):

Mantra 5 (one true thing about how I am showing up):



My Inner Critic vs. My Wiser Voice

Something my inner critic says often:

What my wiser self knows is actually true:

What I would say to a friend going through this exact thing:

Worksheet 6: Weekly Rhythm Map

Use this planner to design a weekly rhythm that includes regulation moments, joy, and at least one gentle task per day. This is not a to-do list — it's a regulation scaffold.

Day	Micro-Regulation Moment	Joyful Thing	Gentle Task
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			



Notes on My Rhythm

What patterns do I notice across the week?

Where am I most likely to skip micro-regulation moments?

One small change I could make this week to protect my regulation: