



# TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

## SELF-REGULATION STRATEGIES



Government  
of South Australia

Some behaviours and situations can be 'hot buttons' for our own ability to stay calm. Staying calm helps children and young people stay calm too and feel safe.

Here are some strategies you can try when you find yourself in a 'hot button' situation.

<b>TOP-DOWN</b> USING YOUR MIND TO CHANGE YOUR REACTION	<b>USING IMAGERY</b>	<b>BOTTOM-UP</b> USING YOUR BODY TO CHANGE YOUR REACTION
<p>Change your thinking ('This person is feeling misunderstood' rather than 'this person is angry with me').</p>	<p>Imagine stepping aside from all the intense feelings directed at you. You calmly watch them float past.</p>	<p>Relax your muscles, noticing the places you hold stress.</p>
<p>Take a mental step back and offer yourself compassion ('I am feeling overwhelmed right now, I need to take time to calm myself').</p>	<p>Imagine a bubble or shield around you. Your care for the person can move through it, but the intense feelings bounce off.</p>	<p>Change your posture to one of confidence, put your chin up and your shoulders back.</p>
<p>Notice if your own brain is going into survival mode. Remind yourself that strong feelings are not an emergency and take the time to regulate before responding.</p>	<p>Imagine being backed up by people you know support you. They have confidence in you and your skills.</p>	<p>Feel your feet on the floor and scrunch your toes. Move in your chair or change position.</p>
<p>Remind yourself that your role is to remain non-judgemental, this does not mean meeting every need of the person you are interacting with.</p>	<p>Visualise yourself filling with compassion and calmness. Try to project those feelings towards the person, knowing their response is due to trauma.</p>	<p>Look around and remind yourself that you are okay and have support. Notice something in the room you can focus on to help you regulate (draw or play with an item).</p>
<p>Remind yourself that the person's distress is about their trauma, not about you.</p>	<p>Focus on your breathing. Breathe in deeply and count to three.</p>	<p>Focus on your breathing. Breathe in deeply and count to three.</p>
<p>Listen to the message beneath the intense feelings ('I am hurt, ashamed, misunderstood. I won't let anyone push me around anymore').</p>	<p><b>If you are dealing with an emergency, get support. You do not have to manage the situation alone.</b></p>	

