

Directions: Ground your focus inward to look at somatic baselines and individual activation patterns honestly.

PART THREE

The Adult Response

A. Self-Reflection Questions

1. How does my tone change under stress? What specific student behaviors trigger judgment in me?

2. When conflict arises, do I instinctively move toward trying to control the situation, or do I seek connection?

The Adult Response

A. Self-Reflection Questions (Continued)

3. How comfortable am I validating emotions without approving behaviors?

4. What helps me remain grounded, and what systemic or personal supports do I have?

Directions: Complete these split somatic and internal planning evaluations to profile biological thresholds.

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The Adult Response

B. Individual Exercises (Part I)

→ Exercise 1: Trigger Mapping Worksheet Breakout

Directions: Identify personal triggers and typical reactions.

→ Exercise 2: Somatic Toolkit Worksheet Breakout

Directions: Build a list of regulating strategies that work for you.

3. Pause Practice

Outline a personal cue, phrase, or internal mantra you can use to intentionally rehearse slowing down your response before stepping into a behavioral crisis.

PERSONAL CUE / MANTRA LOG:

Educator Trigger Inventory

SELF-REFLECTION & REGULATION TOOL

Date: _____

Room: _____

Objective: Identifying our personal professional triggers allows us to move from reactive stress to intentional co-regulation. Check the items below that consistently push your nervous system toward dysregulation, then complete the brief action strategy below.

1. ENVIRONMENTAL & SITUATIONAL TRIGGERS

Sensory Load

- ☐ High vocal volume / piercing screams
- ☐ Multiple overlapping noises (toys, music, voices)
- ☐ Visual clutter / unorganized spaces
- ☐ Sustained high-energy chaos in close spaces

Transitions & Logistics

- ☐ Delays or pacing hitches during room changes
- ☐ Cleaning up major/repetitive messes
- ☐ Staff scheduling adjustments / sudden coverage changes
- ☐ Unpredictable routine interruptions

2. BEHAVIORAL & RELATIONAL TRIGGERS

Student Behaviors

- ☐ Active defiance or direct refusal ("No!")
- ☐ Physical dysregulation (hitting, throwing, biting)
- ☐ Emotional withdrawal / total shut down
- ☐ Chronic attention-seeking / constant interruption

Adult & Team Dynamics

- ☐ Misaligned co-educator responses or styles
- ☐ High-stress drop-off/pick-up parent interactions
- ☐ Feeling unseen, unvalidated, or unsupported
- ☐ Lack of clear communication within the team

3. PERSONALIZED MICRO-PLAN

My Top 2 Triggers:

Identify the two specific situations above that compromise your capacity to co-regulate most quickly.

Early Warning Signs (My Internal Body Signals):

How do I know I'm hitting my limit? (e.g., shallow breathing, tight shoulders, rushed pacing, tone changes)

Proactive Reset Strategy:

What is one realistic micro-action I can take in the moment to anchor myself? (e.g., 3 deep breaths, changing physical position, a brief grounding phrase, tapping in a teammate)

DAYCARE EDUCATOR SOMATIC TOOLKIT

CORE TOOLS FOR CLASSROOM SELF-REGULATION • AUGUST 2026 PD PACKAGE

The Co-Regulation Premise: A dysregulated educator cannot regulate a dysregulated child. When a classroom trigger occurs, use one of these three core strategies to intentionally stabilize your own nervous system, anchor your presence, and restore operational calm.

1. CORE REGULATION STRATEGIES

1. GROUNDING

5-4-3-2-1 Technique

A direct sensory anchor. Pause and silently identify:

- **5** things you can see
- **4** things you can physically feel
- **3** things you can hear
- **2** things you can smell
- **1** thing you can taste

Brings your focus away from the chaotic atmosphere and back into the present space.

2. BODY SCAN

Rapid Tension Check

A quick top-to-bottom internal evaluation you can do while standing:

- **Jaw:** Unclench teeth & release tongue
- **Shoulders:** Drop down away from ears
- **Hands:** Unclench fists, soften fingers
- **Feet:** Feel weight press into the floor

Releases the physical micro-bracing signals that unconsciously communicate anger or panic to children.

3. BOX BREATHING

Tactical 4x4 Rhythm

A simple, rhythmic cycle to reset your autonomic nervous system:

- **Inhale** through your nose for 4s
- **Hold** your breath at the top for 4s
- **Exhale** through your mouth for 4s
- **Hold** empty at the bottom for 4s

Physically lowers your heart rate and clears adrenaline spikes during overwhelming interactions.

2. PERSONAL APPLICATION WORKSHEET

What type of regulation strategies work best for you?

Reflect on past stressful moments. Do you respond better to sensory grounding, physical tension release (body scan), or deep breath control? Why?

My In-the-Moment Action Prompt:

Write down a 1-sentence micro-cue or specific technique choice you commit to using when you feel your internal tension level rising this term.

Directions: Take a moment to reflect on how you physically present yourself in the room when a child is struggling. Use this space to map out your own calm, caring, and grounded adult presence.

PART THREE

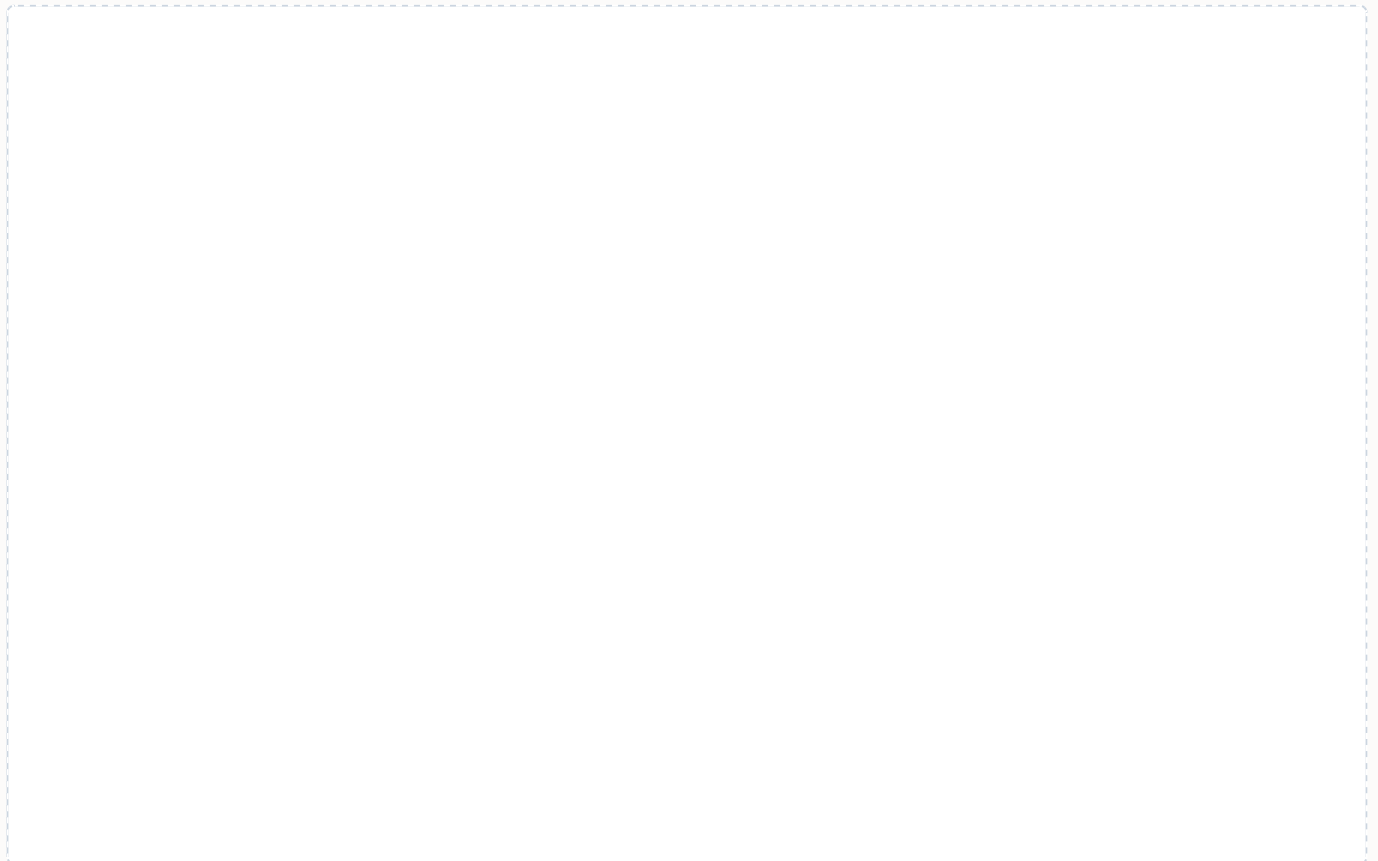
The Adult Response

B. Individual Exercises (Part II)

4. The Anatomy of a Regulated Presence Audit

Reflect on your typical physical state during a stressful behavioral intervention. Evaluate yourself across the five core components detailed on the following page (Mind, Body, Lungs, Face, Voice) and identify one specific area to target for conscious adjustment.

INITIAL REFLECTION NOTES:



Directions: Evaluate your baseline physical state across these five somatic components to target areas for conscious adjustment.

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The Anatomy of a Regulated Presence Audit (Full Page Matrix)

COMPONENT	MY TYPICAL STATE / BASELINE OBSERVATIONS
Mind Exploring the "why"	
Body Softened stance	
Lungs Slow, deliberate breathing	
Face Relaxed micro-muscles	
Voice Warm, regulated tone	

Directions: Based on your physical self-audit, outline your actionable target focus below to maintain a welcoming, stable environment.

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The Adult Response

B. Individual Exercises (Part II Continued)

MY ONE TARGET AREA FOCUS:

Identify one physical area (such as softening your posture, slowing your breathing, or keeping your voice warm) that you will intentionally practice focusing on during your next difficult classroom encounter.

Directions: Rehearse interactive connection techniques and accountability frameworks with a peer partner.

PART THREE

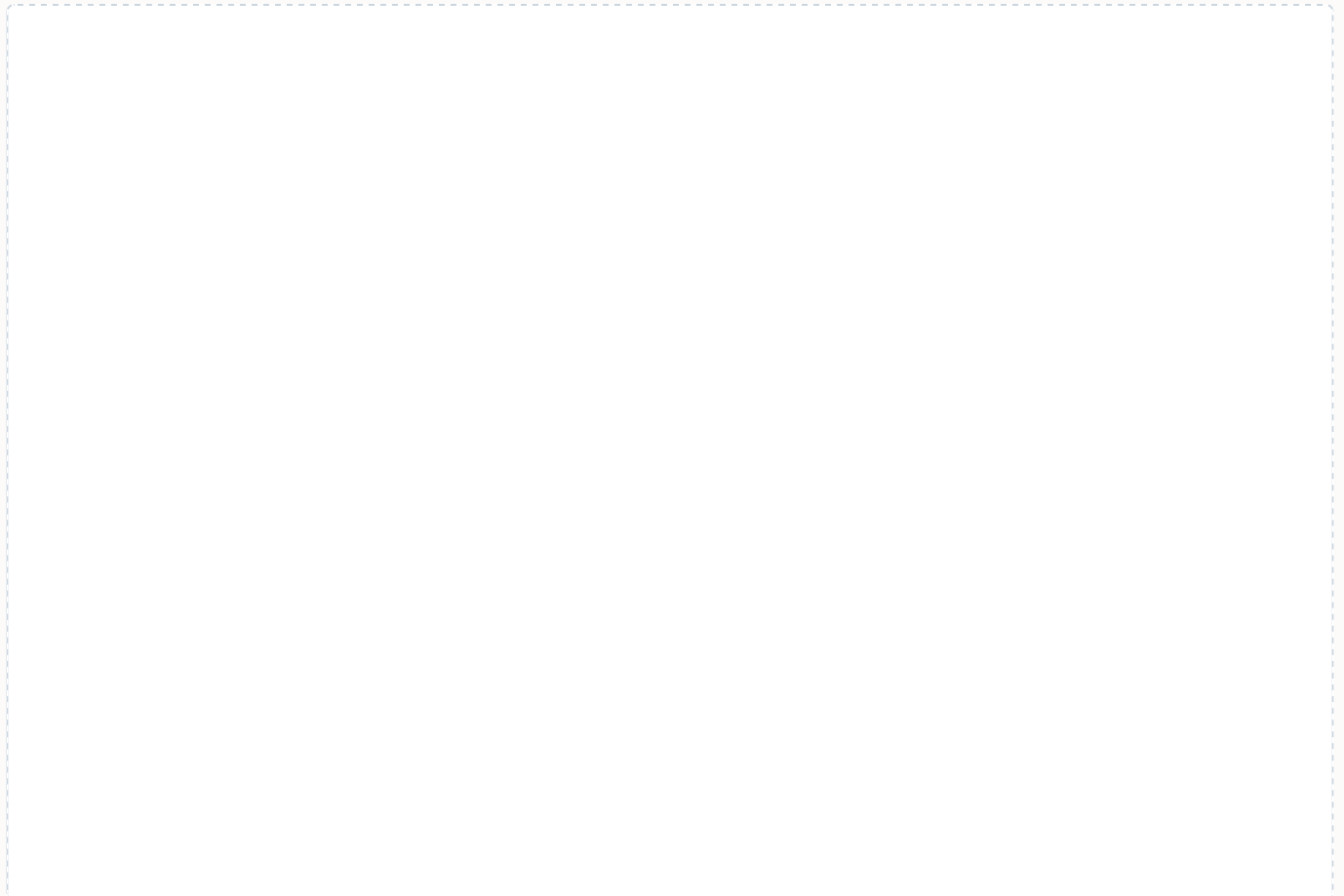
The Adult Response

C. Group Activities

1. Roleplay: From Instructor to Anchor

Review a common scenario of an unstructured play conflict (e.g., two children arguing over a game). Rehearse moving from an "Instructor" style (trying to quickly eliminate the problem) to an "Anchor" style (supporting interaction, co-regulating through disappointment, facilitating problem solving).

TEAM TAKEAWAYS & REFLECTIONS ON THE SHIFT:

A large, empty rectangular box with a dashed border, intended for participants to write their team takeaways and reflections on the shift from Instructor to Anchor style.

Directions: Rehearse interactive connection techniques and accountability frameworks with a peer partner.

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The Adult Response

2. Scripting the Repair

Ruptures are inevitable; regulation is about being reachable, not unshakeable. In pairs, think of a moment you lost your cool, and draft 1-2 collaborative repair scripts to circle back with a student (e.g., "I'm sorry I raised my voice. I got frustrated, and that wasn't your fault...").

DRAFT SCRIPT LOG: