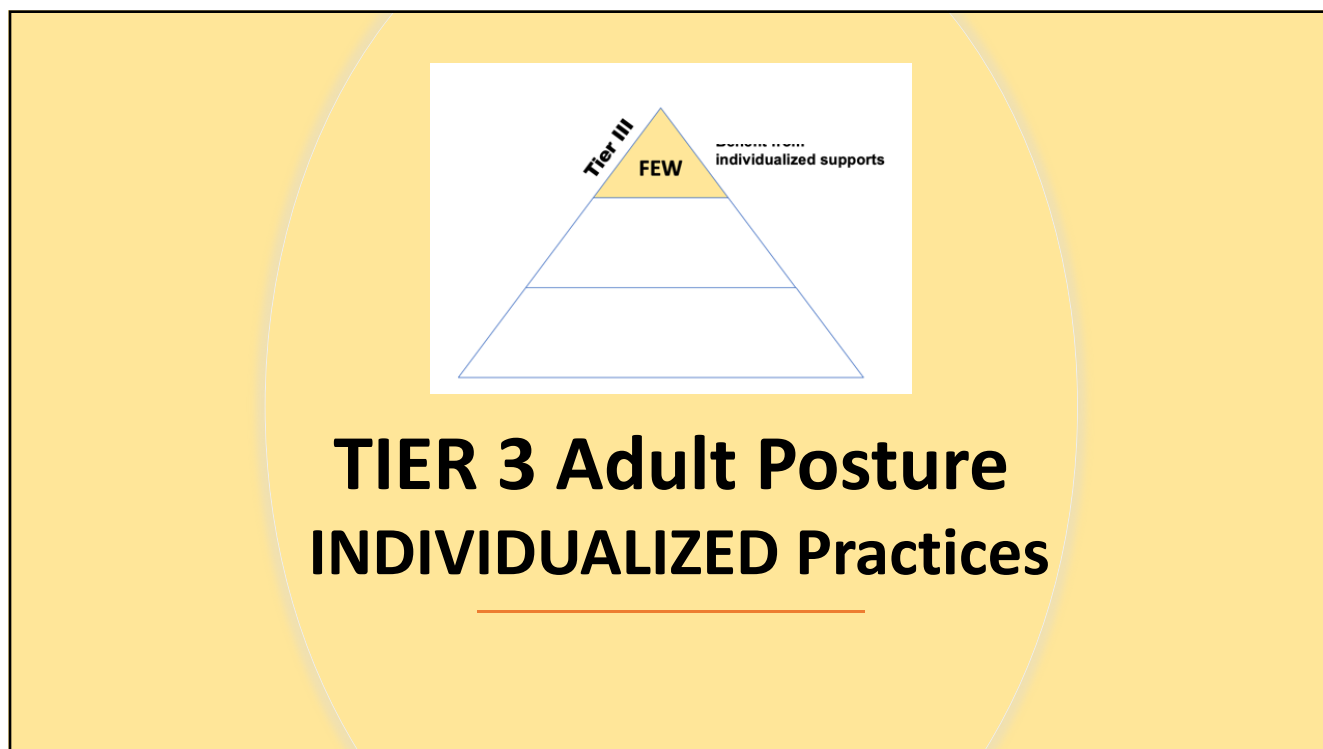




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Examples of a *Strong Adult Posture* at Tier 3

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- SAFETY FIRST**
Always prioritize safety for all.
- RELATIONSHIP DRIVEN**
Connection is the foundation.
- NEURODEVELOPMENTAL LENS**
Understand behaviour as communication.
- COLLABORATIVE**
Work together for consistent support.
- STRENGTHS BASED**
Focus on abilities, build on strengths.

Tier 3 individualized practices

Intensive, individualized practices that prioritize **safety, connection, and collaboration** to meet complex needs.

- 1 **Understanding** that when a student at Tier 3 is triggered and dysregulated, they are not receptive to our interventions in the moment (must focus on establishing safety for all first).
- 2 **Relying on the key elements** to effect change: structures, routines, predictability, respite, movement, being preventive/proactive, etc., including adapted scheduling if needed (these are **non-negotiable** at Tier 3).
- 3 **Being familiar** with the student's profile, needs and triggers to avoid unnecessary blowouts.
- 4 **Not being alienated** by their behaviour and keeping the posture of a nurturing provider.
- 5 **Being neutral, steady, and grounded** when intervening and keeping the students' wellbeing in mind.
- 6 **Backing away from conventional discipline** (in attempt to negatively punish or forcefully control the behaviour) and ultimatums, which may trigger the student further.
- 7 **Relying on co-regulation**, as well as **de-escalation strategies** if needed to defuse the situation. Keeping a safe and respectful distance that feels comfortable for the student (being attuned to the student's non-verbal shifts in facial expressions and demeanour).

- 8 **Ensuring** that all staff working with the student are on the same page concerning the student's profile, needs, triggers, and support measures in place (making the time to co-create a **Student Action Plan/Safety Plan** in order to share best practices and to increase a more coherent approach).
- 9 **Ensuring that the designated adults** familiar with the student's case are the ones who are intervening with them when the situation has escalated.
- 10 **Relying on the power of teamwork** to share the weight and responsibilities (this will help adults keep their posture intact).
- 11 **Implementing the safety plan** when needed. All students need to feel safe and taken care of.
- 12 **Conveying to other students** that you are aware the student in question is upset, that you are handling the situation, and they can focus on their own task at hand.
- 13 **Actively engaging the student** in communicating their needs (keep in mind they may not be self-aware or available to do so) and where they are at in their emotional regulation process, while understanding students at Tier 3 rely on ongoing **co-regulation support**.
- 14 **'Bridging'** by making the relationship (not the behaviour) the bottom line and restoring the connection following any fallout.
- 15 **Reassuring** the student that you are there for them and they can always come to you for help.

A strong adult posture is grounded in connection, consistency, and compassion.

It's not about perfect responses, but about a **purposeful presence**.

SAFETY
Create physical and emotional safety.

PREDICTABILITY
Use routines, structure, and predictability.

REGULATION
Support co-regulation and self-regulation.

CONNECTION
Build trusting relationships.

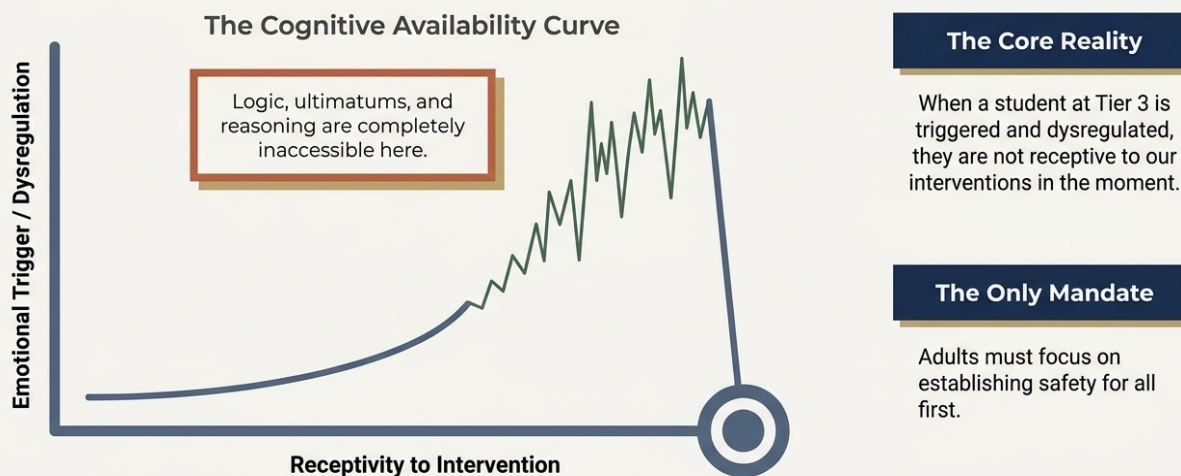
TEAMWORK
Share the weight. Support one another.

PLANNING
Plan ahead. Implement safety plans.

BELONGING
Foster inclusion, respect and dignity.

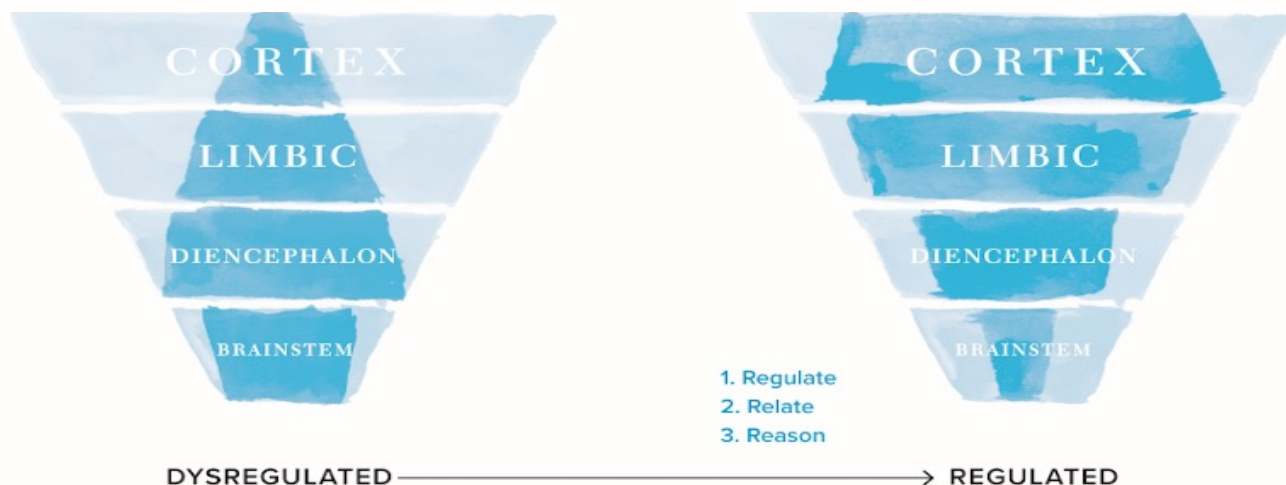
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When dysregulation peaks, cognitive availability plummets.



NotebookLM

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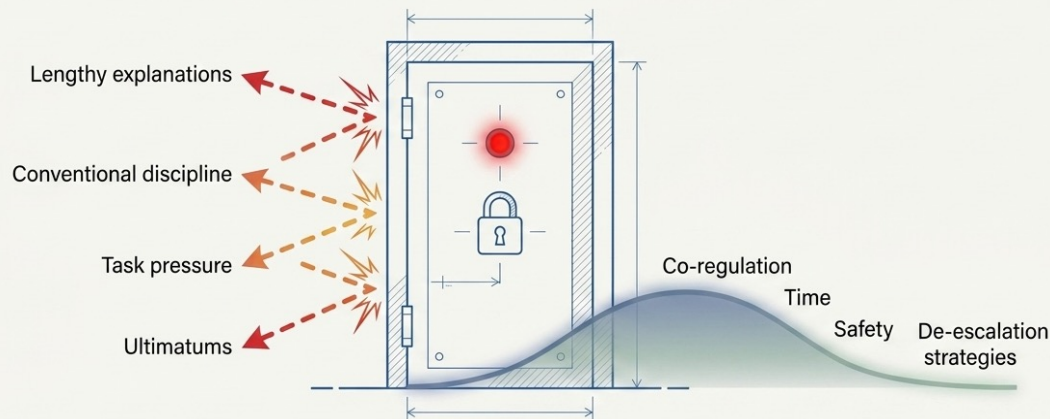
Neuroscience has helped dispel the myth that we need to think better to behave better.

When children are dysregulated, they have lesser access to their 'thinking brain'. Therefore, the key is rather helping children feel safe and grounded through structure/routine, predictability and adult support/co-regulation.

Dr. Bruce Perry (2021) *What Happened to You?*

4

Tier 3: Triggered students operate outside the window of receptivity.



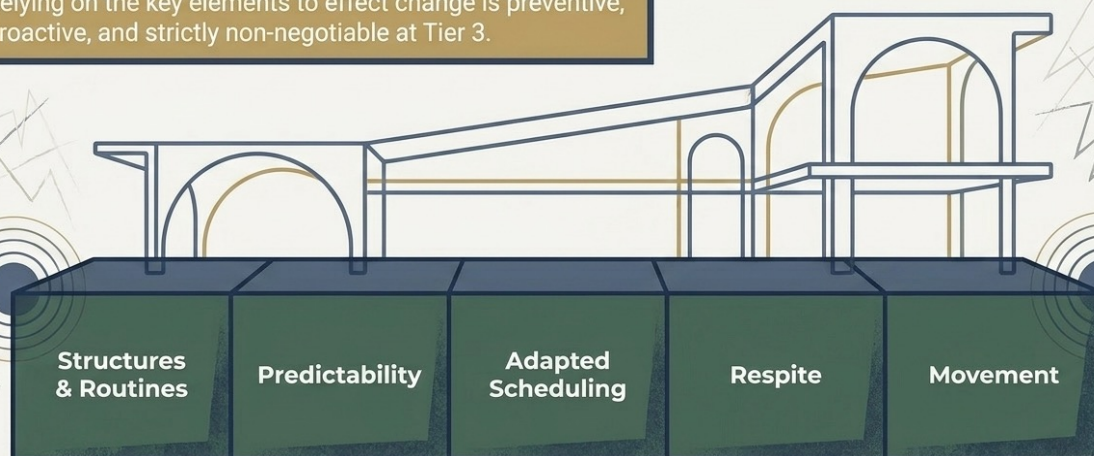
When a student is at Tier 3, they are entirely unreceptive to verbal interventions in the moment. The adult must wait until the student returns to a state of calm before addressing the situation.

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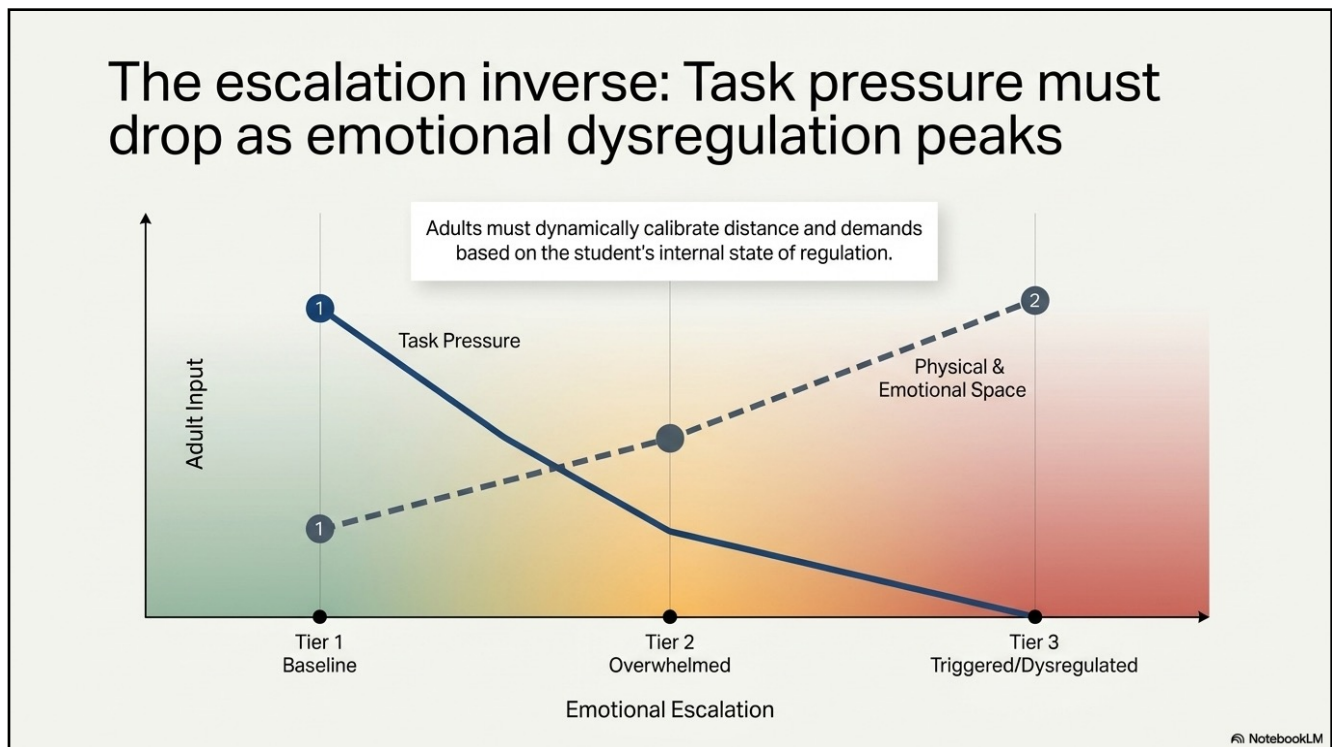
Tier 3 demands a non-negotiable, proactive foundation.

Relying on the key elements to effect change is preventive, proactive, and strictly non-negotiable at Tier 3.

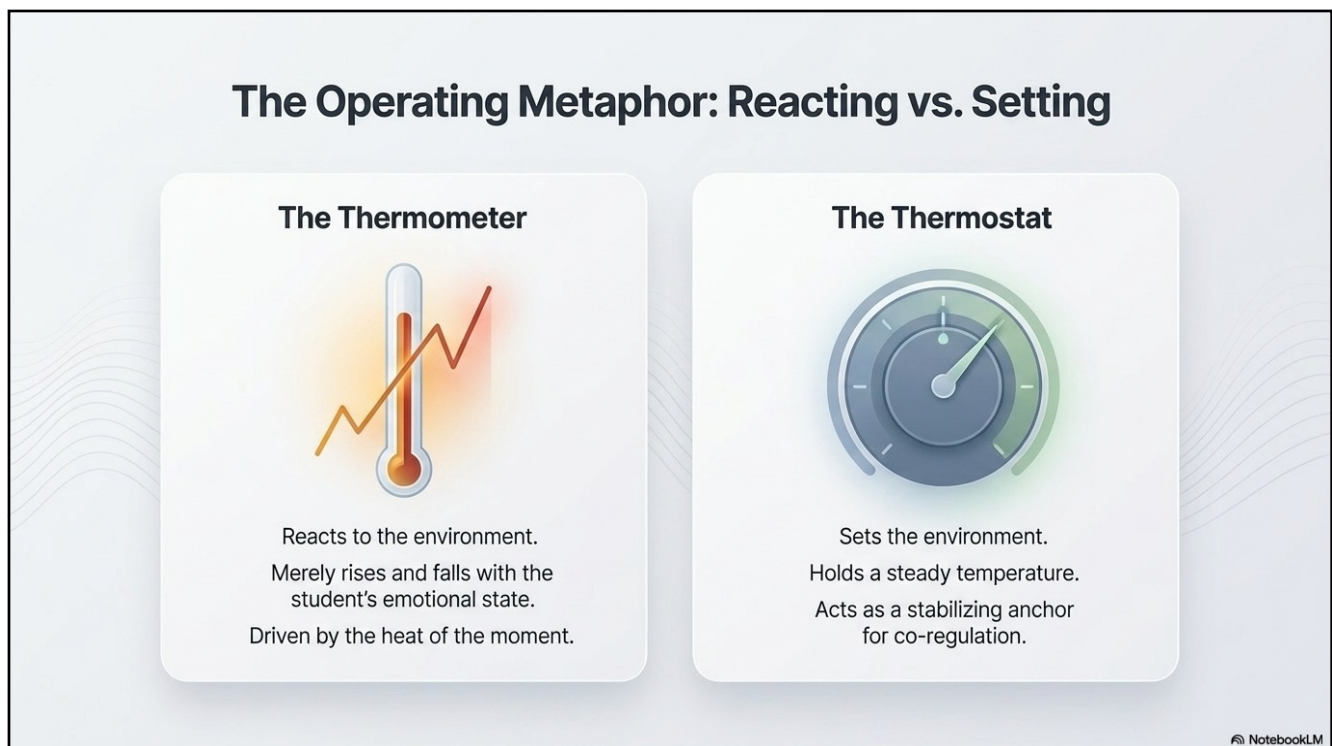


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The Anatomy of a Regulated Presence

Mind (Awareness):
Self-reflective. Exploring why rather than jumping to consequences.

Face (Expression):
Receptive, relaxed facial muscles. (Students constantly scan for safety cues).

Body (Posture):
Soft posture, relaxed shoulders. Non-threatening proximity.

Lungs (Breath):
Slow, steady, audible breathing. (Providing the biological rhythm to borrow).

Voice (Tone):
Speaking slowly and warmly. Tone is more powerful than vocabulary.

Co-regulation doesn't happen in a manual. It happens in the hallway, the classroom, the cafeteria line.

NotebookLM

9

Stay close, but not too close

Some children want you close. Others need space but want you to stay nearby. Offer comfort they can accept—comfort helps the child's brain calm down.

Proximity Slider

Needs Close Contact (Hug) Follow Their Cues Needs Space (Stay Nearby)

Comfort Choices

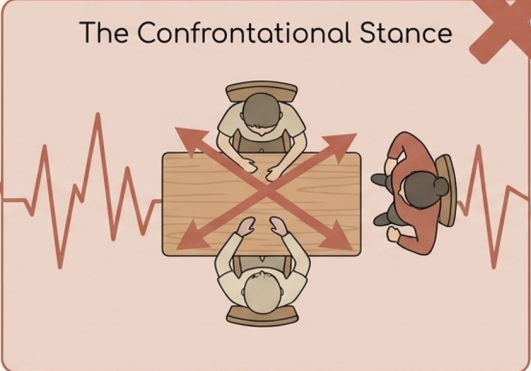
- Blanket
- Quiet Space
- Favorite Object
- Hug

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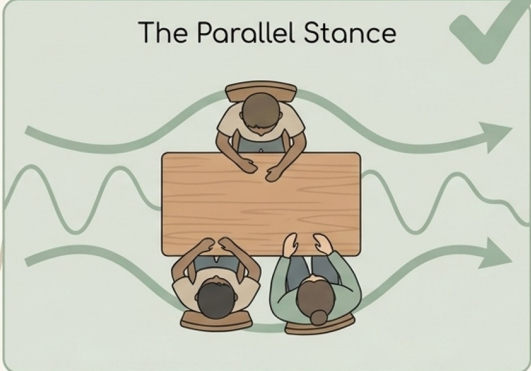
The Body: De-escalating through physical presence

The Confrontational Stance ❌



DON'T use threatening body language. Avoid towering over, crossing arms, or pointing fingers—biological cues of threat.

The Parallel Stance ✅



DO practice parallel regulation. For students with autism or trauma histories, sitting or walking alongside them balances power and reduces confrontational threat. Get to eye level and keep facial expressions gentle.

NotebookLM

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What Co-Regulation Sounds Like

These are not scripts to memorize, but grounding options for adults who want to stay connected.

When a student shuts down completely:

"It's okay to need some quiet. I'm going to sit near you for a bit."

Building agency in moment:

"That was a lot. I'm proud of you for getting through it. Let's talk."

When a student refuses to participate:

"You don't have to talk right now. I'll be here when you're ready."

Building agency in the moment:

Instead of asking "How can I help?", try asking "What would help you right now?"

When a student begins to escalate:

"Let's take a few breaths together. We can handle this."



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Cultivate the internal posture of a nurturing provider.

Your internal posture is the ultimate intervention tool.

Do not be alienated

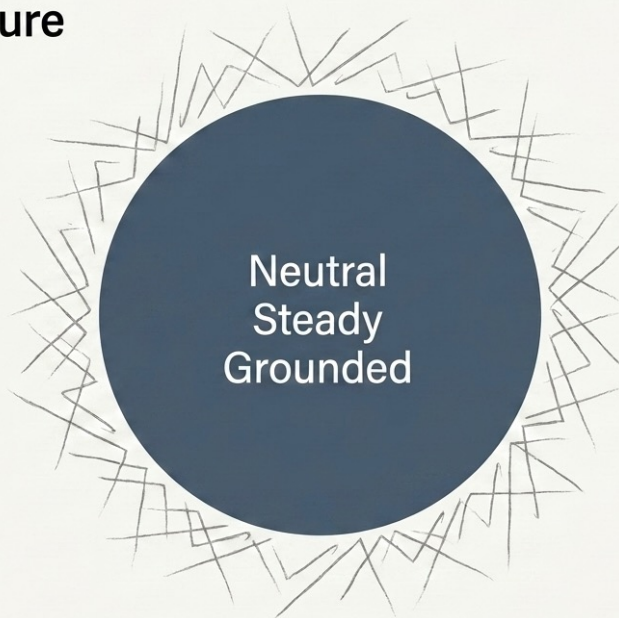
Look beyond the behavioral manifestations to the underlying dysregulated nervous system.

Back away from ultimatums

Recognize that rigid demands during a crisis will only trigger the student further.

Hold the center

Keep the student's baseline wellbeing in mind, rather than focusing on immediate compliance.



Gemini Notebook

13

Student Safety Plan



www.cebmmember.ca

STUDENT ACTIVE PREVENTION/SAFETY PLAN – in Elementary

Student name: _____ DOB: _____

School/Board: _____ Grade Level: _____

Homeroom Teacher: _____

TEMPLATE DOCUMENT

Student stress level	Observable signs	Adult posture and practices suggested	Adult posture and practices to avoid
When the student is regulated, engaged, and receptive			
When the student appears to be tense, annoyed, or frustrated			
When the student's stress response or frustration level is activated and beginning to escalate			
When the student's stress response has fully escalated and is disorganized. No longer receptive towards the adult.			
Post-intervention – following an acting-out episode			

<https://www.cebmmember.ca/tier-3-individualized-practices>

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Examples of de-escalation strategies



Removing any audience. If possible, taking the student for a walk or accompanying them to a safe and private space.



Honouring the student's personal space (needing to consider individual differences in terms of tolerance for physical proximity).



Being mindful of our verbal, non-verbal and paraverbal cues (e.g., triggering language, tone/volume of voice, speech rate, body positioning, facial expression, sudden gestures, walking fast towards the student, etc.)



Being aware of our level of stress, affect, emotional intensity, and type/level of energy reflected.



Avoiding intense eye contact (this can feel quite threatening to some students). Sitting side-by-side or standing at an angle can help with this.



Demonstrating active listening; reducing the amount of talking and allowing for moments of silence.



Being empathetic and non-judgmental; focusing on the emotion(s) experienced by the student rather than their behaviour.



Offering support or a pause; trying to accommodate and reassure the student.



If possible/available, providing a space for them to let off steam.

15

15



Examples of de-escalation strategies



Avoiding getting caught in a power struggle, anticipating potential refusal from the student and perceiving their challenging questions/comments as needing to vent.



Moving away from trying to teach a lesson or reason with the student, especially when their behaviour appears erratic and irrational.



Setting simple, concise, and realistic limits by offering options/alternatives in a supportive manner; being careful to not overload with too many directives.



Allowing time/space for decision making (not pressuring for an immediate response) and choosing wisely what is insisted upon.



Coming alongside the student's frustration, by naming and validating it.



Sometimes, using humour, when appropriate, can be helpful to diffuse the situation.



Not taking it personally; being careful to not overreact (lenses and mirrors).



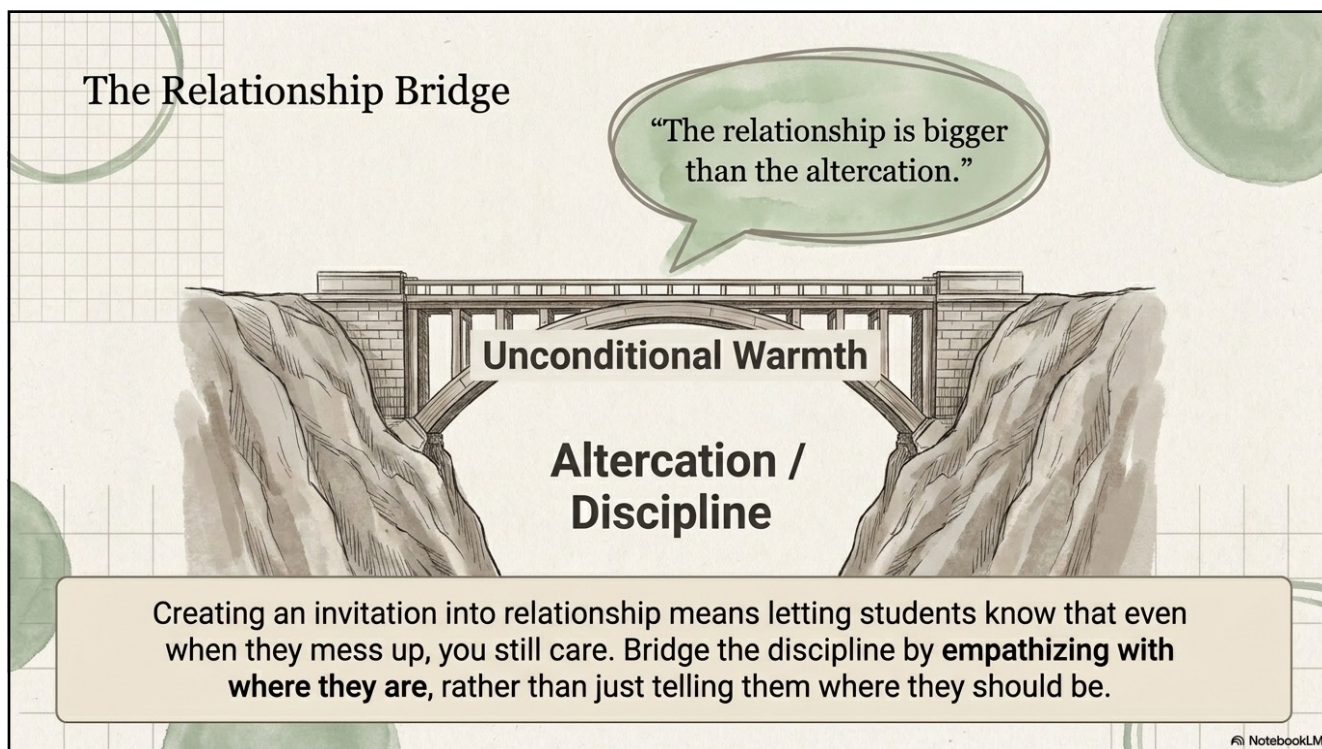
Ensuring that adults passing by don't step in and impose themselves in an ongoing intervention.



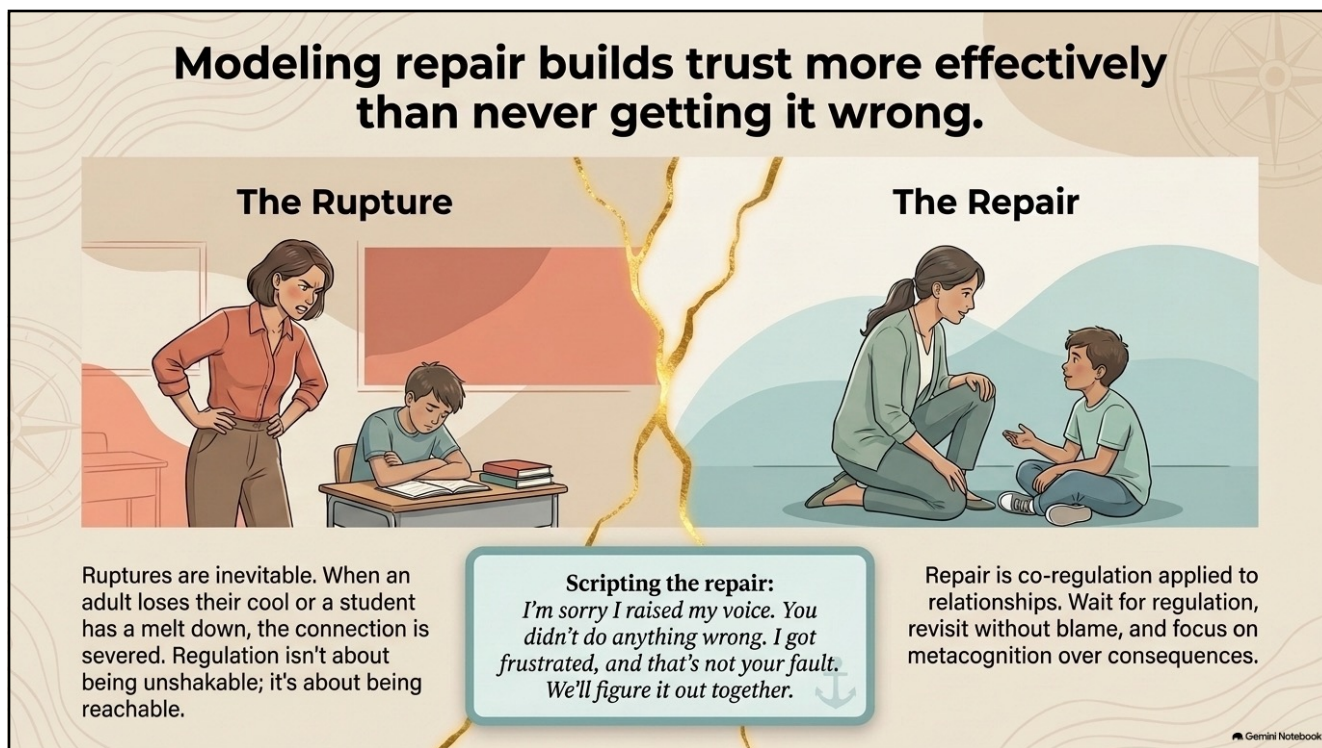
Having another adult support or step in if the situation is not defusing. It's okay for the adult to tap out if they are being triggered.

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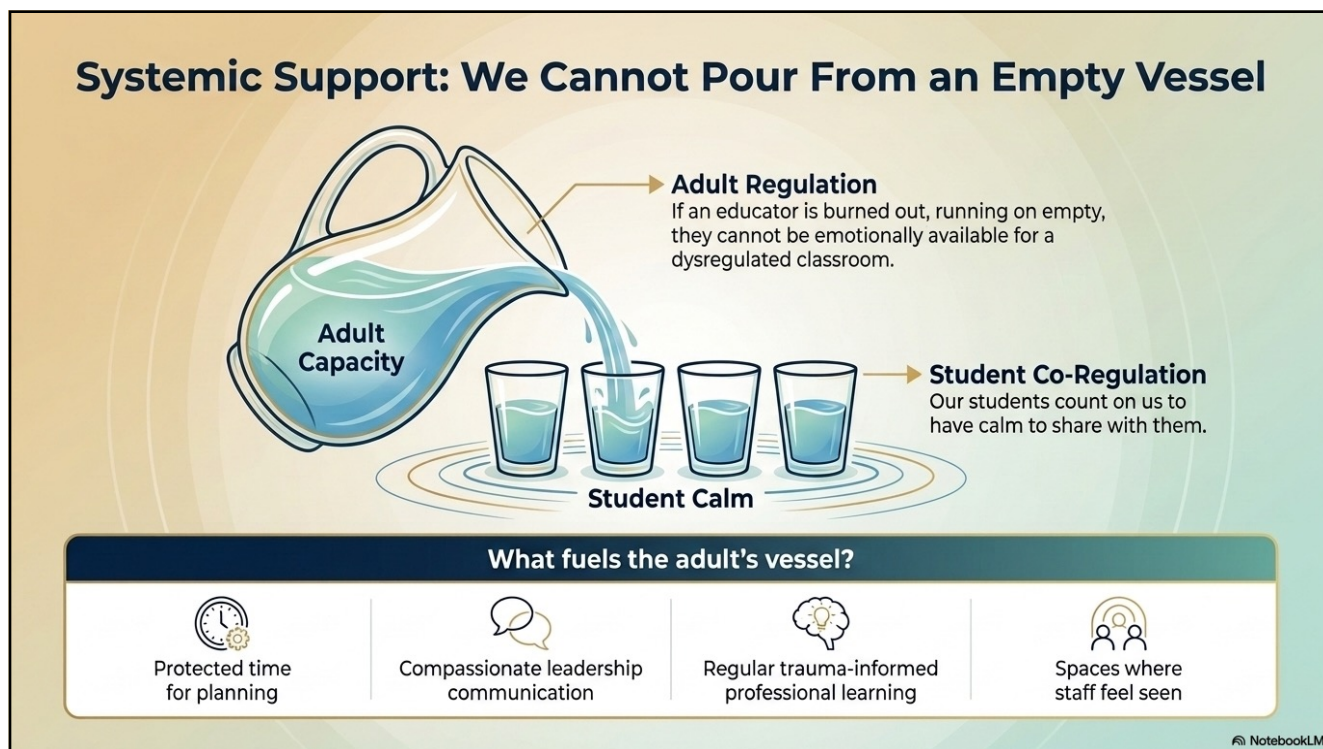
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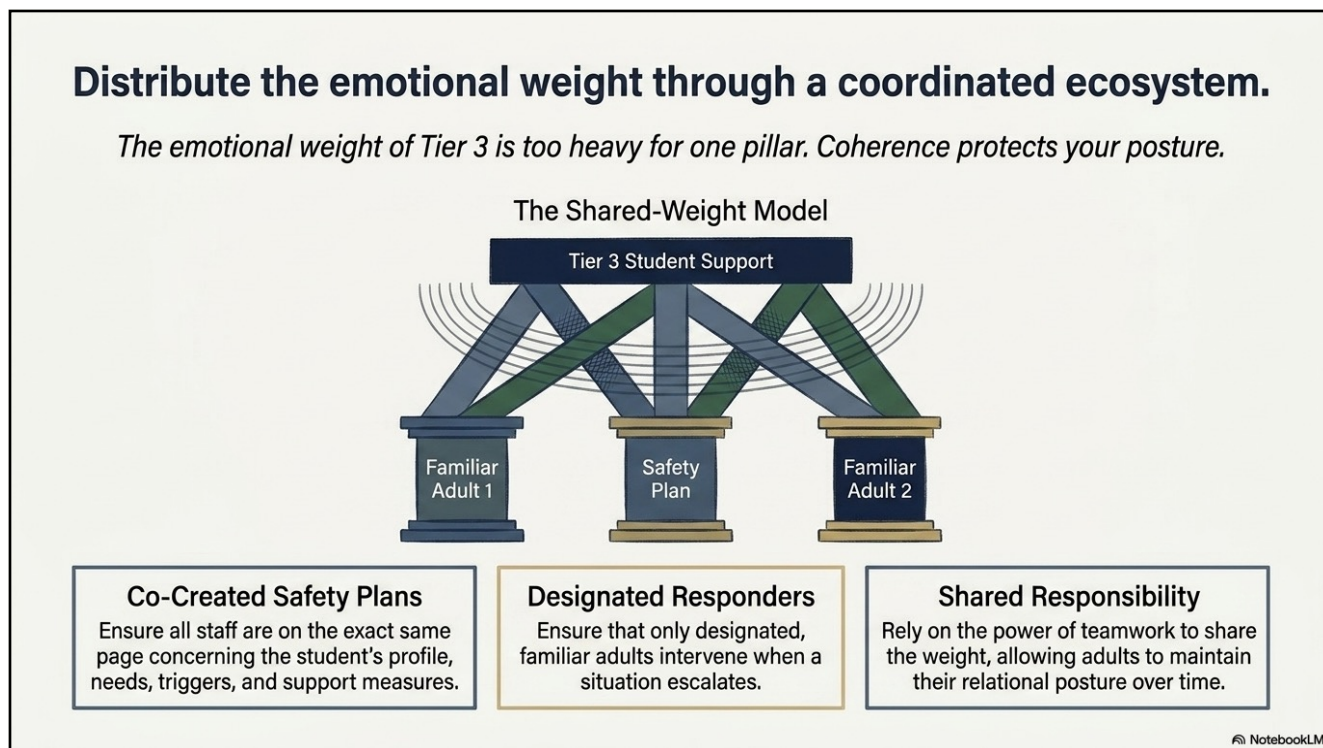
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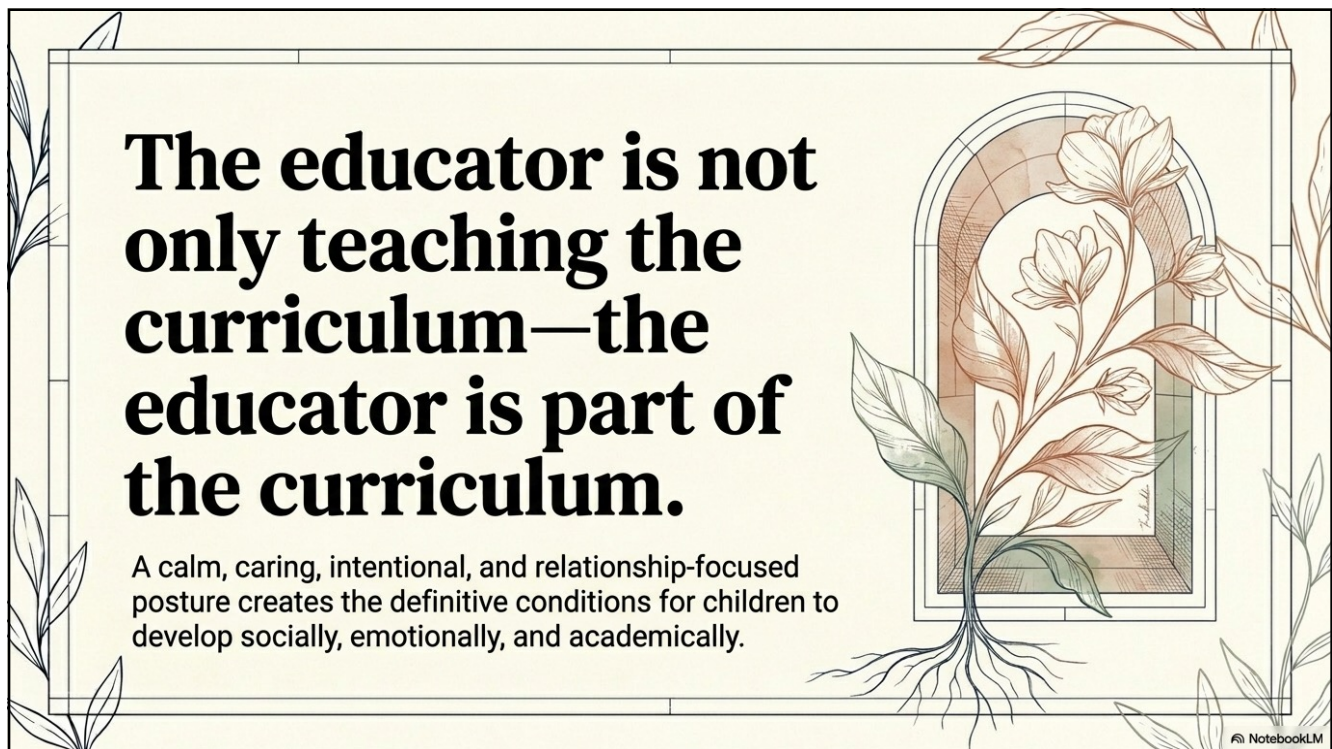
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