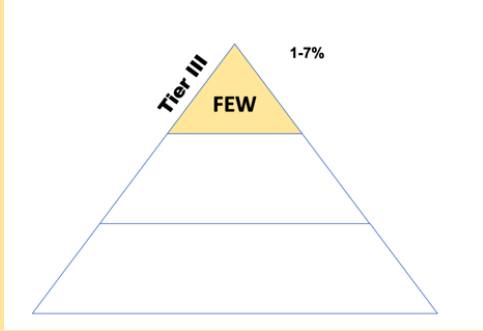




PART 4:

INDIVIDUALIZED Practices

for FEW students at Tier 3

1

Examples of a *Strong Adult Posture* at Tier 3



Tier 3 Individualized Practices

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



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- SAFETY FIRST**
- RELATIONSHIP DRIVEN**
- NEURODEVELOPMENTAL LENS**
- COLLABORATIVE**
- STRENGTHS BASED**

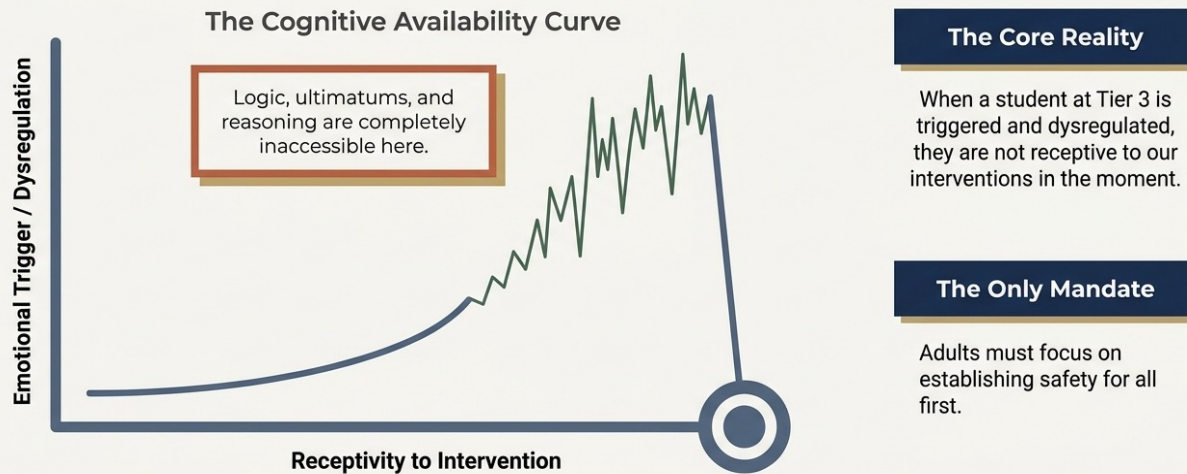
- 1** Understanding students at Tier 3 may **not be receptive** when triggered and dysregulated.
- 2** Relying on the **structures and routines** to effect change (these are **non-negotiable** at Tier 3).
- 3** **Being familiar** with the student's profile, needs and triggers to avoid unnecessary blowouts.
- 4** **Not being alienated** by their behaviour.
- 5** **Being neutral, steady, and grounded** when intervening.
- 6** Backing away from **conventional discipline**.
- 7** Relying on **co-regulation** and **de-escalation strategies**.
- 8** Ensuring all staff are familiar with the student's profile and **on the same page**.
- 9** Relying on the **power of teamwork**.
- 10** Implementing the **safety plan** when needed.
- 11** **Making the relationship** (not the behaviour) the bottom line.

A Strong Adult Posture is grounded in... Connection, consistency, and compassion.
It's not about perfect responses, but about a **purposeful presence**.

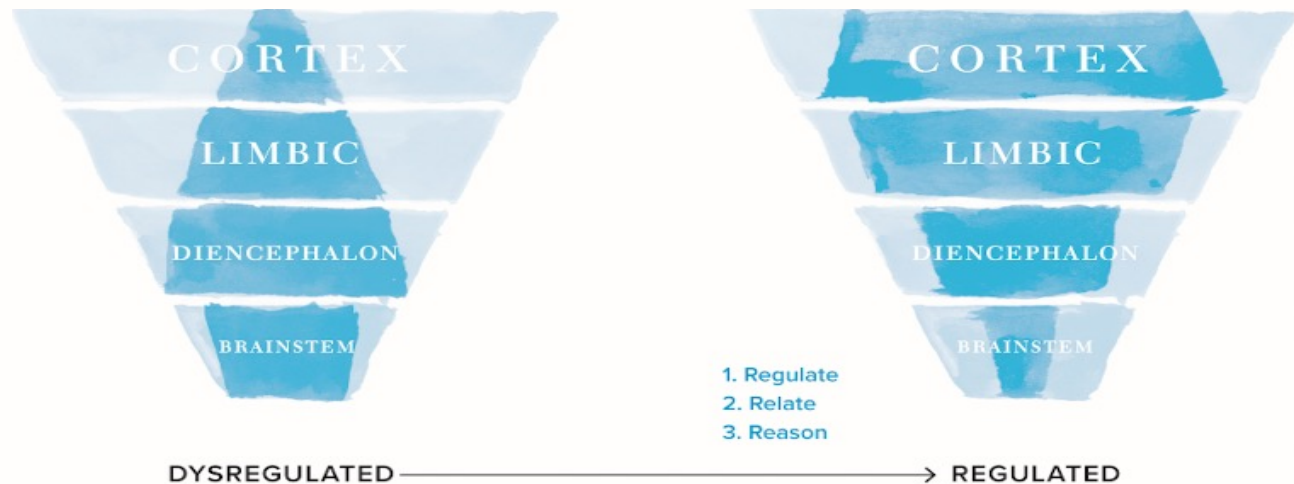
SAFETY **PREDICTABILITY** **CO-REGULATION** **CONNECTION** **TEAMWORK** **PLANNING** **BELONGING**

2

When dysregulation peaks, cognitive availability plummets.



3



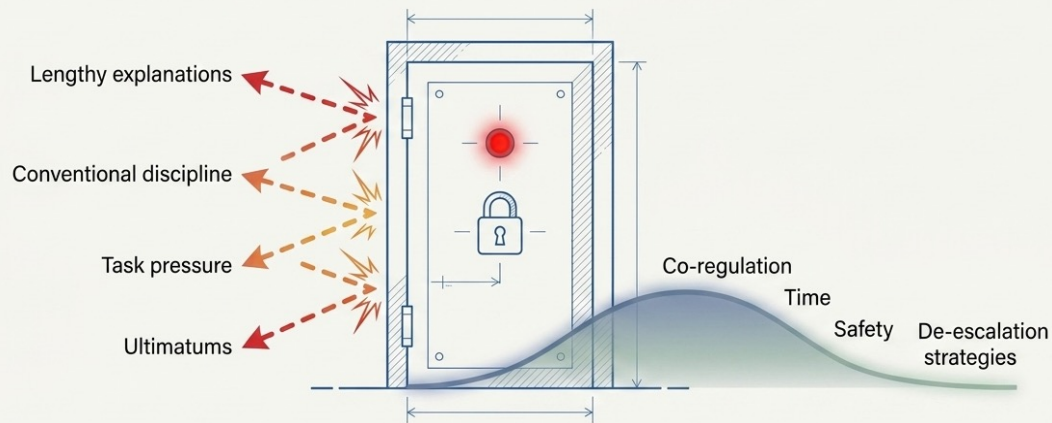
Neuroscience has helped dispel the myth that we need to think better to behave better.

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.



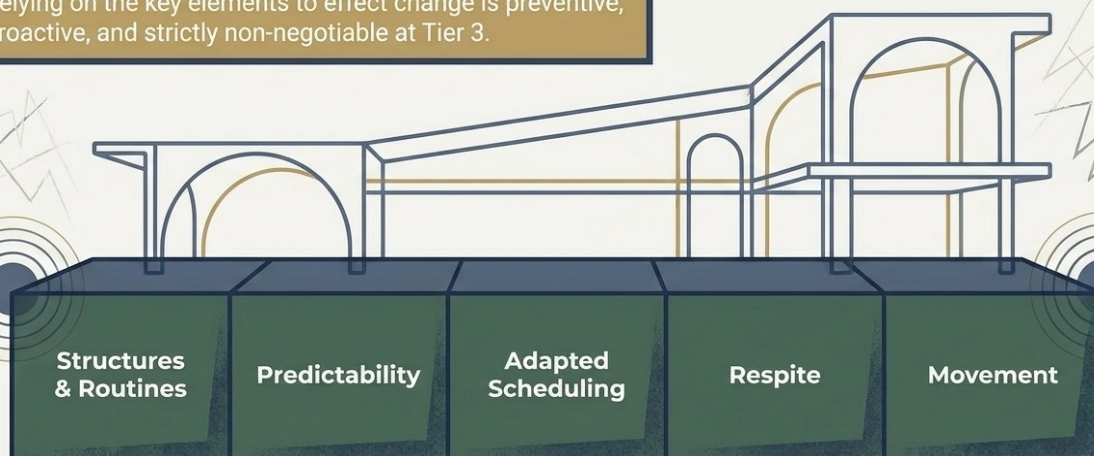
When a student is at Tier 3, they are entirely unreceptive to verbal interventions in the moment. The adult must wait until the student returns to a state of calm before addressing the situation.

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5

Tier 3 demands a non-negotiable, proactive foundation.

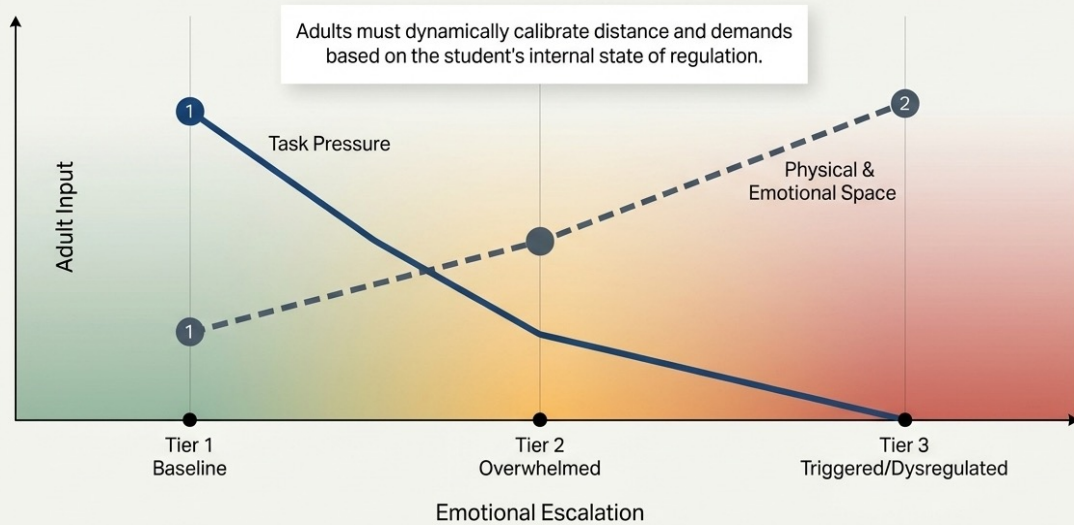
Relying on the key elements to effect change is preventive, proactive, and strictly non-negotiable at Tier 3.



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6

The escalation inverse: Task pressure must drop as emotional dysregulation peaks



7

Co-Regulation Before Crisis



Predictability



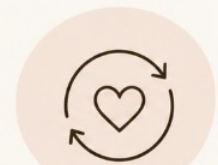
Connection



Attunement



Calm presence



Repair

These aren't crisis strategies.
They're everyday practice.

8

The Operating Metaphor: Reacting vs. Setting

The Thermometer



Reacts to the environment.
Merely rises and falls with the
student's emotional state.
Driven by the heat of the moment.

The Thermostat



Sets the environment.
Holds a steady temperature.
Acts as a stabilizing anchor
for co-regulation.

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9

Your Regulation Changes the Interaction

SAME STUDENT. A DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE.

Activated Adult

- Faster
- Louder
- More words
- More demands



VS

Regulated Adult

- Slower
- Quieter
- Fewer words
- More predictable

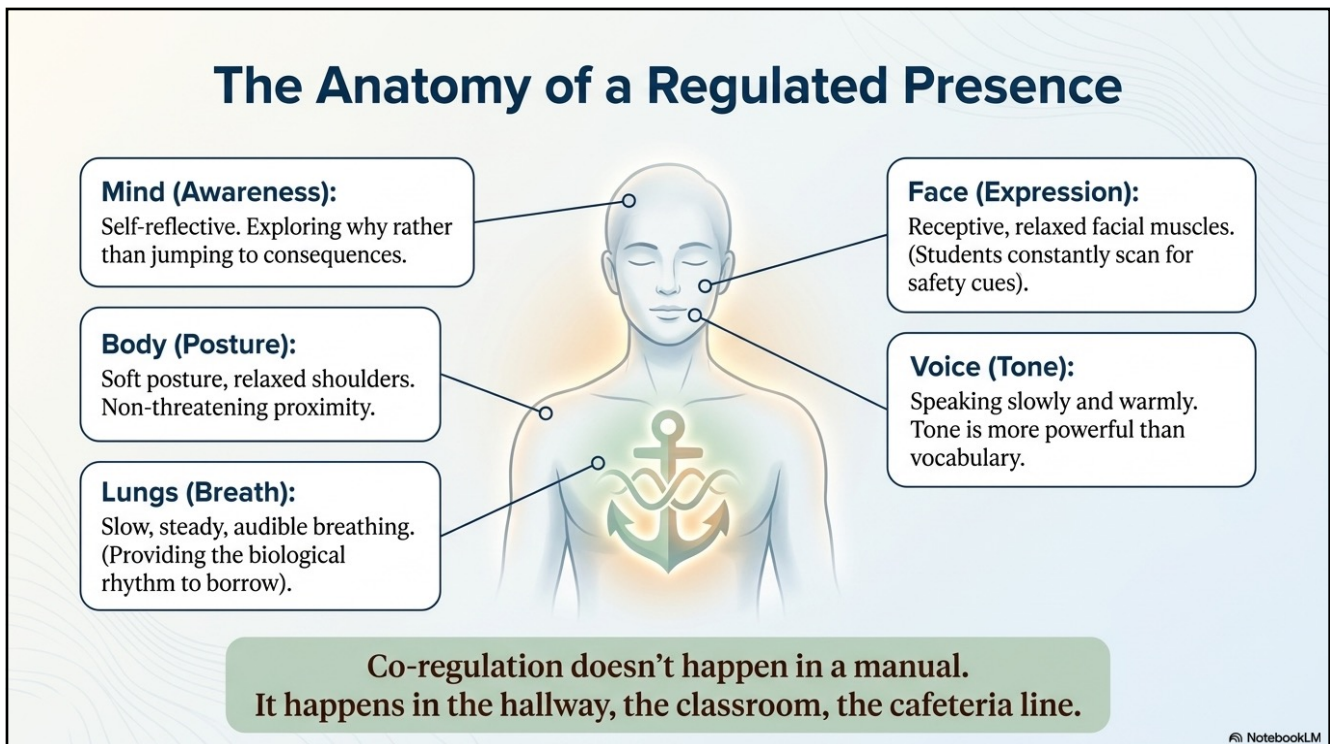


A CALMER ADULT CREATES A SAFER, MORE REGULATED INTERACTION.

10



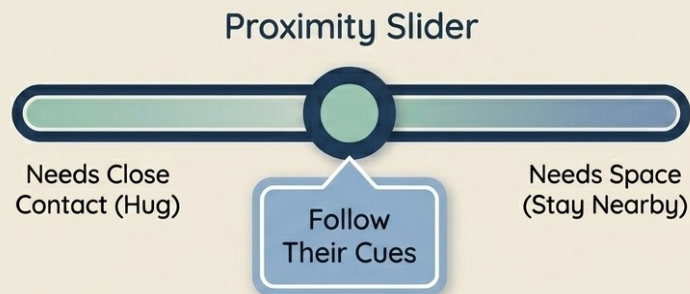
11



12

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.



Comfort Choices



Blanket



Quiet Space



Favorite Object



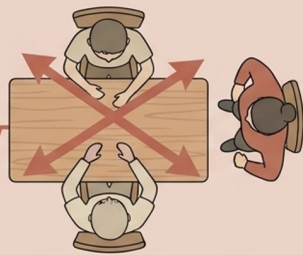
Hug

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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.

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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."

When a student refuses to participate:

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

When a student begins to escalate:

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

Building agency in moment:

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

Building agency in the moment:

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



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Cultivate the internal posture of a nurturing provider.

Your internal posture is the ultimate intervention tool.

Do not be alienated

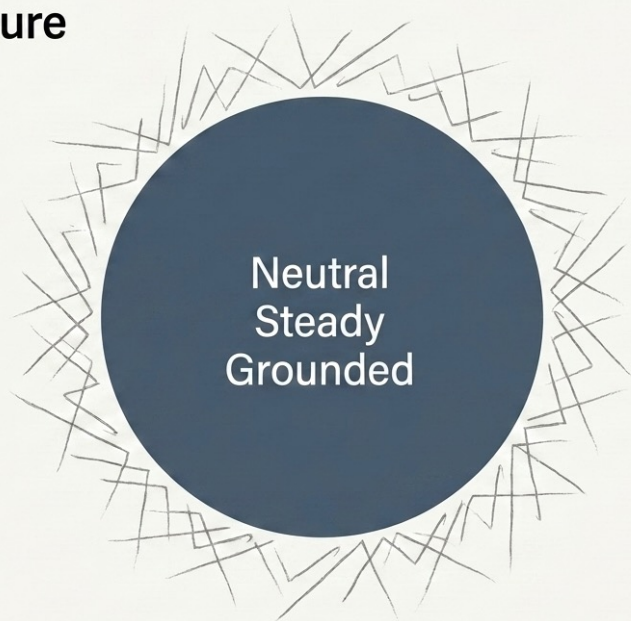
Look beyond the behavioral manifestations to the underlying dysregulated nervous system.

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

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Individual Reflection Question

The Thermometer



The Thermostat



BEING THE THERMOSTAT:

A **thermometer** reflects the room's temperature (it reacts to the student's emotional state).

A **thermostat** sets the temperature (brings a calming presence to defuse stress).

Describe a situation where a student's emotional temperature was high, but you successfully remained the thermostat.

Brief Description:

- What happened?
- How did you keep your posture intact?

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Student Safety Plan

STUDENT ACTIVE PREVENTION/SAFETY PLAN – in Elementary		TEMPLATE DOCUMENT	
		Student name: _____ School/Board: _____	DOB: _____ Grade Level: _____ Homeroom Teacher: _____
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.

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19



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).

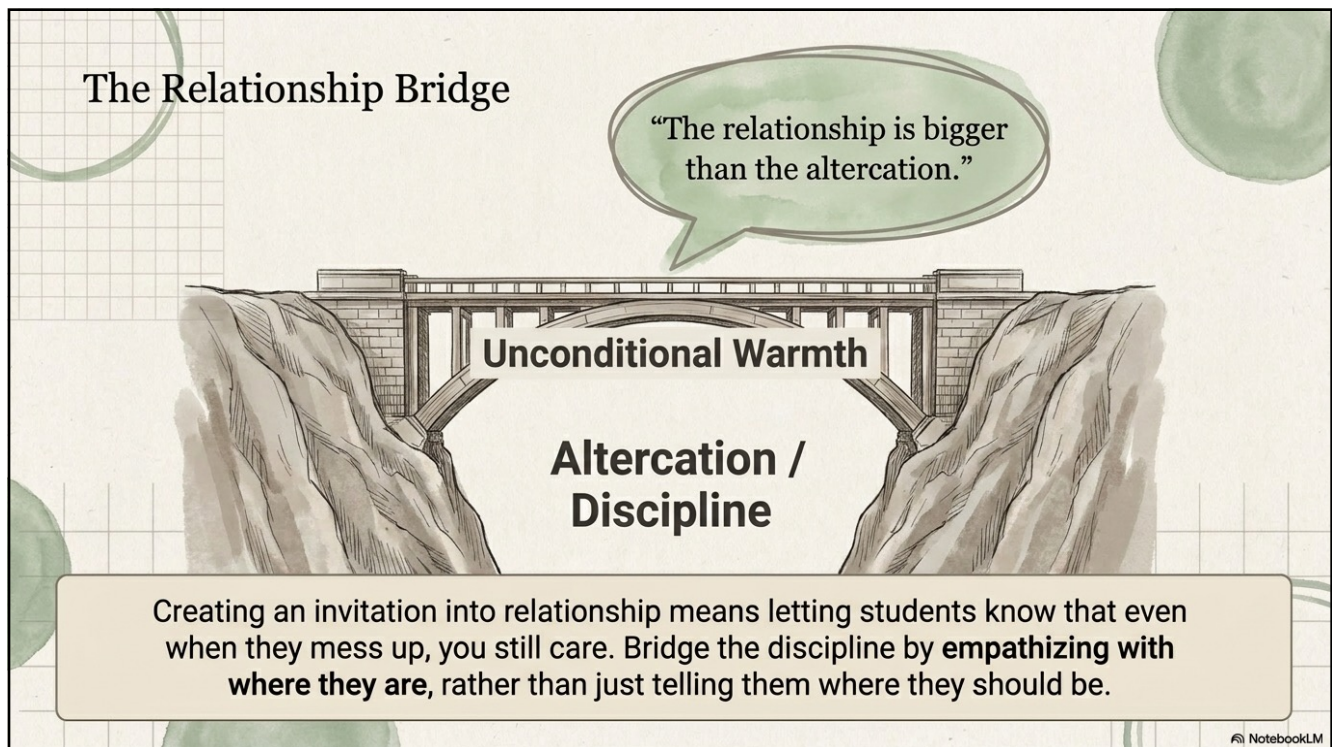


Ensuring that adults passing by don't step in and impose themselves in an ongoing intervention.

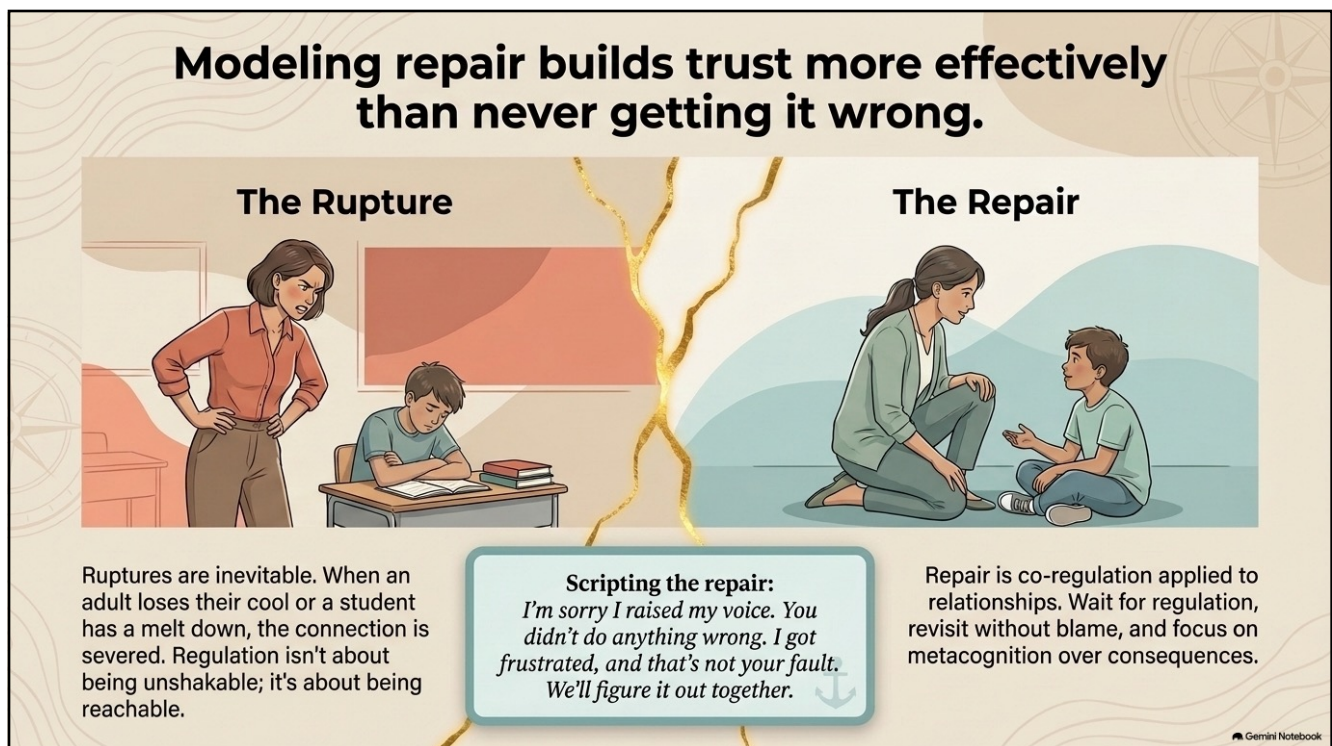


Having another adult support or step in if the situation is not defusing. It's okay for the adult to tap out if they are being triggered.

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Individual Reflection Question



INDIVIDUALIZED Practices for FEW students at Tier 3

REFLECTION ON TIER 3 PRACTICES:

Some students require highly individualized, intensive support that is tailored to their unique nervous system needs.

Reflect on a student who may require this level of support.

- Which individualized accommodations, co-regulation strategies, or collaborative supports have been most effective?
- How can you intentionally maintain a calm, consistent and emotionally available posture while implementing these supports?

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Systemic Support: We Cannot Pour From an Empty Vessel



What fuels the adult's vessel?


Protected time
for planning


Compassionate leadership
communication


Regular trauma-informed
professional learning

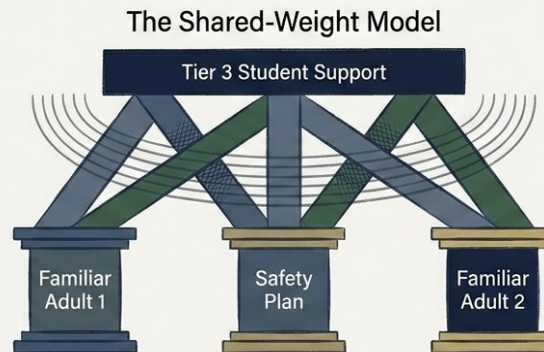

Spaces where
staff feel seen

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Distribute the emotional weight through a coordinated ecosystem.

The emotional weight of Tier 3 is too heavy for one pillar. Coherence protects your posture.



Co-Created Safety Plans

Ensure all staff are on the exact same page concerning the student's profile, needs, triggers, and support measures.

Designated Responders

Ensure that only designated, familiar adults intervene when a situation escalates.

Shared Responsibility

Rely on the power of teamwork to share the weight, allowing adults to maintain their relational posture over time.

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The educator is not only teaching the curriculum—the educator is part of the curriculum.

A calm, caring, intentional, and relationship-focused posture creates the definitive conditions for children to develop socially, emotionally, and academically.



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THE POSTURE AUDIT

- ☐ Do children experience me as safe and approachable?
- ☐ How do I respond when children are distressed?
- ☐ Am I leading with connection before correction?
- ☐ Do my words communicate dignity and respect?
- ☐ Am I reacting to behavior, or understanding what is driving it?
- ☐ What emotional climate am I creating in my classroom?

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THE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT (CEBM)

As a support to the 10 English School Boards of Quebec, the CEBM aims to help boards and their staff to find effective and developmentally friendly interventions for working with students who experience significant behavioural challenges in the school setting.

Also visit the CEBM Resource Center
<https://www.cebmmember.ca/>

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