


Boosting your emotional regulation toolkit

Parent workshop

A woman with brown hair pulled back, wearing clear-rimmed glasses and a dark blue or black hoodie over a light-colored shirt. She is smiling and gesturing with her right hand, palm facing forward. The background is a blurred indoor setting with warm tones. A white subtitle is overlaid at the bottom of the frame.

The airplane analogy is exactly

Reflect on stressful events in your life and what you needed to regulate

Think of a time in the last month when you've been stressed. Identify the cause with one word (eg. workload, family, relationship, IT).

- What helped you to manage your emotions and feel calmer, to 'self regulate'?
- What would have happened if you hadn't been able to do that?
- What would have happened if someone came to you with a task, or a conversation you didn't want to have at that exact moment and wouldn't take no for an answer?
- What would it have been like if you'd been somewhere with noises hurt your ears, other people are telling you constantly how you need to be, that was blindingly bright, etc?





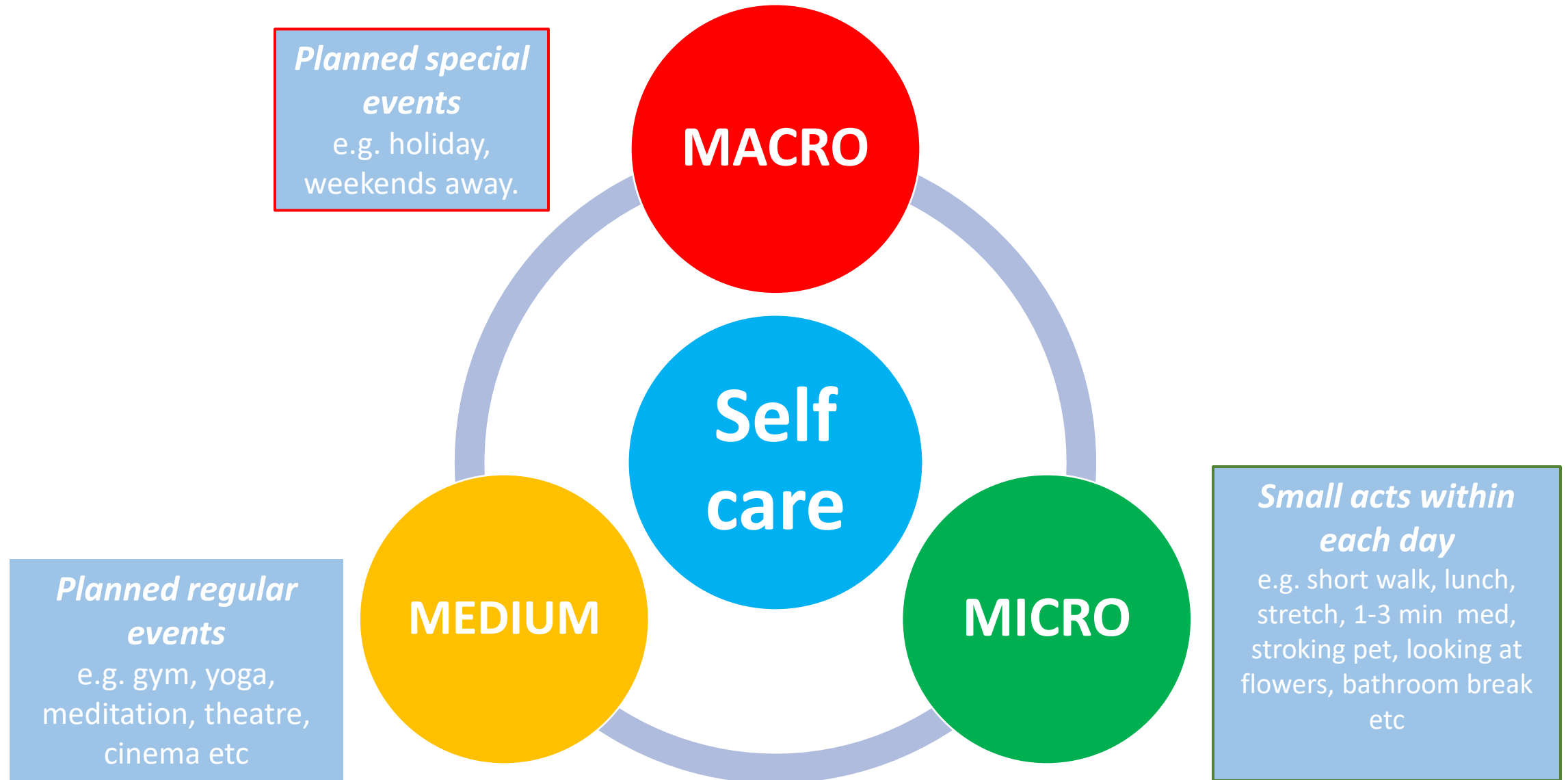
Anna Freud
National Centre for
Children and Families

and if we don't say 'no' and we end up taking too much on,
this leads to stress, leaving us feeling overwhelmed,

Self care vs numbing

| Self Care | Numbing |
|--|---|
| Accepting help from friends and family | Always offering help to others and overextending yourself |
| Allowing yourself an occasional "treat" like a glass of wine or a bar of chocolate | Frequent mindless snacking on foods or finishing the bottle of wine – which often makes us feel worse |
| Finding time for exercise – even if it's just a walk round the block, or to work | Pushing yourself past your limits, and getting overwhelmed by it |
| Buying a new top that you need and will make you feel good | Engaging in "retail therapy" without any regard to your budget |
| Connection and Support on Social Media | Escape and comparing yourself to others on social media. Doom Scrolling |
| Watching your favourite show on TV | Zoning out in front of reality shows all night then sleeping late or falling asleep on the sofa |
| Making time for a 'friend date' | Over-committing to other people's demands and needs. |

TYPES of Self-care



Ten affirmations for reducing stress

- I will not strive for perfection, nor even try to !
- I will not be all things to all people
- I shall leave things undone, that ought to be done
- I will not spread myself too thin
- I shall learn to say 'NO'
- I shall schedule time for myself and my supportive network
- I shall switch off and do nothing regularly
- I shall be boring, untidy and unattractive at times
- I shall not even feel guilty
- Especially, I shall not be my own worst enemy but my best friend!

Two types of Escalation

Giving-in escalation

Your child shouts and makes demands. After a while you give in. Or your expectations regarding your child's behaviour are met by threats (e.g. self-harm), so you drop them.

Joint escalation

Your child raises their voice, you raise your voice, your child shouts, you shout, your child shouts louder, you shout louder...

The Triune Brain



New Brain

Middle Brain

Reptilian Brain

Language of thought and
Verbal Expression

Language of emotions and
feeling tones

Language of body sensation
and impulses

The “Holding” Statement

Statement given to Self

**‘I am not going to deal
with this now’**

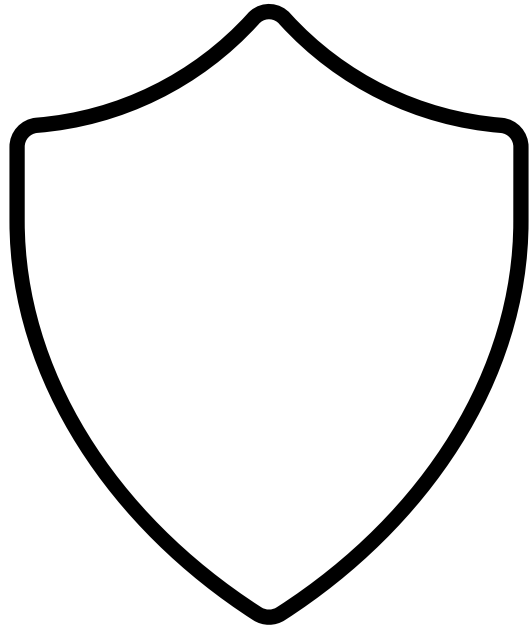
‘We will talk later when
things are calmer’

Statement given to child

*‘I am not giving in or
letting this behaviour go’*

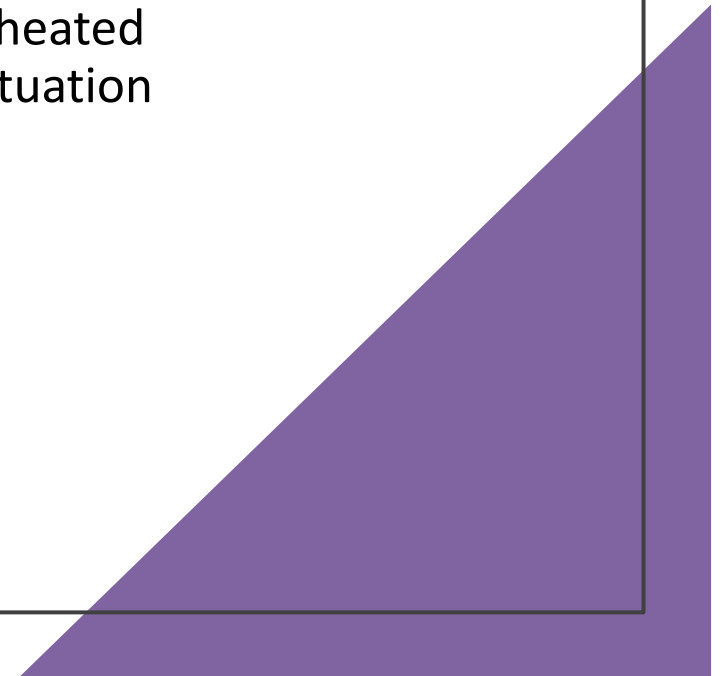
*‘I am choosing not
to respond in the
heat of the moment’*

Inner Conversation



Parental shield or armour

- What you can say (or not say) to yourself (or co-parent) during heated moments to de-escalate the situation



The famous NVR motto



What we know...

When you and your child are upset,
no one is likely to react well.

This is not the time for
communication.

Wait until you cool off.

Give your child your **full attention** (schedule a time if you can't speak at the time they wish to speak): consider the times when your child is most likely to initiate or be more open to discussions involving emotions, achievements, or challenges.

Use a warm tone of voice and **repeat back** what your young person has said or feels

Child: "I had a big fight with my best friend. She said I talked about her behind her back, but I didn't. I hate her and hope she dies."

"You need to let a teacher know when your friends are being mean. I'm going to call them first thing tomorrow to put a stop to it. You can't let people treat you like that."

Reflective Listening

Leave space for them to speak – don't ask lots of questions or try to control the pace of what they are telling you. When you do ask questions, try to use **open questions** and **be curious**

Listen to the **feelings**, not just the problem and try **not to judge** or problem-solve
Walk and talk if face to face feels too intense

*"She said you talked about her behind her back?"
,,, "Oh no, sounds like a really tough day" ...
'I'm really sorry to hear that. I know how important your friend is to you. That sounds like it was very upsetting / I would be upset about that too. What do you think could help now? Is there anything I can do to help?'*



Naming Feelings

Naming the child's emotions...

"That sounds really disappointing for you"

"It sounds like you're feeling really frustrated that your teacher told you off"

"Wow! You are so excited about going to that party"

"I know it's scary to stay away from home"

"My, you seem angry!"

Adults modelling naming emotions...

"Hmm, I'm feeling a bit flat today after a busy week. I think I'll have a cup of tea and sit down to see if that helps"

"Oooh, I felt so frustrated stuck in traffic today. I felt like yelling! But I took a few deep breaths and felt a little bit calmer and stayed in control."

"I feel sad when you talk about how difficult today was for you, but I feel so honoured that you can talk to me about this and so proud of you for being so brave"

"Look at the little girl next to the swings. I think she looks a bit worried. Remember the first day you came to the park, you felt a bit worried too. How do you think we can help her?"

"Wow, I would feel so scared if I was in their situation"