

Zones of Regulation

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What Are They?



The Zones of Regulation is a self-regulation tool created by an occupational therapist, Leah Kuypers, to help kids identify, address, and use strategies to achieve self-control and emotional regulation in a non-judgmental and safe way. The tool has four separate zones; blue, yellow, green and red. Each zone correlates to different emotions. This pack provides tips for each zone and activities you can do at home to help with self regulation.



What is Self Regulation?

In short, self-regulation is the ability to attain, maintain, and change one's arousal level, emotions, and behaviours. It is a form of self control that relies on impulse control, working memory, and generally speaking, the ability to keep oneself "in check". Some children may seem as though they are over reacting to a situation or "acting up" however in reality they are just unsure how to act and how to manage themselves when they are feeling a particular emotion.

The Blue Zone

This zone is characterised by a low level of alertness and is typically viewed as the child running slow. Some emotions that fall into the blue zone are sad, sick, bored, tired and disappointed.

Coping strategies for the blue zone:

- Take a break
- Talk to someone about how you're feeling.
 - Ask for a hug
 - Listen to music
- Do an easy going activity that you enjoy



The Green Zone

This zone is known as the optimal level of alertness. It is typically viewed as the zone when a child is "good to go" and ready for learning and social interactions. Some emotions that fall into this zone are: happy, positive, calm, focused and content.

Coping strategies for in this zone:

- Learn
- Listen
- Work hard
- Do your best!

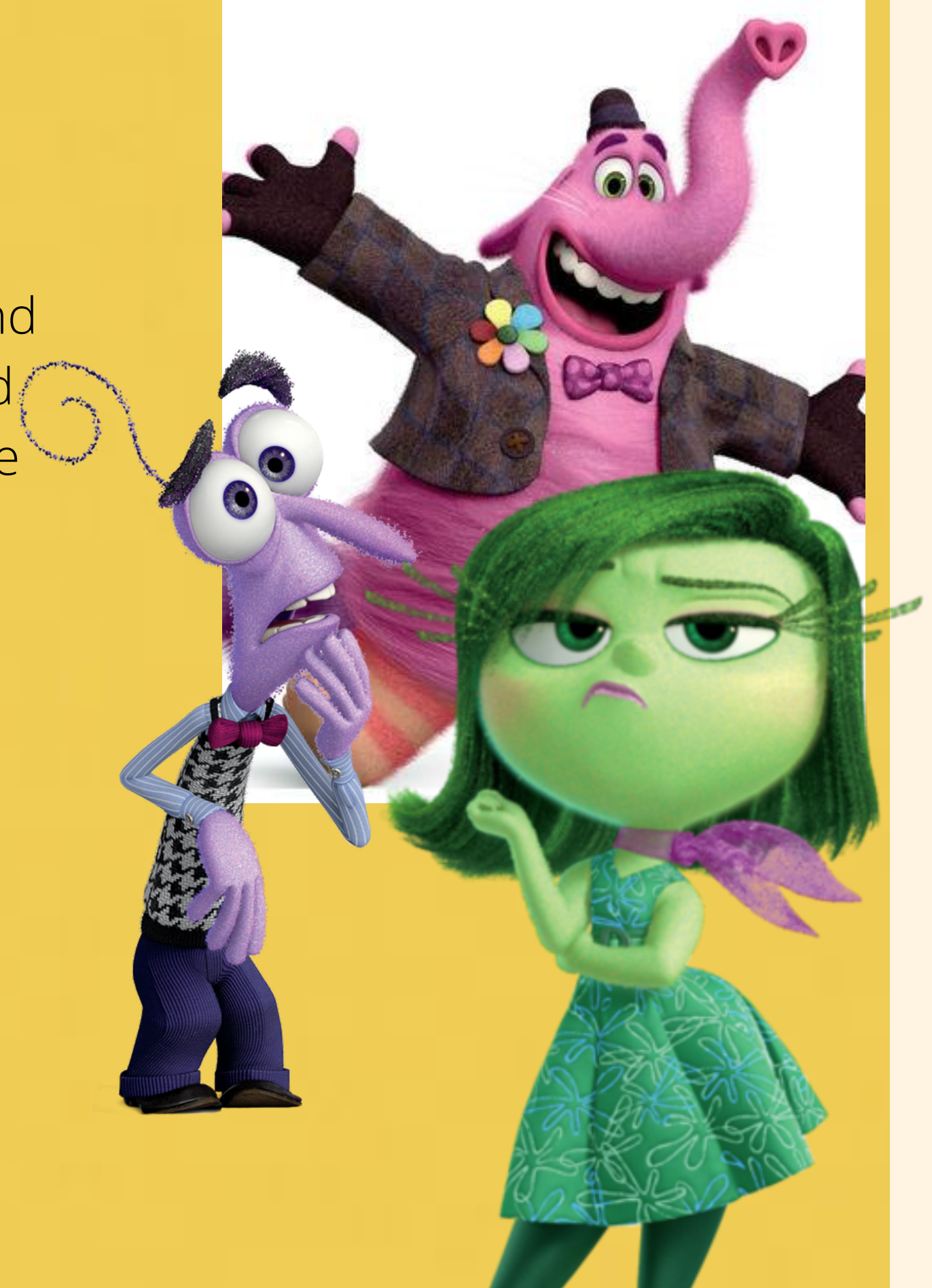


The Yellow Zone

This zone involves entering a heightened state of alertness and elevated emotions. It is typically viewed as heading toward the red zone, the child still has some control, however is beginning to lose it. Some emotions that fall into this zone are: nervousness, wiggly/silly, frustration, excitement, etc.

Coping strategies for this zone:

- Take a walk
- Take a break
- "chair push ups" pushing up and down on chair, to get out some of the wiggles.
- Mindfulness activities such as yoga.
- Teaching an inner coach eg. "it's lunchtime soon and I can get my energy out then"



The Red Zone

This zone is characterised by an extremely heightened state of alertness with intense emotions and is typically viewed as the child being “out-of-control.” Some emotions that fit into this zone include: rage, elation, anger, devastation.

Coping strategies for this zone:

- Take deep breathes
- Remove yourself from the situation.
 - Take a break.
 - Go for a walk or run.
- Think about the size of the problem.



Common Mistakes when Teaching the Zones of Regulation



- Teaching that the red zone is a "bad" zone and that the green zone is the "good" zone. There are no bad zones!!.
- Do not try and teach the zones if your child is in the red zone. This is not the time for teaching. Allow them to have time to calm down when when they move zones discuss how they reacted and if there was a better way to react or calm down.
- Thinking that this can be taught in a week and their self regulating abilities will change. Self regulation takes years to learn, even adults have trouble with it.

Activities to Try at Home!!!

The following slides are activities that you can do at home to help your child with self regulation and learning the Zones of Regulation.

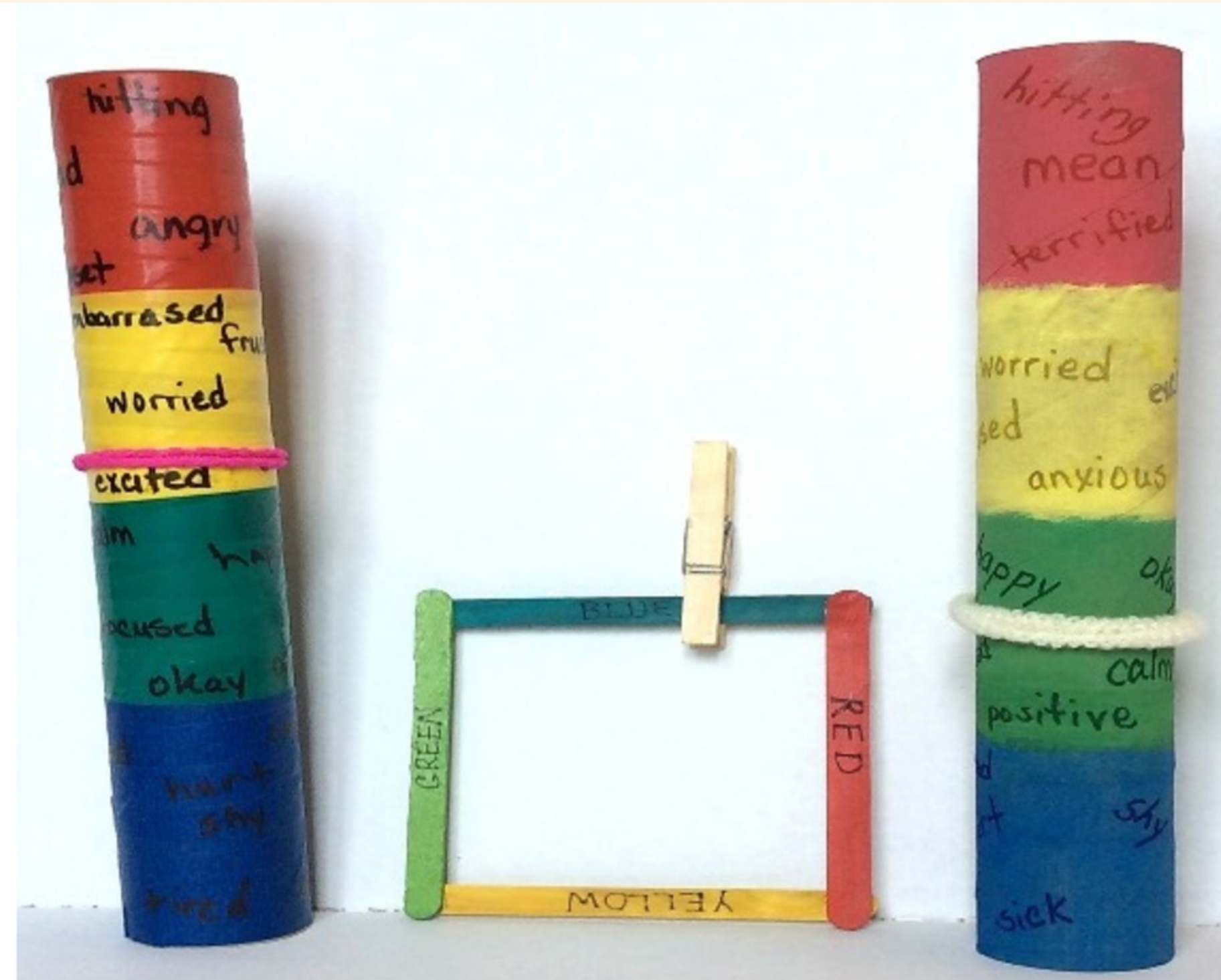
Zones Pockets for Emotions and Coping Strategies



In this activity you child can make the tools they need to play. Fold file folders of paper to create a pocket on the bottom. Trim off the edges. Use hot glue or any glue to turn the large pocket into four sections (red, yellow, green and blue). Colour and label the sections based on the zones. Next, on icy pole sticks write both emotions and coping strategies and insert them into the correct zones. Alternative to the paper of file folder you can decorate four different envelopes to represent the four different zones.

Zone Check in Tube

With a toilet paper roll, create the four zones either by wrapping coloured tape around it, painting the roll, using coloured paper around the roll, or colouring it in with texters. Next, write emotion words or draw emotion facial expressions onto the matching tube colour. Finally, stretch a hair tie around the tube and perform check ins throughout the day of what zone your child feels as though they are in by allowing them to roll the hair tie up and down the tube to their desired zone. When in particular zones discuss coping strategies with your child. An alternate way to create this activity is by colouring in icy pole sticks to the four zones, glueing them end to end to create a square, as in the picture, write emotions on them and then use a peg to indicate what zone you are in.



Scenarios!

The next few slides will have different scenarios to either read or act out to your child. Once completing the scenario;

1. Discuss what emotions the character are feeling,
2. What zone do they think the character is in,
3. What coping strategies they could use.

Scenario 1:

Elise and her brother were playing monopoly and her brother just won the game. Elise started yelling at her brother and was accusing him of cheating. This caused a huge argument between her and her brother.

Scenario 2:

All day James had been thinking about the toy his mum had told him they were going to get after school. When they arrived at the store the worker told them that they were all sold out of the toy that James had been wanting. James started to cry.

Scenario 3:

It's Alex's birthday and she can't seem to sit still because she has so much energy. All of her friends are coming over after school for her party and its all she can think about! Because of this Alex is finding it hard to concentrate in class.

Scenario 4:

Justin couldn't wait to go back to school after remote learning so that he was able to see all of his friends again. He didn't like learning from home and felt ready to be back in the classroom.

Scenario 5:

Ebony's favourite subject in school is PE. When the class were playing a game and she didn't get picked to go first. Ebony got upset and ran away from the rest of the class.

After completing the scenarios discuss with your child times that they may have felt like the children in the story. Then talk about appropriate coping strategies that they could have used!