



# Regulating Resources

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## Regulating Resources

Regulating resources are personalised tools, activities and support systems that help us regulate our nervous system and return to a feeling of safety and connection. These resources are crucial for moving out of survival states (fight, flight, or freeze) and into a regulated 'safe and social' ventral vagal state.

Ultimately, the goal of identifying and using these resources is to become an active operator of our own nervous system, fostering flexibility and resilience in navigating daily life.



Choose from these alternatives to coping strategies—not things to “do perfectly,” but options to gently support nervous system regulation.

### Body-based regulation (bottom-up)

- Slow, extended exhales (e.g. inhale 4, exhale 6) while waiting for the kettle to boil
- Wrapping up in a blanket or jumper for warmth and containment
- Gentle stretching, shaking or swaying, or floor-based movement after travel or socialising
- A warm shower or bath, noticing the sensation on your skin
- Walking outside in daylight, even for 5–10 minutes
- Moving into a posture that gives you space
- Place your hand on your body

## Sensory regulation

- Holding a warm mug of tea or hot chocolate
- Lighting a candle and focusing on the flame
- Listening to familiar, calming music (not constant background noise)
- Using a familiar scent (lavender, citrus, pine)
- Noticing five things you can see, four you can feel, three you can hear
- Finding a comforting texture

## Relational regulation

- Sitting quietly with someone without talking
- Making brief, genuine eye contact with someone safe
- Performing acts of kindness
- Listening carefully when others speak about their experiences
- Dancing
- Sharing laughter
- Stepping outside or into another room to reduce social load
- Sending a grounding text to someone who feels steady
- Playing with a baby or a pet or noticing their breathing and warmth
- Co-regulation cuddles with a person or a pet who feels safe

## Orienting & pacing

- Naming the date and reminding yourself: “I’m safe right now”
- Breaking down tasks into smaller, manageable chunks
- Taking short breaks during family gatherings and between tasks
- Scheduling rest periods through the day, the week and the year
- Varying types of activities to use different energy systems (physical, mental, social)
- Reducing alcohol and sugar *without* rigid rules
- Letting go of one “should” each day
- Prioritising important and meaningful tasks, planning your schedule and eliminating tasks that are less essential
- Use a timer to limit duration of an activity (work on computer for 20 minutes at a time)

## Emotional permission

- Allowing oneself to experience an emotion (like anxiety, or sadness) without judgement, rather than trying to avoid or suppress it
- Allowing mixed feelings about a situation, without fixing them
- Acknowledgement and naming what’s present: “This feels a bit much”, “I feel angry”
- Giving oneself permission to express an emotion in a healthy way (engaging in a creative outlet, talking with a friend etc) to help process the feeling, rather than letting it build up
- Giving oneself permission to rest, even when others are busy

These resources can help to build a ‘toolkit’ of resources that can help us self-regulate. Make a note of which might work for you and in what situations. The aim is to support our system little by little. We are not aiming for perfection.

## A Short Regulating Practice

When you notice that you might have slipped into disconnection, invite a moment of curiosity. Here are five steps to come back into connection:

1. **Orient:** Take a moment to look around your environment. Take in the doors, the windows, and some of the shapes and colours in the room.
  2. **Tune in:** Notice your bodily sensations. Notice the support behind your back. Can you feel your toes, feet and fingers? If you can't, give them a wiggle, play a little air piano. Notice the speed of your thoughts or heart rate, your temperature, and if it feels ok, notice what your breath is doing without trying to change anything.
  3. **Be curious:** Instead of asking "What's wrong with me?" ask, "What is this protector trying to help me with?"
  4. **Listen:** Give yourself a few moments to see what comes up. It might come in the form of sensation, image, emotion or even a movement or gesture. What messages does your body have for you? Any of these things could be a clue to what kind of activation you might be experiencing.
  5. **Acknowledge:** Would it be ok to stay with this activation for a few moments and tend to it? Tell your vulnerable part that you are here, you've got this. What does it need right now? Notice what changes.
  6. **Nourish:** What regulating resource would feel the most nourishing right now for your vulnerable part?
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Eva Rahman is a Somatic Coach, Business Mentor, Yoga & Circle Facilitator. She is trauma-informed and has over 20 years' experience in business development.

She draws on contemporary somatic coaching practices and ancient yogic wisdom to guide you to reconnect with your truth, cultivate 'felt sense' and build nervous system capacity to enjoy life more fully as you.

You can find out more about her work [www.evarahman.co.uk](http://www.evarahman.co.uk)