

Moving Past Book Trauma for Neurodivergent Readers

NANCY ROOP

MEGAN CAVANAUGH

Warm-up:

1. **Pick a Bag**
2. **Greet your neighbor**
3. **Review your bag**



Agenda

Student Profiles

Presenter Bios

Neurodiversity and Promoting Self-regulation

Ease Working Memory and Cognitive Load

- Move from Book Trauma to Book Joy
- Take Back to Class Guide

Resources

Visual Strategies for Improving Communication

Linda A. Hodgdon

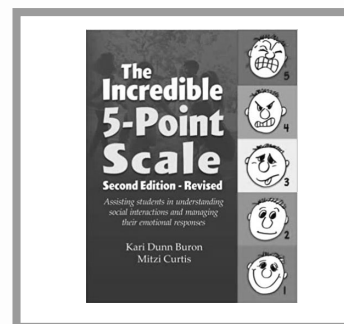
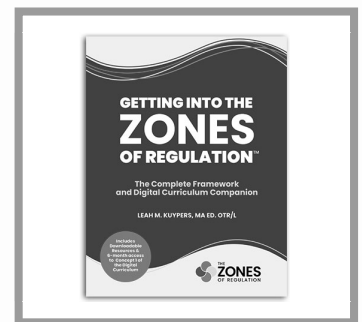
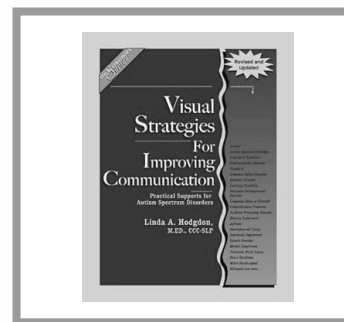
The Zones of Regulation

Leah M Kuypers

The Five Point Incredible Scale

Kari Dunn Buron

Mitzi Curtis



Resources

Neurodiversity Affirming Schools

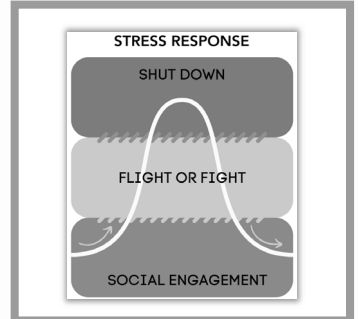
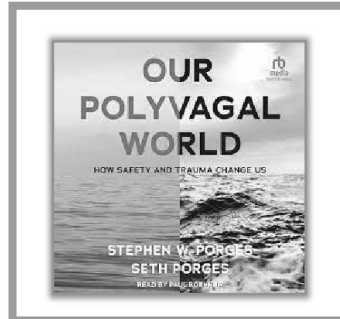
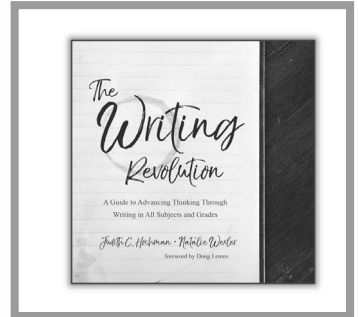
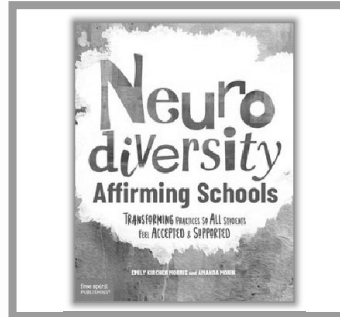
Emily Kircher Morris
Amanda Morin

The Writing Revolution

Janet C. Hoffman
Natalie Wexler

Our Polyvagal World

Stephen W. Porges
Seth Porges



Safiy

Student Profile: Safiy

Fourth Grader

Likes to play with sensory toys

Hesitant with everything new

Easily overwhelmed

Reading level: first grade

CPTSD due to unstable home

Level three autism



Student Profile: Alex

Fifth Grader

Likes to ask questions

Hyperactive body and mind

Reading level: third grade

Social and emotional delay

Dysgraphia



Student Profile: Jordan

Fifth Grader

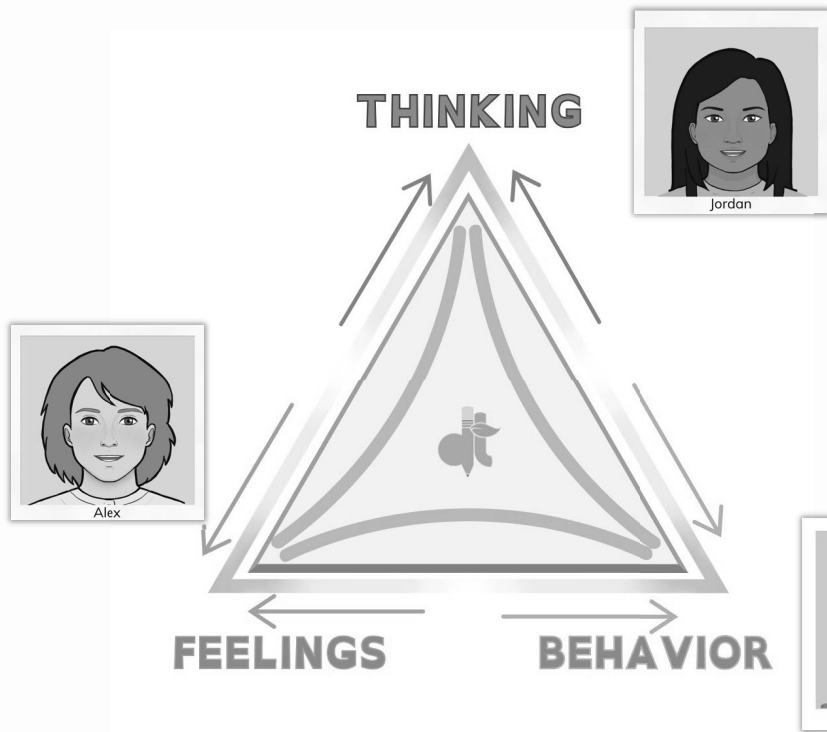
Likes to do research projects

Gifted

Reading level: eighth grade

Social and emotional delay

ASD and A.D.H.D



Thinking, Feelings, Behavior Triad



Pause and Think

ONE STUDENT THAT COMES TO MIND IS...



**PARA TO
PARA**

Nancy Roop

Author Publisher

Developmental Texts

Paraeducator Coach and Trainer

Para to Para

Substitute Special Education Teacher

- Former Paraeducator, Oakland County

Education

- BA in Integrative Studies, Oakland University

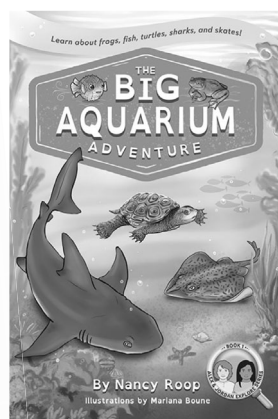
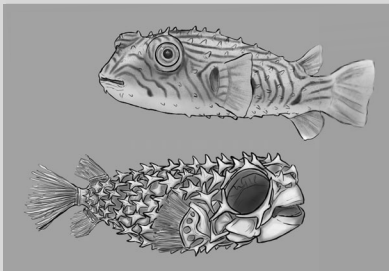
Nancy Roop Author

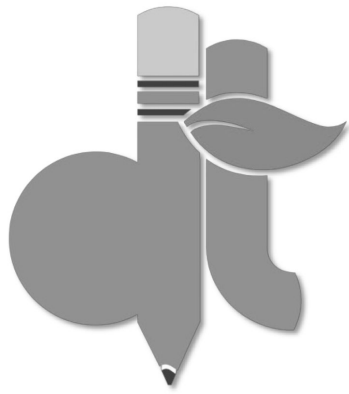
Evidence-based comprehension strategies

Beautiful illustrations

Designed for neurodivergent readers

Real, relatable, and relevant!





Megan Cavanaugh

MA.SPEd., QBHP

Consultant and Speaker

Developmental Texts

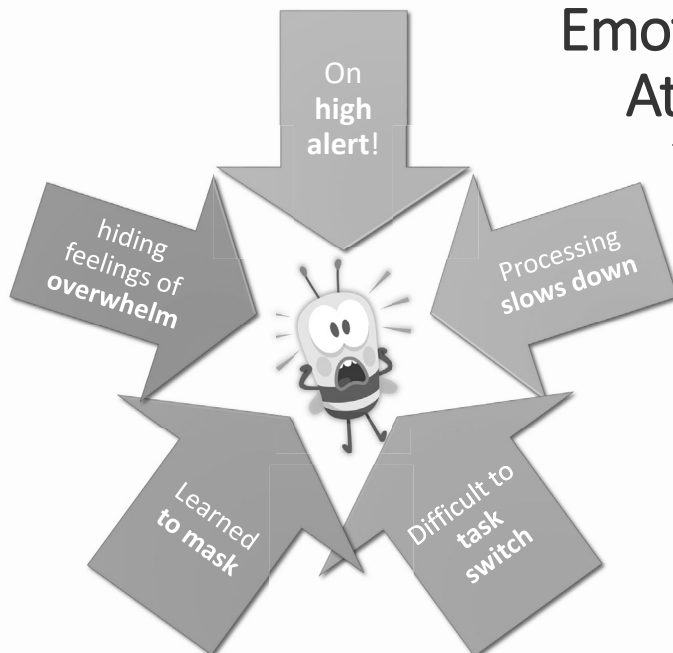
Former

- Behavioral Consultant, Wayne County
- Special Education Teacher, Oakland County

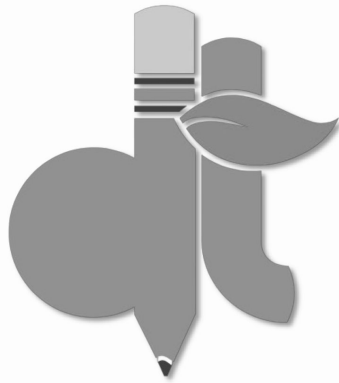
Education

- MA.SPEd., Oakland University
- Behavior Analysis Accreditation
UC Santa Barbara
- BA in Education
Central Michigan University

Emotional Regulation Takes Attention and Energy!



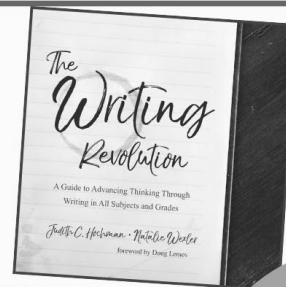
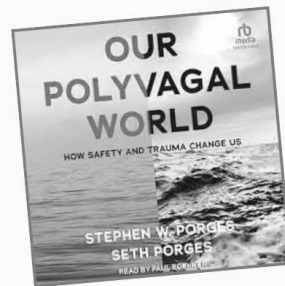
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- ✓ Presenter Bios

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What will
you
choose?



Libro.fm
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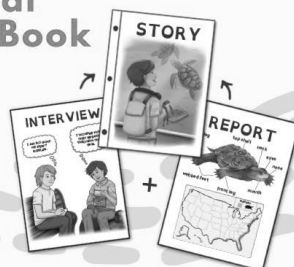
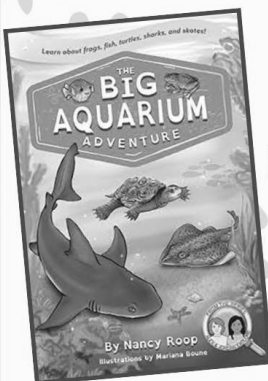
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DRAWING

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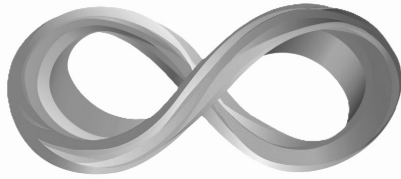


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Spiral
Bound Book



We are all Different



Neurodiversity Affirming

- Presume competence
- Promote autonomy
- Respect all communication styles
- Strength's base approach
- Tailor supports to individual needs



The Eight Sensory Systems

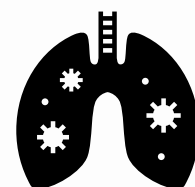
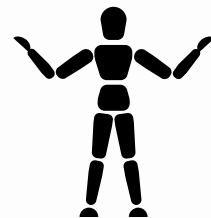
Basic Five: See, hear, smell, taste, and touch

*touch is everywhere on the body

Proprioception is the body's spatial awareness

Vestibular is the motion and balance sense

Interoception is the body's internal awareness





Sensory Regulation and Learning



Environment:

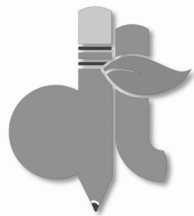
- Designated quiet or comfy areas
- Reduce visual stimulation

Promote self-regulation

- Provide headphones and fidgets
- “When you are ready...”

Explicit directions

- Pause frequently
- Written on the board



Sensory Regulation and Learning



Movement

- Walking is bilateral stimulation
- Designate a pacing and standing area
- Student delivers something to the office

Flexible Seating

- Chairs or stools that allow for movement
- Low tables, so student sits on the floor
- Put a colored tape boundary

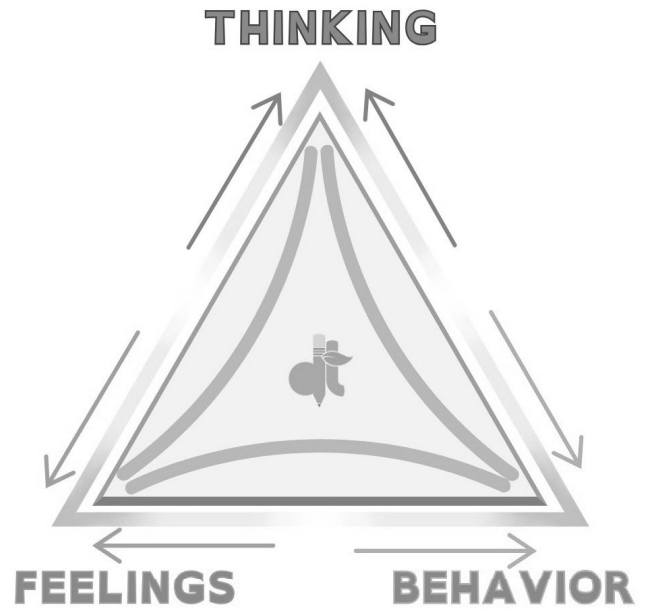
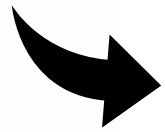


TFB Triad

Improve Sensory Input

based on what an individual needs:

- Thinking is improved
- Behavior is improved

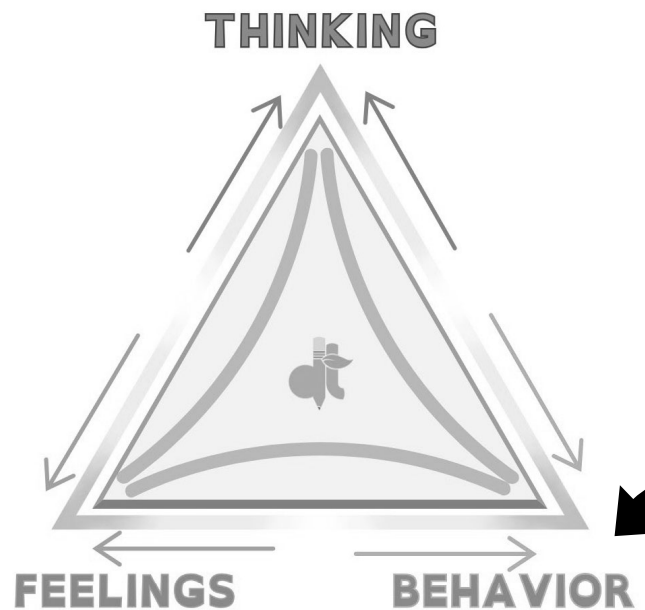


TFB Triad

Change up Behavior

based on what an individual needs:

- Thinking is improved
- Feelings are improved (both sensory and emotional)





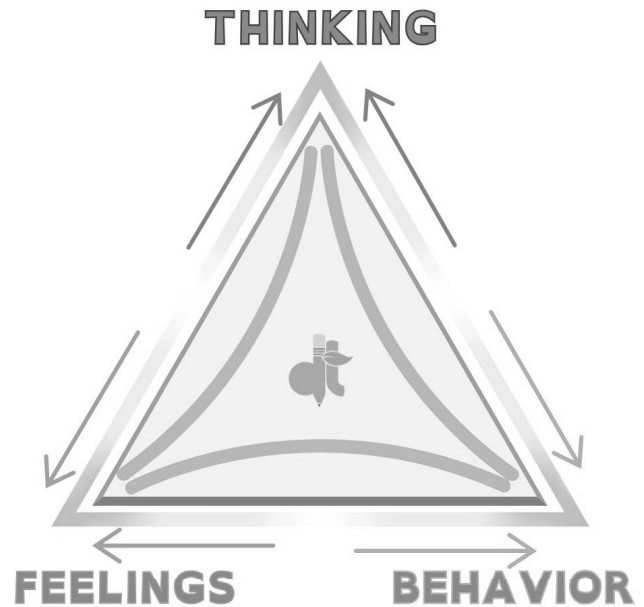
TFB Triad

Change up Thinking

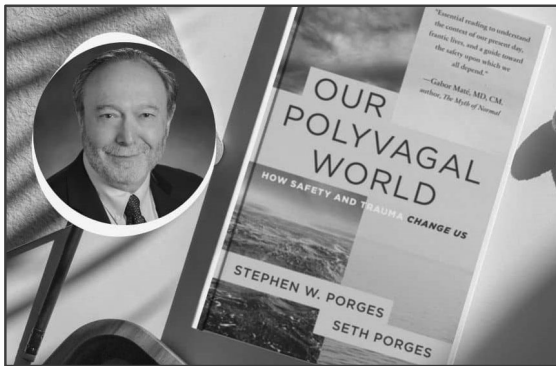


Model Positive self talk:

- Feelings are improved (both sensory and emotional)
- Better able to make good behavior choices



Polyvagal Theory by Stephen Porges



Neuroception: the body's automatic ability

- To assess danger
- Reacts
- to keep us safe
- Attention

Self Regulation:

- A development skill
- Learning varies per person
- Is influenced by the nervous system
- Nervous system can override thinking and feeling

PVI | polyvagal institute



Vagus Nerve

Vagus Nerve
Main Branch

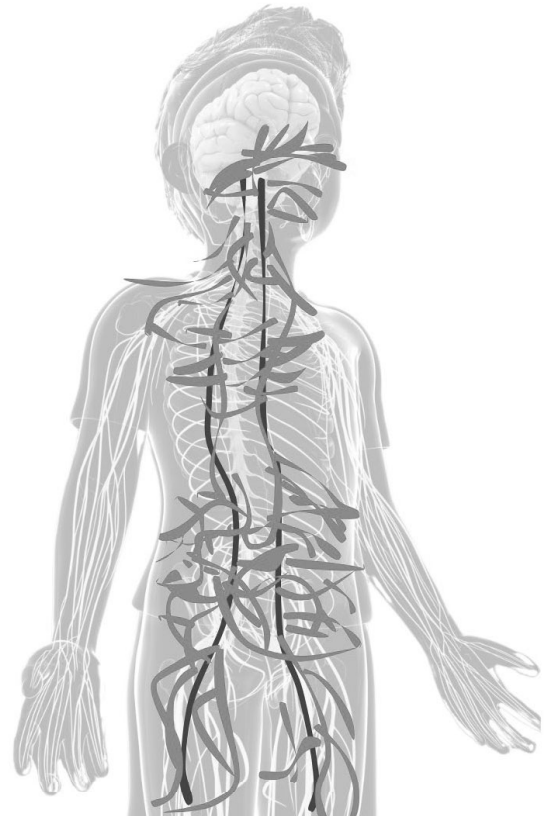
blue

Vagus Nerve
Connections

green

Other
Nerves

yellow



APRIL 9, 2025

STRESS RESPONSE

SHUT DOWN

FLIGHT OR FIGHT

SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

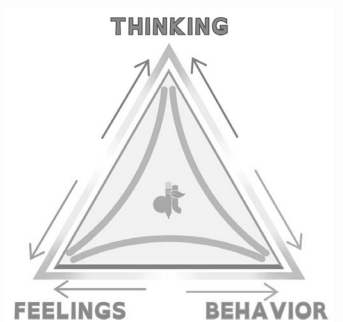
Polyvagal Theory

Physiological state is the sum of:

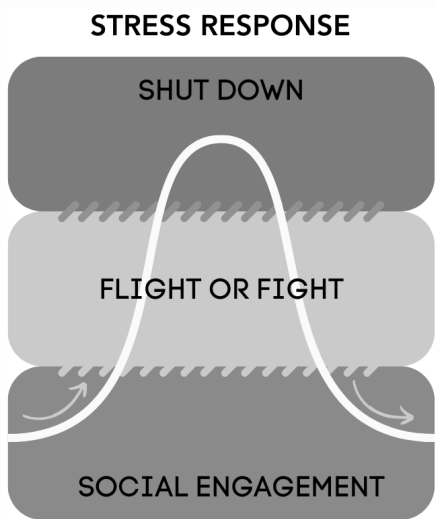
- Emotions and sensory perceptions
- Ability to manage executive functions
- Carry out the chosen behavior

Must feel safe to maximize thinking

- Environment
- Emotionally
- Physically (sensory)



When feelings and behavior are regulated, learning is possible!



Alex

Often in green

- Very social
- Has agency over sensory needs

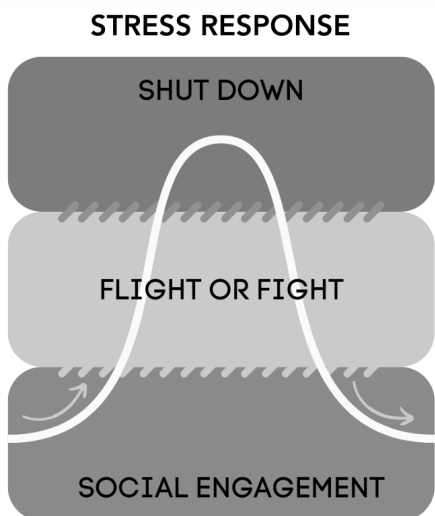
Goes up to yellow quickly

- High demands
- Task switching too fast

Demands continue

- Escalates into red
- 20 minutes until de-escalation

Alex stays on alert due to cortisol for the rest of the day!



Jordan

Often in yellow

- But appears to be in green
- She masks her anxiety

Goes up to red slowly

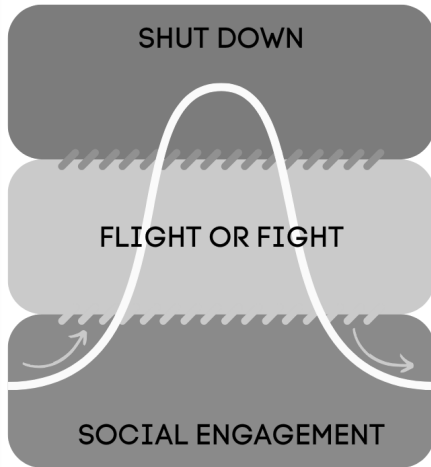
- Works hard to not escalate
- She cannot learn in this state
- Starts to show agitation

Looses control

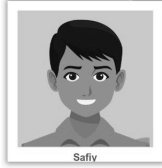
- Short period of time
- Tends to blow up after getting home

Jordan benefits from taking breaks and draws pictures.

STRESS RESPONSE



Safiy



Often hovers near red

- Body feels trauma
- Transitions are hard

Is seldom in green

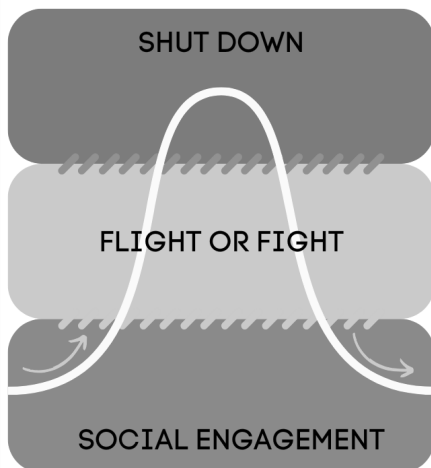
- Routine schedule
- Favorite activities

Needs extra time to process

- Finish scripting and routines
- Needs to work on one goal at a time.

Safiy needs an educator who is patient and empathetic.

STRESS RESPONSE



Safiy

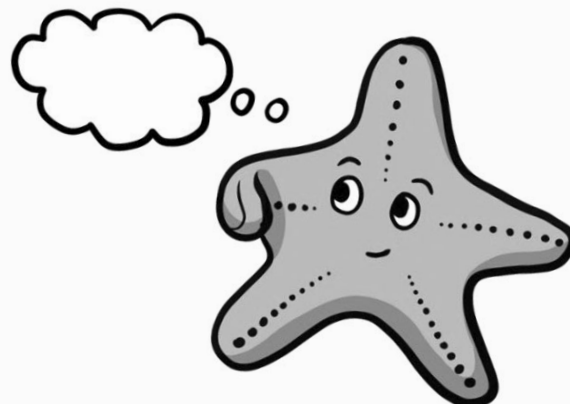


Jordan



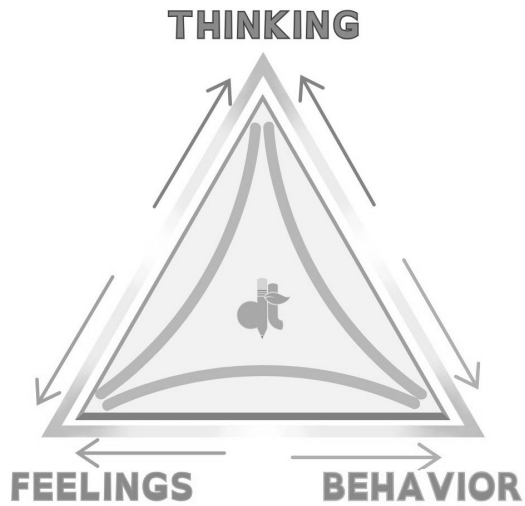
Alex

Pause and Think About Your Student





TFB Triad Expanded



Thinking

- Executive Functions
- Decisions / choices
- Thoughts about feelings
- Thoughts about behavior
- Learning

Feelings

- Physical
- Sensory
- Emotional

Behavior

- Physical actions
- Behavior choices in action
- Stress response / impulsive reactions

What zone am I in?

Angry or Upset

Afraid or Nervous

Happy and Ready to Learn!



Co-regulation

Model desired energy level and manner

- Match the energy level to task
- Provide explicit directions
- Add, "When you are ready..."

Check in with a feelings chart

Offer breaks as needed

If agitated, ask,

- "What will help you feel better?"
- "I can help you get started."
- "Do you need a break?"

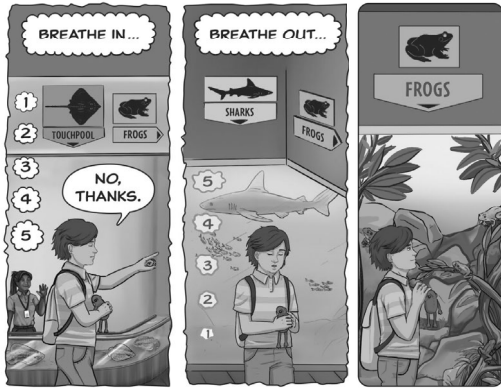




STEPHEN'S QUICK TIP FOR STAYING CALM



When I start to feel too much in my body, I can take deep breaths.
 I breathe in with a deep belly-breath and count to five: 1 2 3 4 5.
 I focus on the numbers and remember to go slowly.
 Then, I exhale slowly and count backwards from five: 5 4 3 2 1.
 I repeat these two more times.
 I look at frogs, squeeze a toy, or listen to music.



Deep Breathing

- Breathing and mindfulness calms the vagus nerve.
- Be sure to practice with students when they are calm.
- Stephen's Quick Tip for Staying Calm is in the handouts.
- Print and laminate



Quick Tip from our Pets!



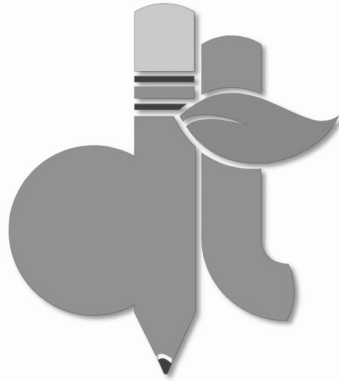
Stephen Porges says: Brains are naturally wired to focus on negative thoughts to keep us safe. Modern brains haven't evolved, yet.

Deb Dana says: **Glimmers** are micro-moments of regulation that foster feelings of well-being.



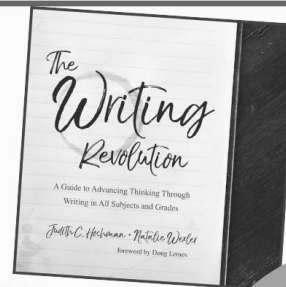
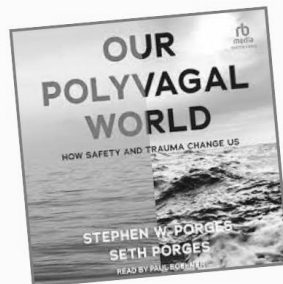
Use **good** gossip!
 Positive narration
 Mindfulness
 Affirmations

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Audiobooks

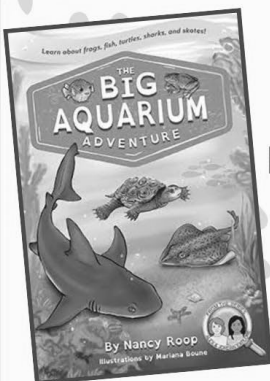
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Spiral
Bound Book





Language Delays and Comprehension

“It is perhaps not surprising that children with poor speech and language have problems with literacy.”

Nation et al 2004

Most neurodivergent students have language differences:
Autism, ADHD, Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Dyscalculia, PTSD, CPTSD,
Traumatic Brain Injury, Anxiety disorders, Other Learning Disabilities



Moving from Book Trauma to Book Joy!



“If a child with ASD is put in a learning situation that they don’t understand, it is likely to produce anxiety which interrupts their ability to attend and learn.

Frustration and anxiety may cause negative behaviors such as inattentiveness, acting out, and an increase in ritualistic behavior.”

Developmental Texts for Students with Autism;
a Safe Space in the Written World.

Nancy Roop, Undergraduate Thesis, 2020



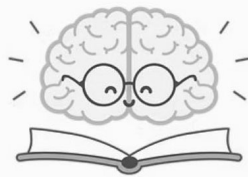
Quick Tips for Reluctant Readers



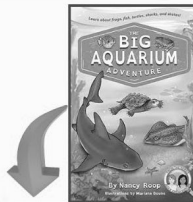
- Match text, pictures, and graphic to sensory needs
- Older nonfiction is organized well
- Avoid figurative language
- Repeated Readings allow familiarity
- Detective Questions with page number clues
- Books in a series are predictable and familiar.
- Graphic novels: pictures are processed differently

NEURODIVERSE
INCLUSIVE
BOOKS

A NOVEL MIND



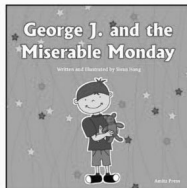
anovelmind.com



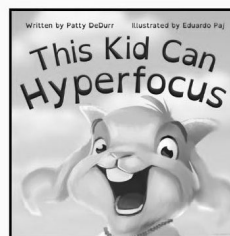
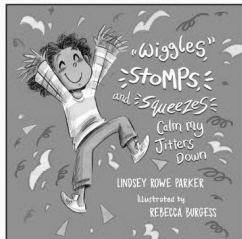
#ASDAuthor



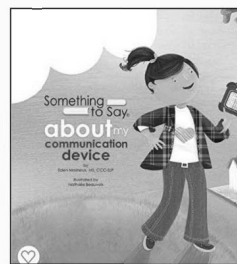
#DyslexiaAuthor



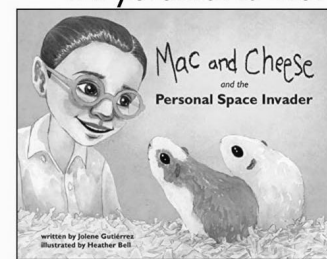
#SPDAuthor



#ADHDAuthor



#AACAuthor

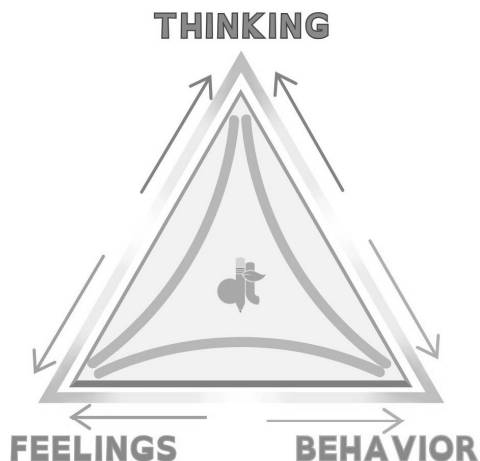


#proprioceptionauthor

 Neurodivergent Database



Pause and Think Back TFB Triad

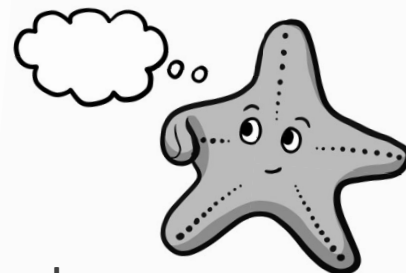


Co-regulation

- Modeling desired mood, tone, and behavior
- Provide sensory tools
- Match the energy level to the task
- Allow breaks with signs of overwhelm

Movement:

- walking, jumping, stretching,
- bilateral tapping
- Can stimulate and energize
- Can calm and regulate



Regulation reduces cognitive load.



Environment

THE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM



Supportive Adults



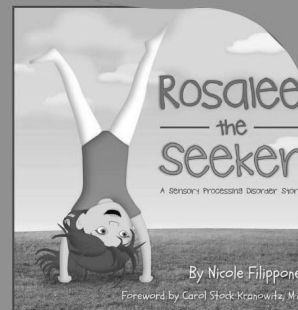
Visual Aides



Breaks



Repetition



Books for ND



The Neuroaffirming Classroom

Executive Functions

Organization

Planning

Task Initiation

Working Memory

Impulse Control

Emotional Control

Self Monitoring

Flexible Thinking

Reducing Executive Functions

1. Identify the learning objective
2. Identify executive functions to complete the work
3. Make a change to the number of tasks or functions
4. Create Routines
5. Use visual cues or lists
 - Vision is processed easier than hearing



The Power of Visuals

The only part of the autistic brain that is not affected by autism is **visual processing**.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
Next: _____

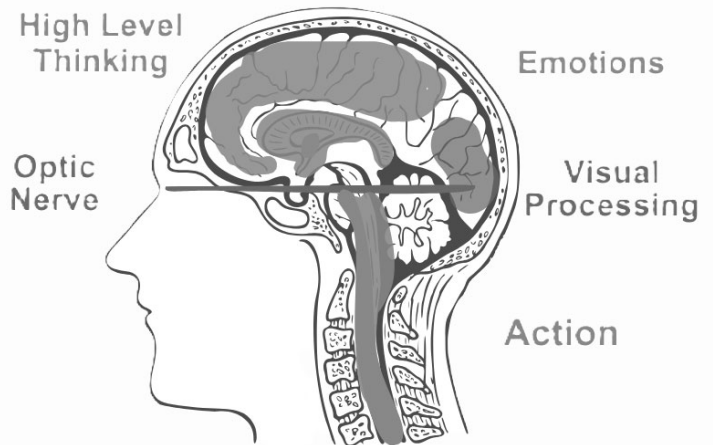


What zone am I in?

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Afraid or Nervous

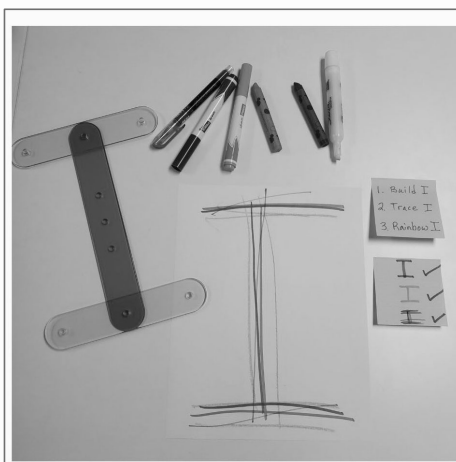
Happy and Ready to Learn!




Language takes higher-level processing

Organization and Planning

Short Task Lists: written on sticky notes or laminated paper



-  1. Listen to teacher's lesson.
- 2. Write 3 notes in notebook.
- 3. Write 4 definitions pg 2.
- 4. Color 3 states on USA map.
- 5. Choice time: 5 minutes.



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
Next: _____



Organization and Planning

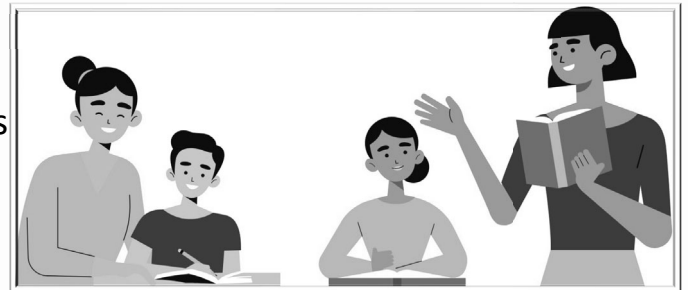
The Roop Method

Easiest content standard in chunks of 3-5 days

Capitalizes on familiarity and routines

Builds executive function skills

1. Attends the teacher's daily lesson
Based on self-regulation; a break may be needed
Adult prepares 3 to 5 copies
2. Student repeats the lesson for up to 5 days
High to low scaffolds/modifications
3. When class begins a new unit, move on and repeat



Scaffolding

1. Include word banks
2. Detective questions: use page number clues
3. Add color to worksheets
 - Increases interest
 - Use color-coding to give clues to the answers.
4. Review sheet: provide answer keys
5. Reduce the number of multiple choice to two
6. Para scribes for student in notebook
 - Taking notes of teacher's lesson
 - Brainstorming ideas and sentence creation

Use a word bank.

Color code with lines or dots.

Use same colors consistently.



frog fish turtle shark skate

1. What animal is Stephen's favorite? _____ (p. 13)
2. What was too scary for Stephen? _____ (p. 21)
3. What animal helped Stephen feel calm? _____ (p. 81)

DIRECTIONS: which word tells...

Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

aquariums ● where _____	carefully ● _____
turtles ● what _____	last summer ● _____
slowly ● _____	inside ● _____
the tank ● _____	Alex ● _____
Jordan ● _____	sandbar ● _____

DIRECTIONS: expand the sentence.

He walked to the frogs.

Who? _____ Stephen _____

When? _____ he felt scared _____

Where? _____ at the Aquarium, or The Big Aquarium _____

Stephen walked to the frogs when he felt scared at the aquarium.

Student-led Bookmaking

Use topics of interest or common items at school.
Use a binder, lined paper, and plain white paper

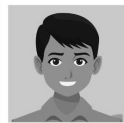
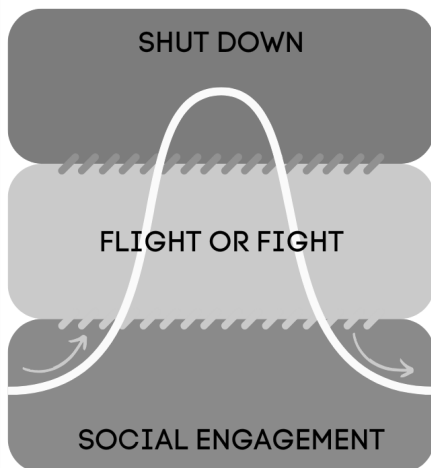
Create a picture book—one page a day

1. Write a word, phrase, or a sentence on lined paper
2. Draw an illustration on plain paper
3. Put pages in binder (3-hole punch)
4. Read the book after new pages are added
5. Create cover page when book is complete.



Scaffold as needed: sentence choices or outline illustration

STRESS RESPONSE



Safiy

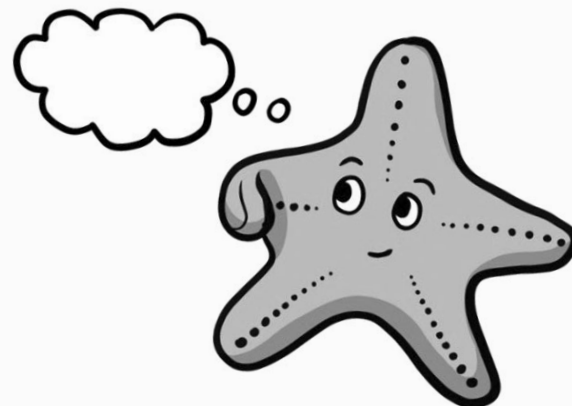


Jordan



Alex

Pause and Think About Your Student



Agenda



- ✓ ~~Student Profiles~~
- ✓ ~~Presenter Bios~~
- ✓ ~~Neurodiversity and Promoting Self-regulation~~
- ✓ ~~Ease Working Memory and Cognitive Load~~
- ✓ ~~Move from Book Trauma to Book Joy~~
- ✓ ~~Take Back to Class Guide~~

Resources Available to You!

Nancy@DevelopmentalTexts.com

Sign up for my occasional newsletter:

- nancyroop.com—scroll to the bottom
- Advance reader copies of new books

Coming Soon:

**PARA TO
PARA**



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Thank you for being here!

