Celebrating our Growth and Success

From the Executive Director: Susan Hopkins (PhD, MEd), Executive Director of TMC

As our second annual Summer Self-Reg Symposium (SRSS) approaches I have to tell you that more than anything else, it feels like a celebration. SSRS 2016 will be a great learning and networking experience. But, it also makes me feel happy and proud of all the great things that have happened since SSRS 2015.

Last year it felt like we were a few caring voices advocating and working towards a Self-Reg vision. Now we have this INCREDIBLE team and an ever-growing network of AMAZING people all looking at Self-Reg from their own lens in so many diverse contexts. And our rich dialogues are moving past the “What is Self-Reg?” Now people are asking, “How can I put this into practice?” and “Who wants to collaborate?”

And then there is the Self-Reg Foundations Program. Foundations grew out of a need and demand expressed at SSRS last year. Now we offer four solid courses, with almost 200 people registered and participating in those courses. Our first cohort of 18 people is on the threshold of certification. What a thrill it is that Dr. Shanker will certify the members of this first cohort in person at the place where it all began – SSRS on the beautiful grounds of Trent University.

Our website content, which was still pretty unknown last summer, is now sought out and read by people around the world. We are seeing Self-Reg seeds being sown everywhere and other incredibly exciting developments like Self-Reg being embedded in curriculum, policy and strategic directions and even organizations beginning to plan to become Self-Reg Havens!

We did our first institute in Lethbridge - and it looks like our next (fingers crossed) will be in Australia in 2017 with perhaps a few more in between. We’ve granted our first licenses in the U.S. for use of The Shanker Method™ and are looking towards licensing in Canada for Shanker Self-Reg™ and the Shanker Method™ starting this fall.

We launched our newsletter, which now has 800 readers around the world. We’ve had great success in social media including a Twitter chat that trended as number four in Canada. We morphed Peersite, our online community of practice into Portal Plus on our eSchool, and are now in the process of developing a Parent Portal too.

We have a LONG way yet to go and so much left to figure out. What do people need from us most in small communities and giant school boards alike? How do we better support the early years, college years, parents, communities, even seniors? How do we help folks who need to evaluate their initiatives? How can our research arm, the Self-Regulation Institute, best serve the people bringing Self-Reg to their early childhood programs, schools, and communities?

We’ll figure it out. What I really want to do right now is celebrate and say thank you. Thanks to our wonderful team, and thanks to all of you for your great ideas, your curiosity and your commitment to Self-Reg!

MAY, 2016
Breaking the Stress Cycle

SELF-REG SUMMER SYMPOSIUM 2016

Join Dr. Stuart Shanker and the TMC crew for Self-Reg Summer Symposium 2016: Breaking the Stress Cycle.

In addition to keynote and plenary sessions, TMC will be offering certification options. Breakout sessions will include partner presentations and self-reg activities such as canoeing, yoga, bike rides, and painting.

Dr. Jean Clinton and Dr. Gerry Costa will be joining us again this year along with another incredible array of presenters from among our Self-Reg leaders, practitioners and researchers across Canada and internationally.

WHEN:
Evening of Monday, July 18 to 1 pm Friday, July 22, 2016.

WHERE:
At beautiful Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario.

WHO:
This symposium is designed for educators and self-reg practitioners. The material will be interdisciplinary, covering early years to post-secondary. Parents are invited to join two evening events that will be live webcasted to guardians and Self-Reg aficionados across Canada.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT:
self-reg.ca/learn/self-reg-summer-symposium/

Feature Article
By: Dr. Stuart Shanker, CEO of TMC and Distinguished Research Professor of Philosophy and Psychology, York University.

The Self-Reg View: The Critical Importance of the Fifth Domain

The mom on the phone was distraught. Her son had been through a harrowing experience at his previous school, which ended up with him “agreeing” to leave after a couple of incidents of threatening behavior and a psychological assessment that diagnosed him as being at risk of Conduct Disorder. But the school board had responded well, placing him in a school with a more sympathetic staff. Things had improved immeasurably.

There hadn’t, in fact, been any disturbing episodes at all in the new school. Yet his rages at home hadn’t stopped; if anything they were getting a little worse. And Mom was frightened: about his future, frightened that he might hurt one of his younger siblings, and for that matter, frightened that he might hurt her. She told me that he was always contrite afterwards. But when he was in the grip of one of these explosions he was completely out of control.

This mom had heard me speaking on the radio about how there is no such thing as a bad kid and desperately wanted to believe this. But there was an uncle in the family who had “inherited his genes.” Still, I have never met a child with so many of the symptoms associated with Conduct Disorder. But the school board had responded well, placing him in a school with a more sympathetic staff. Things had improved immeasurably.

When I first met him he was 13, healthy looking and fit, with some gentle probing we learned that the crisis at his previous school was the culmination of being sick and bullied: not just by the other students but, in fact, by some members of the staff as well. Yet he was healthy now and things were going fairly well at the new school. So why was he still having rages at home? It might in part have simply been that he felt safe enough there to give vent to his pent-up emotions. Yet the fight-or-flight episodes were incontrovertible evidence that his stress load had remained unbearably high.

The most troubling thing he said to me, on more than one occasion, was that he himself was deeply upset about being such a “bad kid.” The problem was that he’d internalized what he’d been told at the previous school, and in fact, a number of times in primary school as well. He himself was deeply concerned that he had no control when he went into one of his rages: every bit as frightened, as it happens, as his mom.

We worked with him on Self-Reg, focusing to begin with on the biological domain, but the turning-point came when he went to a sports camp for a couple of weeks during the summer holidays. Neither Mom nor Dad were particularly athletic, and they said they had only sent him there because his best friend was going. But perhaps they had an intuitive sense of what he needed. In any event, he came back from camp “a different kid.” And this is where his story becomes really interesting.

"She had heard me speaking on the radio about how there is no such thing as a bad kid and desperately wanted to believe this."
At school in September he started to hang out with a couple of the kids who had been at the camp, rather than the ones he had associated with the previous year. These kids introduced him to their friends and this new group welcomed him into their midst. And he suddenly found himself playing sports, going for walks, texting and talking on the phone, getting involved in community activities with a bunch of really nice teens. When I next saw him I was shocked by the change: he was smiling, happy, comfortable with me, funny, reflective, empathetic. In short, he was an entirely different kid. When I asked his teacher about this she told me that when he had come to their school the previous year he had cozied up to the school “toughs.” It made sense. He was anxious and scared by what had happened. So he had sought to be part of the group that he thought would ensure his safety. But the rages at home indicated that it wasn’t an effective strategy.

This is one of the great paradoxes of neurorecovery – the way our limbic system detects whether people and situations are safe or threatening. When we are anxious or frightened we can be drawn to someone who promises safety but actually leaves us even more anxious or frightened. We get caught in a spiralling stress cycle that shuts down the very reflective system we need to make sense of what we are feeling. This is precisely what kindled alarm. This is precisely what the exact opposite effect. The result is a blunted and, in severe cases, blocked by excessive stress. Such an individual is chronically hyperaroused and rarely, if ever, experiences those moments of calm satisfaction that are the goal and the ultimate benefit of self-regulation. They can certainly achieve material success, yet seldom with accompanying feelings of fulfillment or contentment; more likely only a sense of power and dominance. The prosocial domain isn’t just critical for personal wellbeing, it is critical for that of society as well. Indeed, the ultimate principle of the Interbrain is that the two cannot be separated. A child’s prosocial character, and indeed society’s, is a function of prosocial experience and aspirations. This idea lies at the very heart of Plato’s Republic, and in the oft-repeated quote from John Locke. “We are all a sort of chameleons, that still take a tincture from things near us: nor is it to be wondered at in children, who better understand what they see than what they hear.” But however august this idea might be, it is one that is easily and repeatedly forgotten. And yes, the boy’s rages stopped.

A Self-Reg Haven is a school where everyone feels physically and emotionally safe, where students and staff alike feel connected to the school and to each other. But the big question is the “How?” Invariably, when a school is starting out on its journey to becoming a Self-Reg Haven I get asked questions like:

“Where do I start?”
“Can you just tell me the strategies and give me the basic tools?”
“How do I get the parents to know about this?”
“How can we get all teachers learning about Self-Reg?”
“Self-Reg is not that complicated. Why do I need to understand the science?”
“Self-Reg is SO much more complicated than I first thought. How will I ever learn it all?”

In Self-Reg, Dr. Stuart Shanker frames the two core detective-work questions for reframing stress behavior as: “Why?” and “Why now?” At an organizational level, such as a school, the challenge comes when you try to bring in Self-Reg and “why?” “why now” doesn’t seem enough to handle all the problems you’re dealing with.

If only the “how” were something simple and straightforward that we could package and share. That would be a lovely thing for us, as you can imagine, knowing our mission is to ground self-regulation in living and learning. But instead of a program for managing behaviour, Self-Reg is an ongoing process of learning why students act and react in certain ways; what they are feeling, and why; what they are communicating, intentionally or unintentionally; what helps them stay or return to being calmly focused and alert. Not only is every student different, but each is constantly changing. So Self-Reg is a never-ending process of getting to know a student, and helping them to recognize and realize their potential. Equally, it is a process of unlearning: removing cognitive blinders that shape our attitudes and perceptions of student behaviour. And finally, it is a process of learning about ourselves: why we act and react in certain ways, what the signs are that show us when we are stuck in a state of low energy and high tension, and what we need to do to rest and restore.
Continued: Self-Reg RADAR: A tool to help with the “how” of becoming a Self-Reg Haven

The 5-stage RADAR approach will help.

RADAR – Reflect, Analyze, Design, Activate, Respond -- guides the process of moving towards a Self-Reg Haven. We designed this model to meet the challenge schools face with questions of “data” or “evidence based” decision-making. But this could easily apply to any organization traveling on the journey towards becoming a Self-Reg Haven. The process has 5 iterative steps. Self-Reg is a continual reflective process, so using the RADAR model, you could cycle through these iterative stages again and again.

RADAR Stage 1: Reflect
Identify which of the four Self-Reg journeys aligns best with your strategic goals/directions for your school or organization, your readiness, and your resources. The four streams are: (a) Self-Reg seeds; (b) Self-Reg sunrise; (c) Self-Reg quilt; or (d) Self-Reg Haven. Document your vision and goals.

RADAR Stage 2: Analyze
Use the Self-Reg RADAR matrix to capture information about your organization’s Self-Reg physical and relational contexts and the services and resources available to the population you serve and the adults working within your organization. Assess: Gather information about your current state of Self-Reg using the 5-domain Self-Reg RADAR Matrix. Analyze: Identify strengths, gaps, and priorities.

RADAR Stage 3: Design
The big picture strategic goal was identified in RADAR Step 1. In RADAR Stage 3 the first phase of “design and develop” occurs. The commitment is long term but the planning is in bite-size chunks (agile approach), with ongoing reflect and develop “checkpoints” all along the way.

The active reflection, the testing, the continuous growth orientation is a process over time. In the design phase you develop and document:

RADAR Stage 4: Activate
At this stage the plan that was designed in Step 3 is activated. Documentation is crucial in this phase.
- This is the stage in which the researcher in every practitioner comes to life: observing, active listening, documenting what’s perceived and experienced with the activation of the plan, discussions of emerging themes with team.
- This is a non-judgment phase. The focus is on testing out your plan and noticing what happens. The emphasis is on gathering information to inform the Haven oriented work next steps etc.
- Various forms of data collection tools can be used in this phase depending on the design and context. Keep in mind that observation and documenting of what’s noticed in personal/professional reflections journals is a good starting place for Self-Reg development.

RADAR Stage 5: Respond
- Deconstruct the information gathered in the Activate stage, appraise, and respond by returning to the “Design” stage of the RADAR model as appropriate.
Self-Reg and Everything Else We Know

Fathers and Self-Regulation in Families

by John Hoffman

I have spent more than 25 years writing about fatherhood, and I am a father of three grown young men. Getting into self-regulation has given me a new way of looking at fatherhood issues. I’m particularly interested in how father involvement affects the self-regulation of fathers and their partners, because I know that the partner relationship has a major impact on fathers involvement with their kids.

But first I want to touch on one of the big ideas in the fatherhood field, which is that father involvement – meaning presence, responsibility, and engagement with kids – is good for children’s development. There is lots of research about this, along with various with theories as to why and how father involvement would be beneficial for kids.

Using the Self-Reg lens it seems obvious that a skilled, caring father provides an additional interbrain to help regulate the immature brains of his children. This additional interbrain doesn’t have to be a father, of course. It can be a second mom, a grandparent, nanny or other caregiver. But, when Dad is in the picture, his interbrain activity can be very valuable, and not just for his kids. It can also help his partner.

Years ago Today’s Parent magazine asked me to write an article called “Dad’s Guide to Newborns.” I said, “Sure, as long as it’s OK if the first half of the article is about mothers.” This reflects one of my core beliefs about modern fatherhood. If a guy in a mother-father family needed me to be highly involved in baby care.

One of the first things I noticed in my early days of parenting was that my efforts to be involved were sometimes a source of stress for my wife. Sometimes I sort of got in her way even though I was trying to help. And when she was stressed, I found it harder to be involved. So reducing her stress seemed to make it easier for her to feel safe around my involvement. Of course, that’s not how I would have expressed it back then. But I did figure out pretty quickly, even with our first baby, that she was feeling this huge load of responsibility. I could see how much physical and emotional energy she was burning and how quickly she could become rattled (dysregulated) at times, sometimes by things I did unintentionally. She needed my general support and understanding around her experience of new motherhood at least as much or more as she needed me to be highly involved in baby care.

In today’s world, fathers have enormous potential, and a responsibility I would argue, to support the self-regulation of mothers. Fathers’ support has always been important to families. But it is important in a different way now than in the past. Historically, all cultures have understood the importance of supporting and helping mothers. Traditionally, this support, which had the effect of reducing mothers’ stress, usually came from networks of women: grandmothers, sisters, female neighbours and friends. Nowadays women are often less available to provide this support for various reasons. So, in a mother-father family, the father’s support and hands-on involvement have become key for mothers’ well-being and self-regulation.

But, as I noted, the mere fact that Dad is involved does not guarantee reduced stress for Mom. Parenting partners can add to each other’s stress. However, there’s pretty good evidence that enhancing Father/Mother teamwork and mutual support improves the parenting of both mothers and fathers.

But now I come to the point that doesn’t get much coverage in the discussion of the benefits of father involvement. Father involvement has huge potential benefits for the self-regulation of men themselves. But now I come to the point that doesn’t get much coverage in the discussion of the benefits of father involvement. Father involvement has huge potential benefits for the self-regulation of men themselves.

I logged a lot of time looking after my kids in their early years and, although it wasn’t always fun, I felt good about it. I loved the sensory experience of frequent physical contact: carrying my kids, holding their little hands or feet, smelling the tops of their heads. I also took immense satisfaction and pride from knowing how to look after the needs of little guys (my kids are all boys) who needed my help to get through the day and feel OK in the world.

I remember one time saying to my wife, “I feel like I’ve discovered this great women’s secret. Looking after kids gives you a feeling of satisfaction that you can’t get from anything else.” That feeling was very regulating for me. It buffered me, and helped me recover, from the stresses of parenting. It also helped me feel closer to the loop with my wife and children. I understood their experience and was part of it. Being on the outside looking in, feeling disconnected and unsure of your role, is highly dysregulating for fathers. I’ve seen it happen.

I believe that productive father involvement can also contribute to the self-regulation of communities. It is clear to me that caring for little ones – gauging and addressing their needs from minute to minute – breeds empathy. We’re born with the capacity for empathy, but fully-fledged empathy and the regulating behaviour it fosters comes from experience. The more men we can support to have these kinds of experiences the better off our society will be.

“Getting into Self-Regulation has given me a new way of looking at fatherhood issues.”

I see it happening. I see all kinds of fathers out there who are good at reading and addressing their children’s needs. But I think more could still be done to enhance father involvement and parenting teamwork in families, which brings me to my last point, or question really.

How do we help more fathers feel supported and regulated in their parenting role? Some people think fathers need to be taught more parenting skills. Sure. Parenting skills are useful. But let’s do the regulation piece first. Fathers will be much more able to connect with and learn about their kids – and use parenting strategies they’ve been taught – when they feel supported and relaxed in their parenting role and in tune with their partners and kids. When men (and women!) feel comfortable in the clothes of parenthood they are much more able to be good parents.
Unpacking TMC’s Values Part Two

TMC’s statement of values, developed in 2015, tells people what we stand for and provides an ethical foundation to guide our behaviour as we engage in our work and pursue goals. Since value statements are typically brief and try to capture complex ideas in relatively few words, they are subject to a certain amount of interpretation, and, possibly, misinterpretation. This is the second in a series of short articles that will unpack our values to clarify their meaning.

Value #5 There is no single set way to do Self-Reg

Although Self-Reg is described as a method with steps to follow, that does not mean that there is a best or ideal way to carry out the method. Everyone who does Self-Reg brings their own experiences, knowledge, beliefs, biases and personalities to the table. Just as people have different ways of calming themselves, they will have different ways of calming others. Some people may be “naturals” who just seem to get Self-Reg, while others may have to take longer to figure Self-Reg out. Just as every individual is unique, every individual’s way of doing Self-Reg will be unique.

Value #6 There are no quick fixes, Self-Reg is a continual and reflective process

We live in a world where people are constantly trying to sell us quick fixes. Just do X, Y or Z and “your child will behave,” or “you’ll lose weight and keep it off,” or “you’ll protect yourself against dementia.” Fairly quick successes, or perhaps more accurately, encouraging breakthroughs, sometimes happen. But in the real world, change tends to happen slowly and incrementally. And, as anyone who has raised or worked with children knows, even if you are successful with one of your child’s issues, that usually just gives you a little breathing room until the next issue pan out. After a six-month contract to return to Italy but that didn’t translate for accomplishing those goals.”

Value #7 Self-Reg is for everyone, it’s not just about children and youth

People rightly want to support and enhance child development, because that seems (and is) the best way to promote the long-term well-being of society. But consider two things. One is that stress and other challenges are as inevitable in life as death and taxes. People may deal with trauma, mental illness, health problems, misfortune, and the effects of aging at various points in their lives. Therefore, grounding living, learning and mutual support in self-regulation is important no matter how old you are.

Secondly, and this relates directly to Value #6, adults will be best able to help regulate children (and also to model and teach Self-Reg), if those adults are regulated themselves.

Value #8 The well-being of children is inseparable from the well-being of all the critical adults in their lives.

This value brings to mind the old saying: “If Mama ain’t happy, ain’t nobody happy.” That statement speaks to an elemental truth. People who look after and see to the well-being of others – mothers, fathers, teachers, early childhood educators, nurses, doctors, mental health professionals – will be most able to address the needs of others, if they themselves stay regulated, happy and mentally healthy most of the time. So if we’re looking at how to enhance self-regulation in children, we can never forget that we must also look at and address the self-regulation and well-being of the people who care for them.

Self-Reg People:
TMC Executive Director, Susan Hopkins

Susan Hopkins officially took over the day-to-day operations of TMC in June of 2015. Her journey to TMC was a winding and fascinating one, which took Susan from Halifax, where she was born, to Vancouver, Italy, Northern Ontario, the Northwest Territories and Edmonton, before landing in Peterborough, where TMC’s office is located.

In her free-spirited youth, among other things, Susan dropped out of school twice, ran away from home, tried skydiving, jumped off 60 foot cliffs into water, hiked Vancouver Island’s Pacific Coast Trail alone, went to university, worked in various Halifax and Vancouver bars and restaurants, and did a stint as a sales rep in the natural health industry. She also experienced a mental health crisis (depression) at the age of 27. After her recent marriage and the decision to pursue a teaching career, something she’d always wanted to do. Even after graduating from Teacher Education at UBC in 1998, Susan’s unconventional path continued. After sending out 200+ resumes to schools all over the world, she landed a job at St. Louis School, an international school in Milan, Italy, where she taught for four years. One unique aspect of that experience was that she stayed with the same class of students from grade one through grade four. “I loved that because of the relationships we developed” she says. “I still have some of my students from Italy on Facebook.”

Work visa problems brought Susan back to Canada in 2003. She planned to return to St. Louis School as a Teaching Coordinator and did a stint as a sales rep in Vancouver bars and restaurants. Finally, in May 2015, when Susan was 45, she decided to go back to school. She landed a job at St. Louis School, an international school in Milan, Italy, where she taught for four years. One unique aspect of that experience was that she stayed with the same class of students from grade one through grade four. “I loved that because of the relationships we developed” she says. “I still have some of my students from Italy on Facebook.”

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Susan loved the north, but three years into motherhood she started to think about living in a less remote location. The first move was to Yellowknife, where she served as Early Childhood and Kindergarten Coordinator and a subsequent Director of Planning, Research and Evaluation for the Northwest Territories Department of Education. It was in the former role that Susan first encountered the name of her current boss. As she researched models for play-based kindergarten curricula a certain name kept popping up: Stuart Shanker. Eventually she e-mailed Stuart to ask for his advice. He responded within an hour, and the very next day they were talking on the phone. “What was different about Stuart was that everyone else I had consulted with did a lot of talking,” she says. “Stuart mostly listened and asked questions.”

That conversation proved to be the beginning of a working relationship that would thread through Susan’s work in various roles over the next several years. It didn’t take long for her to realize that Self-Reg really pulled together a lot of the ideas she had about children and their well-being. “I’ve been driven to do good my whole life,” she says. “I care deeply about the well-being of kids, their parents and their communities. And I have been a huge advocate for any group that I felt was being marginalized and worked to make space for their voices. In Self-Reg I found the best platform I’d ever seen for accomplishing those goals.”

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Self-Reg Surprises You:

We asked participants in our Foundations Courses to answer this simple question: 

What surprises you most about Self-Reg?

Their answers were fascinating, insightful and — wait for it — surprising!

“What has surprised me the most about Self-Reg is how much I have learned about myself. I took these courses as professional development, but the impact on my life has been amazing. I have become much better at recognizing my own stress and finding ways to lower my stress.” — Tina Etzl, Registered Early Childhood Educator

“Despite its “sciencey” foundations, Self-Reg is quite understandable as a social movement. It’s a lovely marriage of the two realms. As a Social Worker and history buff, this jumped out for me right away and helped me to embrace and absorb the material. I love a good revolution!” — Jennifer Pritchard, Social Worker

“What surprises me most about Self-Reg is how quickly it awakens the spirit and transforms relationships. When we don the lens of Self-Reg we begin to see with the heart instead of the eye.” — Susan Conklin, Special Education and Classroom Teacher

Thinking through a Self-Reg lens can allow a person to shed a lot of blame and shame. When we aren’t aware of stress levels and stress impacts, we can create a long, inaccurate ‘story’ and find moral failing (our own or someone else’s). But with Self-Reg you can simply stop, take a breath, and start the detective work of looking for stressors across the domains. It restores a kind of innocence to the human experience. We’re not evil or bad. But we are variously stressed, and that stress takes a toll. And being triggered can cause damage, which can be repaired. With awareness and strategies we can increase the chances that we experience the best of the world, and the world experiences the best of us.” — Elaine Stewart, Registered Early Childhood Educator

I am surprised how much the theories behind self-regulation resonate with people of all ages, myself included. How well a person self-regulates impacts every relationship they have. It really is for everyone.” — Lindsay Bunn, School Psychologist

“How quickly a child’s learning curve could change when I began to observe, consider and understand the child through the Self-Reg lens. Self-Reg works, but you may have to learn to suspend your previous training and beliefs.” — Laura Cesarino, Registered Psychotherapist

“I’m astonished that I see evidence of Self-Reg all around me now that I’ve taken this course. It’s like I’ve put on new glasses and every interaction with other people is clearer, sharper, and Self-Reg coloured.” — Vicki Parnell, RDI (Relationship Development Intervention) Consultant

“What surprises me most about Self-Reg is how quickly it awakens the spirit that connects us all.” — Gail Molenaar, Registered Early Childhood Educator

Self-regulation is about how we deal with stress. And there sure is a lot of it in today’s world. That’s not to say that stress is a bad thing. The fact is that development – emotional and social as well as physical and spiritual – is driven by stress. But the stress load has to be manageable. When it’s too great, growth is stalled and can even be set back. So it’s essential that we learn how to keep our child’s stress – and our own! – in a manageable range.

Our customers include anyone interested in learning more about Self-Reg and professionals from many fields, including: early childhood educators, teachers, principals, pediatricians, occupational therapists, psychologists, behavior specialists, speech & language therapists, counsellors, researchers, college students, professors, and many more!

Multi-user licenses are also available. Contact liz@self-reg.ca

**Self-Reg Portal Plus**

**The Portal is filled with ever-growing content**

- A huge bank of videos for personal learning or to use with training and presentations, including dozens of videos from Dr. Shanker
- Dozens of videos from the field demonstrating examples of Self-Reg in Action
- New content added every week
- Short video clips that can be viewed on any device
- A moderated discussion area for questions and idea sharing
- Printable Self-Reg resources from TMC and others practicing Self-Reg
- First access to all new Self-Reg content from The MEHRIT Centre
- A video glossary of Dr. Shanker explaining all the Self-Reg and science terminology
- A personal ePortfolio where you can keep notes, assemble and store presentations, collect a personal bank of your favourite resources

**Members include anyone interested in learning more about Self-Reg and professionals from many fields, including:**

- early childhood educators, teachers, principals, pediatricians, occupational therapists, psychologists, behavior specialists, speech & language therapists, counsellors, researchers, college students, professors, and many more!

**The Parent Self-Reg Portal**

We are in the midst of one of the most exciting and profound revolutions ever seen in our understanding of how to enhance healthy child development. Scientists have uncovered the fundamental importance of self-regulation for your child’s wellbeing – and your own! And what’s most exciting is that our ability to self-regulate is something that we can always work on, always work on and improve.

**The Parent Self-Reg Portal**

**For this to be possible, you need to know:**

- What is stress?
- What are the big stressors in your child’s life: hidden as well as overt?
- When your child is becoming over-stressed

**Some examples of the major topics covered are:**

- What is the difference between good stress and bad stress?
- How can I tell when my child is under too much stress and what do I do?
- Why doesn’t my child know when he/ she is stressed too much?
- How can I tell the difference between misbehavior and stress behavior?
- How can I tell when my child is under too much stress and what do I do?
- Why isn’t my child able to explain why they are upset?
- Why can’t I just tell my child to stop misbehaving?
- Why are the teenage years so hard for my child?

**Self-Reg Portal Plus**

For a one-year membership $79 CAD / person

**Multi-user licenses are also available. Contact liz@self-reg.ca**

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**The Parent Self-Reg Portal**

**For this to be possible, you need to know:**

- What is stress?
- What are the big stressors in your child’s life: hidden as well as overt?
- When your child is becoming over-stressed

**Some examples of the major topics covered are:**

- What is the difference between good stress and bad stress?
- How can I tell when my child is under too much stress and what do I do?
- Why doesn’t my child know when he/ she is stressed too much?
- How can I tell the difference between misbehavior and stress behavior?
- Why isn’t my child able to explain why they are upset?
- Why can’t I just tell my child to stop misbehaving?
- Why are the teenage years so hard for my child?

**Self-Reg Portal Plus**

For a one-year membership $79 CAD / person

**Multi-user licenses are also available. Contact liz@self-reg.ca**

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$79 CAD / person for a one-year membership

**Members include anyone interested in learning more about Self-Reg and professionals from many fields, including:**

- early childhood educators, teachers, principals, pediatricians, occupational therapists, psychologists, behavior specialists, speech & language therapists, counsellors, researchers, college students, professors, and many more!

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This will be a great comfort to parents who know from experience, that in real life, progress with parenting problems usually comes gradually and incrementally. Few things work instantly. Things that used to work suddenly stop working. What works with one child doesn’t work with another. Strategies that “should” work sometimes don’t work. And sometimes things work and you’re not exactly sure why.

The book was written for parents, but it is equally relevant to educators, and not just because most educators are parents too. This book explores some fairly different territory than Calm, Alert and Learning. Thanks to Dr. Shanker’s ongoing learning process, he is now able to go much more deeply into the five domains and the impact of hidden stressors on children.

Above all, this book soundly deconstructs the idea that kids who are having trouble paying attention, or controlling impulses, those who have short emotional fuses or social problems, aren’t trying hard enough or simply haven’t been disciplined properly. Many exhausted, discouraged parents will find it a great relief to know that they can stop fighting for control and can instead put their hearts and minds into understanding and connecting with their children – in all their uniqueness. Because, at the heart of it, isn’t that what all parents really want to do?

**Self-Reg: How to Help Your Child (And You) Break the Stress Cycle and Successfully Engage with Life**, by Dr. Stuart Shanker, with Teresa Barker, Penguin Press 2016

Pre-order your copy of Self-Reg How to Help Your Child (and You) Break the Stress Cycle and Successfully Engage with Life, follow the appropriate link:

- United States: Penguin Random House
- Canada: Penguin Random House Canada
- United Kingdom: Hodder & Stoughton Limited

Commissioned by an American publisher (Penguin Press), the rights to Dr. Shanker’s new book have already been picked up by publishers in several different countries. We should note that Dr. S had an American co-author this time out: Teresa Barker, a veteran journalist and author who has collaborated with other experts on several best-selling books for parents.

The first thing that struck me about the new book is that Dr. S treats parents like intelligent, curious, caring beings who really want to understand “what’s going on inside that little head (and body).” This will be a breath of fresh air to troubled parents who are accustomed to being told all the things they are doing wrong. And, in helping parents understand the science behind Self-Reg, Dr. S doesn’t shy away from comprehensive information. This book contains lot of detail – much more than other parenting books – about the workings of the brain and nervous system and how that all relates to the stress children experience and how that stress affects their energy, mood, behaviour, thinking and social functioning.

If you’ve seen Stuart speak or read his blogs you know that he likes to talk about real cases of children he’s met. In Self-Reg he delves very deeply into the stories. These are not just anecdotes. He gives you lots of information, circling back to the same child several times during a chapter: the child’s behaviour, the parents’ concerns, his own observations, and what they all learned along the way. And, as we’d expect, he uses Self-Reg to show us what was making that child tick and how they were able to identify and deal with the child’s stressors.

Another strength of this book is that it doesn’t provide parents with pat 1-2-3 Magic type answers — You know... “Just do this (and do it just right) and your child’s behaviour will be fixed.” Oh, Stuart does say children’s behaviour can improve. He says that very confidently. But he offers parents a journey of detective work: observation, learning, thinking, missteps and reflection. And he uses the real life cases to show parents the steps along the way. (He also devotes an entire chapter to parents and their stress.)