

**REBUILD. RENEW. RESTORE. REDISCOVER. TOGETHER.**

Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board

THE MEHRIT CENTRE

# A WORKBOOK FOR ADULTS & EDUCATORS



# PRACTICE 1: REFRAME

THE BEHAVIOUR

ADULTS & EDUCATORS

Reframing is crucial in terms of helping us understand our own behaviour better and respond to behaviour in a more helpful way. A lot of behaviours we tend to see as “misbehaviour” are actually “stress behaviours,” caused by the brain and body changes that take place when we are overstressed. Sometimes it’s easy to distinguish between misbehaviour and stress behaviour. But not always. One of the ways we can learn to make that distinction is by reflecting on past behaviour. Identify below some stress behaviours. How do you know they were stress behaviours? What were the signs that they were over stressed? What stressors were affecting them at the time?

## WHAT TELLS YOU THAT “MISBEHAVIOURS” ARE ACTUALLY STRESS BEHAVIOURS?

STRESS BEHAVIOUR	THIS IS NOT “MISBEHAVIOUR” AND THIS IS HOW I KNOW








# PRACTICE 1: REFRAME

THE BEHAVIOUR

ADULTS & EDUCATORS

Reframing our own behaviour can help us be more compassionate with ourselves when we behave in ways that we regret. Think of a few of your recent “misbehaviours” (things you wish you did or handled differently in the moment or ongoing habits that you'd change if you could) that might have actually been stress behaviours.

## WHAT “MISBEHAVIOURS” ARE ACTUALLY STRESS BEHAVIOURS?

“MISBEHAVIOUR”	REFRAME THE BEHAVIOUR
	
	
	
	
	
	
	

# PRACTICE 2: RECOGNIZE

THE STRESSORS IN THE BIOLOGICAL DOMAIN

ADULTS & EDUCATORS

Self-Reg looks at stress across five domains of experience: biological, emotional, cognitive, social and prosocial. Usually, we don't have stress in just one domain at a time. But still, it's helpful to understand and be able to recognize how stressors affect us in each domain. This task will help you learn to recognize stress in the biological domain.

Here are a few examples for some inspiration:



**WHAT BIOLOGICAL STRESSORS ARE YOU EXPERIENCING RIGHT NOW?**

**WHAT OTHER BIOLOGICAL STRESSORS DO YOU COMMONLY EXPERIENCE?**

# PRACTICE 2: RECOGNIZE

THE STRESSORS IN THE EMOTION DOMAIN

ADULTS & EDUCATORS

Stress in the emotion domain includes having feelings like being upset, angry, scared or sad. Most people understand that. But, it's also a good idea to understand what our personal stressors are in the emotion domain. Understanding these stressors—not only the big stressors, but the small ones too—helps us understand and manage our emotions. So, try to identify as many different emotional stressors as you can.

Here are a few examples for some inspiration:



**WHAT EMOTION STRESSORS ARE YOU EXPERIENCING RIGHT NOW?**

**WHAT OTHER EMOTION STRESSORS DO YOU COMMONLY EXPERIENCE?**



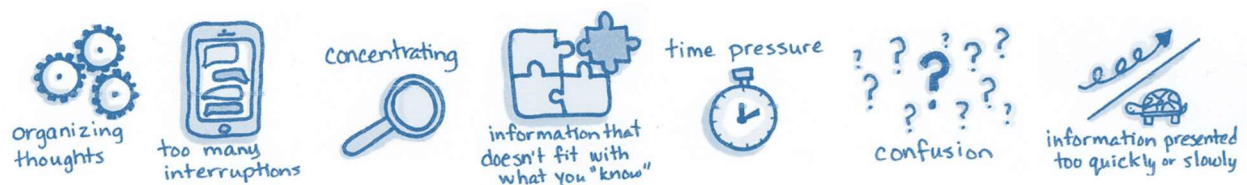
# PRACTICE 2: RECOGNIZE

THE STRESSORS IN THE COGNITIVE DOMAIN

ADULTS & EDUCATORS

The cognitive domain is about stress related to thinking: concentrating, feeling puzzled, solving problems, managing time and thinking logically. This time, try to think of situations and experiences that cause cognitive stress for you.

Here are a few examples for some inspiration:



**WHAT COGNITIVE STRESSORS ARE YOU EXPERIENCING RIGHT NOW?**

**WHAT OTHER COGNITIVE STRESSORS DO YOU COMMONLY EXPERIENCE?**

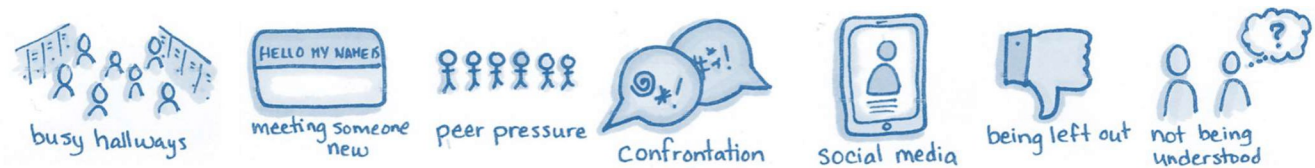
# PRACTICE 2: RECOGNIZE

THE STRESSORS IN THE SOCIAL DOMAIN

ADULTS & EDUCATORS

We are social creatures. And while social engagement is our most important way of dealing with stress, social interaction (including relationships) can also be an ongoing source of everyday stress. The first step in dealing with social stress more effectively is getting in touch with our social stressors. Remember, social stressors vary from person to person, and can change, depending on the situation or stressors from other domains.

Here are a few examples for some inspiration:



**WHAT SOCIAL STRESSORS ARE YOU EXPERIENCING  
RIGHT NOW?**

**WHAT OTHER SOCIAL STRESSORS DO YOU  
COMMONLY EXPERIENCE?**

# PRACTICE 2: RECOGNIZE

THE STRESSORS IN THE PROSOCIAL DOMAIN

ADULTS & EDUCATORS

The prosocial domain is a tricky one for a lot of people. What's the difference between social and prosocial? In truth, social and prosocial stressors are often experienced at the same time. But here's the difference. Prosocial stress is less self-centered than social stress. Prosocial stress tends to revolve around empathy, our concern for others. So, it's things like feeling distressed by other people's distress or level of arousal or feeling overloaded by our feelings of empathy and concern for others. What prosocial stressors affect you?

Here are a few examples for some inspiration:



**WHAT PROSOCIAL STRESSORS ARE YOU EXPERIENCING RIGHT NOW?**

**WHAT OTHER PROSOCIAL STRESSORS DO YOU COMMONLY EXPERIENCE?**



# PRACTICE 3: REDUCE

THE STRESS ACROSS ALL 5 DOMAINS

ADULTS & EDUCATORS

We're often told that stress is something we should learn to "cope" with. Coping is important, but it's not the whole story of stress management. Coping burns our energy. So, it's also important to reduce stress when we can, otherwise, we'd burn all our energy coping. Look back at your list of stressors in the biological and emotion domains. What are some of the ways you reduce those kinds of stress?



## REDUCING THE STRESS IN THE BIOLOGICAL DOMAIN

In the table below, list some of the biological stressors you identified in Practice 2. How could you reduce these stressors?

BIOLOGICAL STRESSOR	I CAN REDUCE THIS BY...

# PRACTICE 3: REDUCE

THE STRESS ACROSS ALL 5 DOMAINS

ADULTS & EDUCATORS



## REDUCING THE STRESS IN THE EMOTION DOMAIN

In the table below, list some of the emotion domain stressors you identified in Practice 2. How could you reduce these stressors?

EMOTION STRESSOR	I CAN REDUCE THIS BY...

# PRACTICE 3: REDUCE

THE STRESS ACROSS ALL 5 DOMAINS

ADULTS & EDUCATORS



## REDUCING THE STRESS IN THE COGNITIVE DOMAIN

In the table below, list some of the cognitive domain stressors you identified in Practice 2. How could you reduce these stressors?

COGNITIVE STRESSOR	I CAN REDUCE THIS BY...

# PRACTICE 3: REDUCE

THE STRESS ACROSS ALL 5 DOMAINS

ADULTS & EDUCATORS



## REDUCING THE STRESS IN THE SOCIAL DOMAIN

In the table below, list some of the social domain stressors you identified in Practice 2. How could you reduce these stressors?

SOCIAL STRESSOR	I CAN REDUCE THIS BY...

# PRACTICE 3: REDUCE

THE STRESS ACROSS ALL 5 DOMAINS

ADULTS & EDUCATORS



## REDUCING THE STRESS IN THE PROSOCIAL DOMAIN

In the table below, list some of the prosocial domain stressors you identified in Practice 2. How could you reduce these stressors?

PROSOCIAL STRESSOR	I CAN REDUCE THIS BY...

# PRACTICE 4: REFLECT

ENHANCE STRESS AWARENESS

ADULTS & EDUCATORS

One key problem with self-regulation is not being aware of our own brain and body signals that we are overstressed. Sometimes we can be tense, or low on energy—both CAN BE signs of excess stress—without actually being aware of it. Learning to recognize your personal signs of over stress is a crucial step in developing effective and growth-promoting self-regulation skills that help you reduce tension and restore energy. At first it might seem hard to think of 10 signs that you are overstressed. But once you get started, the ideas will start coming.

In the table below aim to list 10 signs that tell you that you are overstressed. Do you grind your teeth? Perhaps you pace up and down? It's different for everybody but becoming aware is the first step.

## 10 SIGNS THAT I AM OVERSTRESSED

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

# PRACTICE 4: REFLECT

ENHANCE STRESS AWARENESS

ADULTS & EDUCATORS

Another important part of self-regulation is knowing what true brain and body calmness feels like, and what it feels like to have the “just right” amount of energy for the situation you are in. You might be surprised to hear that a lot of people, young people in particular, are not in touch with what it feels like to be calm. This exercise is a good first step in building our awareness of what “just right” feels like.

In the table below aim to list 10 signs that tell you that you are feeling “just right”. Do you fall asleep easily? Perhaps you’re not feeling any tension in your body?

## 10 SIGNS THAT I AM FEELING “JUST RIGHT”

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

# PRACTICE 5: RESTORE

DEVELOP PERSONALIZED STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE RESILIENCE AND RESTORATION.

ADULTS & EDUCATORS

Our levels of energy and tension are always shifting as our brain and body try to help us meet the demands created by various stressors. Excess stress can put our energy and tension out of balance. When that happens, we feel tense and low on energy too much of the time. So, we need to be able to reduce our tension and restore our energy. What sort of things do you do to release or let go of your tension?

## HOW DO YOU RESPOND TO YOUR TENSION?

In this task, create a list of strategies or activities that help you reduce tension and increase your energy. Remember that these are different for everyone. For example, going for a run, relaxing in the bath, or making a cup of coffee to start your morning.

Think about how these relate to the stressors you identified in Step 2 (Recognize)?

Remember, Step 5 'Restore' differs from Step 3 'Reduce', as these are not 'in the moment' ways to reduce stress, but rather are to provide yourself with energy and reduce your tension to bring about a state of calm and better tackle those unknown stressors that may be on the horizon.





# PRACTICE 5: RESTORE

DEVELOP PERSONALIZED STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE RESILIENCE AND RESTORATION.

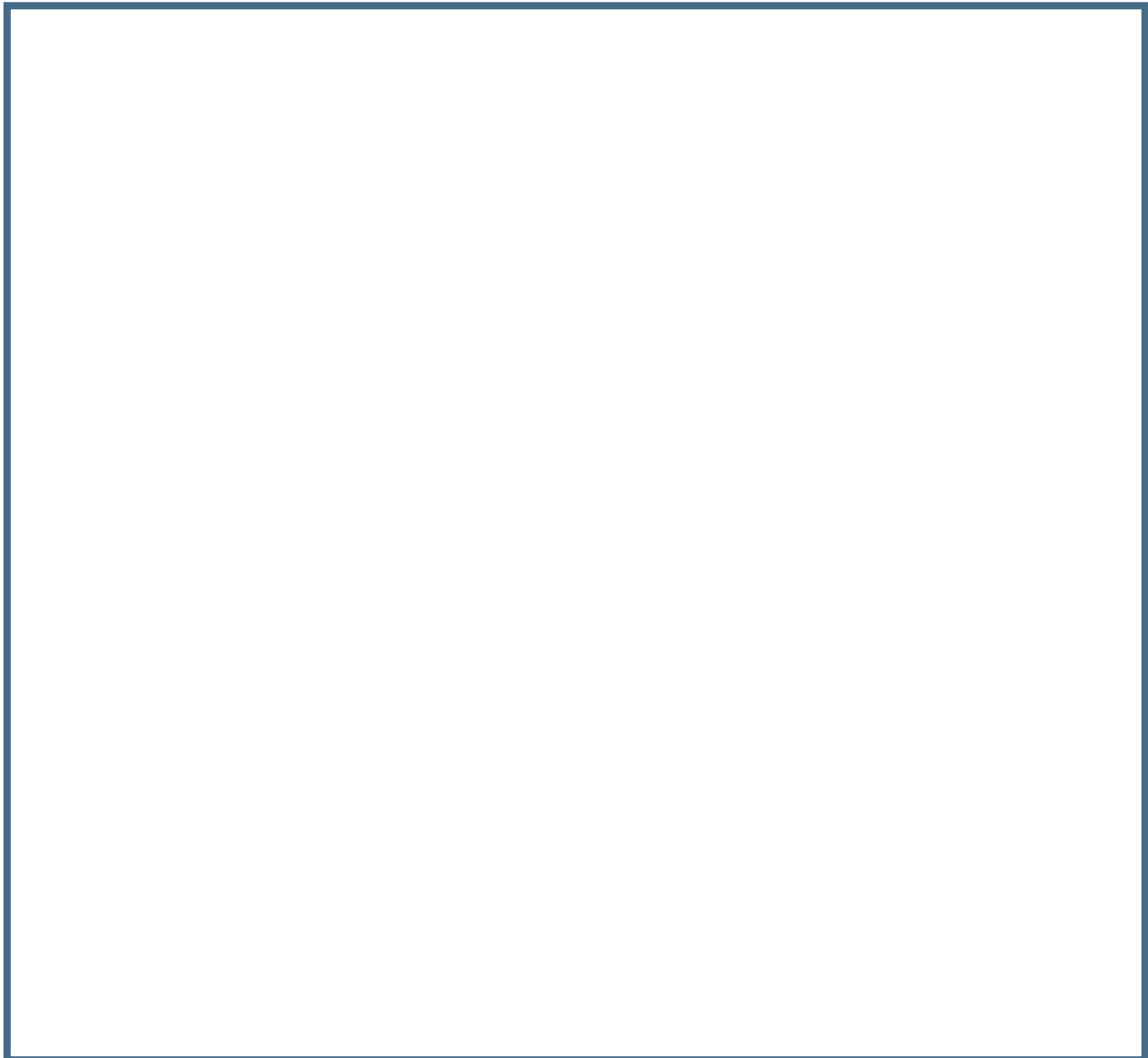
ADULTS & EDUCATORS

The other key problem with excess stress is that it depletes our energy. And pretty much everything we do requires energy. So, being low on energy is not a good thing.

The good news is that there are lots of ways of filling our energy tank back up. Sometimes being with people we like or doing something we enjoy helps. What are some of the specific things that fill your energy tank?

## HOW DO YOU RESPOND TO YOUR ENERGY LEVELS?

What fills you up with energy? What do you do to restore yourself say in your spare time or on the weekend? Create your personalized list of activities or strategies that you use to restore energy:



# PRACTICE 5: RESTORE

DEVELOP PERSONALIZED STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE RESILIENCE AND RESTORATION.

ADULTS & EDUCATORS

Is there anything you have ever wanted to try? What ways that work for your friends, family, colleagues or students but you haven't tried come to mind? How do you think this will help you restore energy? List your thoughts in the box below:

