


What is Self-Reg and Why Does it Matter? An Introduction to Self-Reg

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Self-Controlism


Self-Control is an ancient paradigm (Plato)

Child needs to be trained to exert "mental effort" to inhibit impulses

The "stronger" the effort the better the child's outcome in life (eudaimonia)

Parents need to *strengthen* child's effortful control through punishment and reward

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Self-Regulation


447 definitions of Self-regulation

446 variations on self-control

i.e., "Child needs to *regulate* emotions, behaviour"


Physiological definition: How we manage stress

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Walter Bradford Cannon (1871-1945) 

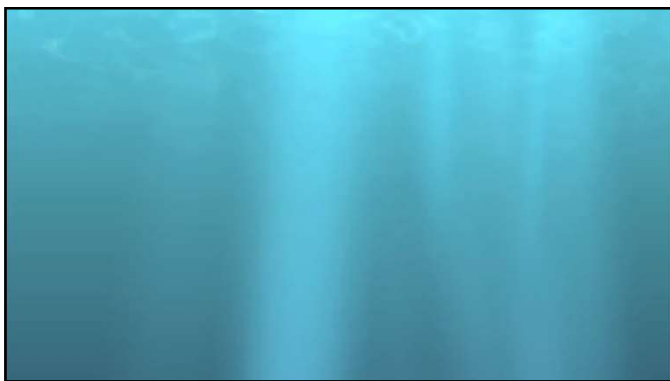
- Body is composed of multiple homeostatic systems
- Brain responds to "stress" with physiological reaction to maintain a system in its functional range
- Example of body temperature
- Burn energy (shivering, teeth chattering) to generate heat
- In this example, cold temperature is a "stressor"

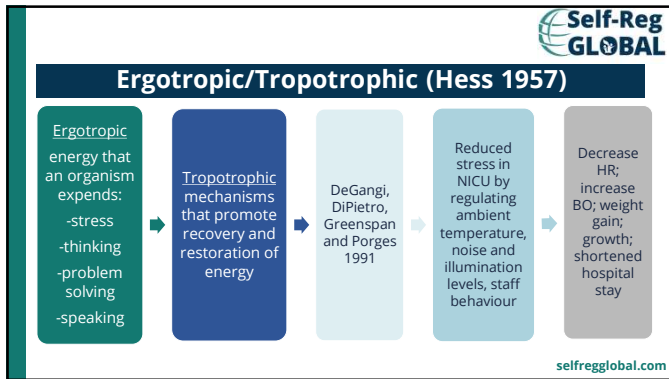
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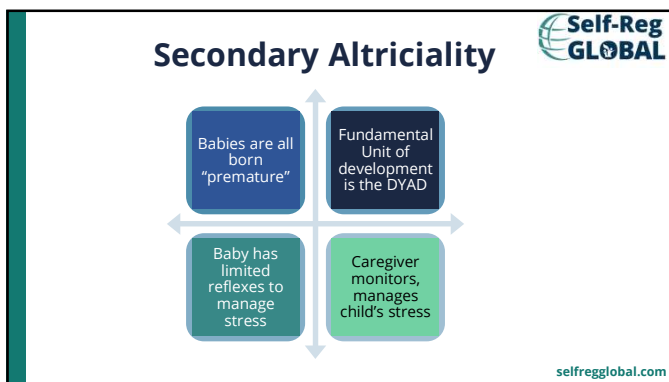
The Trauma of Birth 

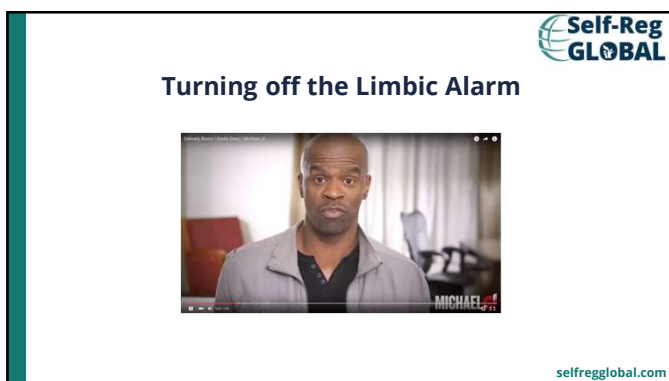
- The womb is a stress-reduced environment
- The birth process itself a huge stress
- At moment of birth baby assaulted by new stresses
- Tremendous drain on child's energy reserves

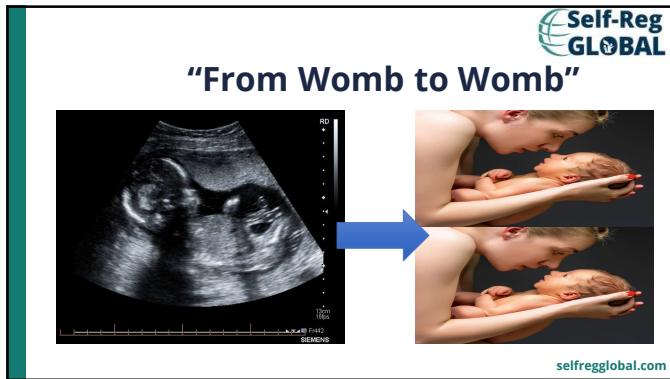
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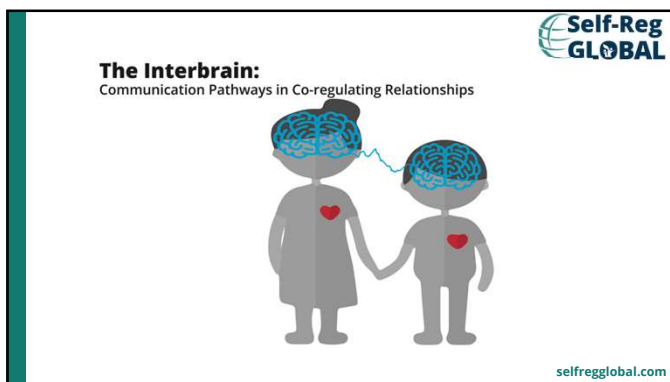


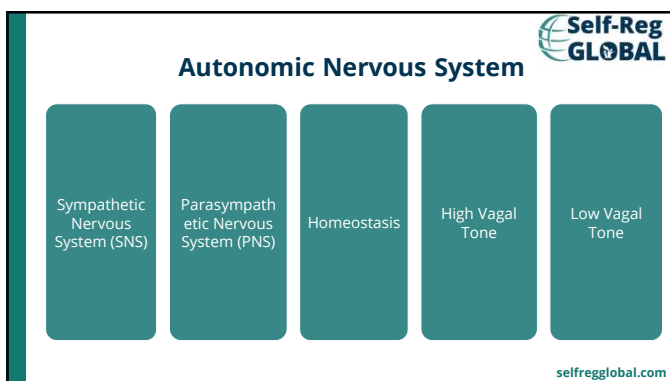


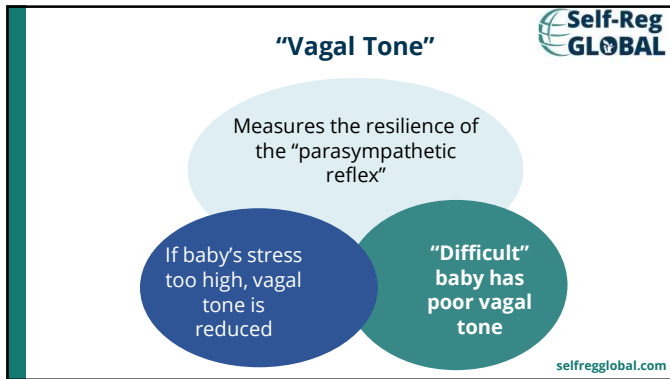


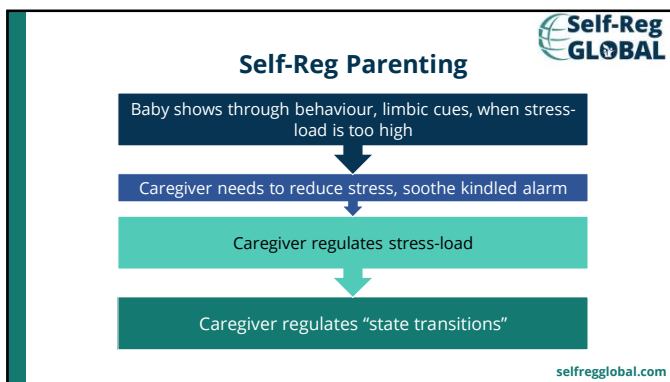


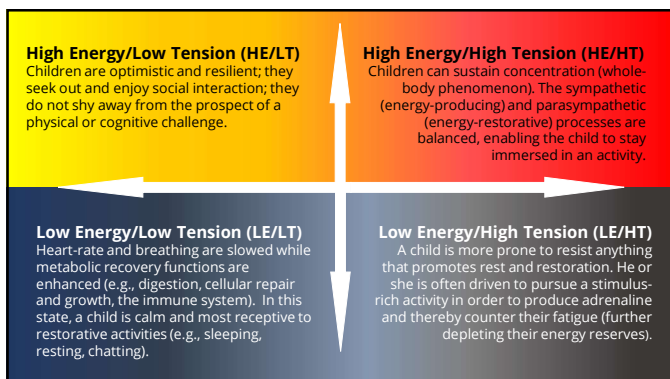












SELF-REGULATION
MALADAPTIVE VS ADAPTIVE MODES

Maladaptive self-regulation: avoidance, sugar consumption, gaming

Maladaptive Self-Reg creates greater stress down the road

Self-Reg teaches children adaptive ways of dealing with stress

Patterns start to form *very* early

Under heightened stress, kids regress to maladaptive modes

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Cost of Maladaptive Self-Regulation

"Maladaptive" behaviours sublimated as a way of dealing with certain stresses

Maladaptive Self-Reg causes heightened sympathetic arousal

Interbrain source of maladaptive Self-Reg

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Different Kinds of Maladaptive Self-Reg

Momentary relief, creates more stress downstream (gaze aversion)

Suppression creates tension, sympathetic arousal (inhibiting impulses)

Often a matter of what doesn't happen than what does (sympathetic arousal vs. restoration)

Mismatch (diet - chewing)

Can undermine rather than support social engagement (social media)

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Controllist Parenting → Maladaptive Self-Reg

Parent's role: ensure that children develop self-control

Caregiver unconsciously modulates what emotions, behaviours need to be controlled

Child who associates, e.g., shame with anger experiences a sharp increase in sympathetic arousal whenever she gets angry

Avoidance, denial, suppression, repression maladaptive modes of Self-Reg

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Self-Controllist Parenting

Toilet-training

Emotion-regulation

Behaviour (tantrums)

Sleep-training

Discipline (Proverbs 13:24)

Children should be seen and not heard (15th C English proverb)

Children should not be hugged (Watson)

Children should not eat the marshmallow!

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Self-Controllist Parenting → Maladaptive Self-Reg

Costs of suppression, repression: Chronic sympathetic arousal

Shift from social engagement to "self-sufficiency"

Child becomes habituated to sympathetic arousal

Effect of blocking parasympathetic recovery:

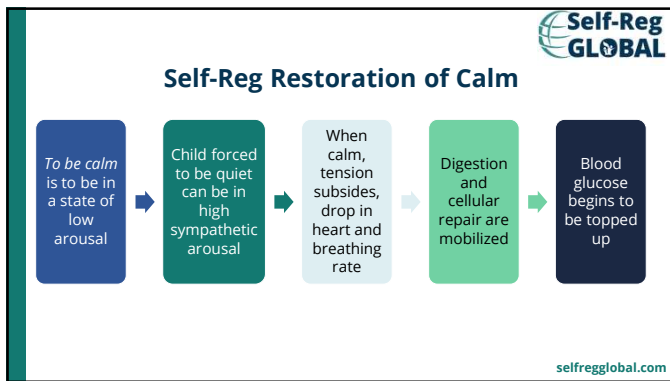
Dysregulation of ANS

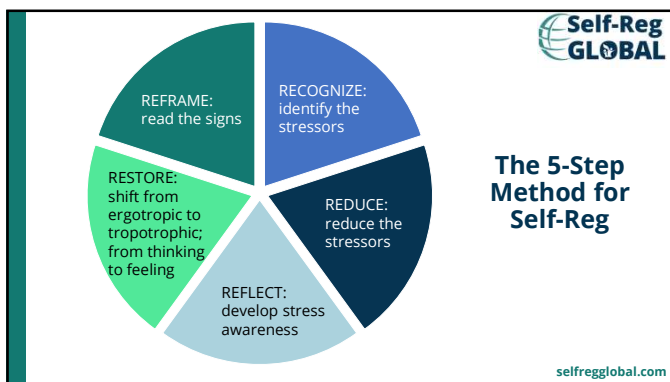
DMN shifts to rumination, intrusive thoughts, anxiety

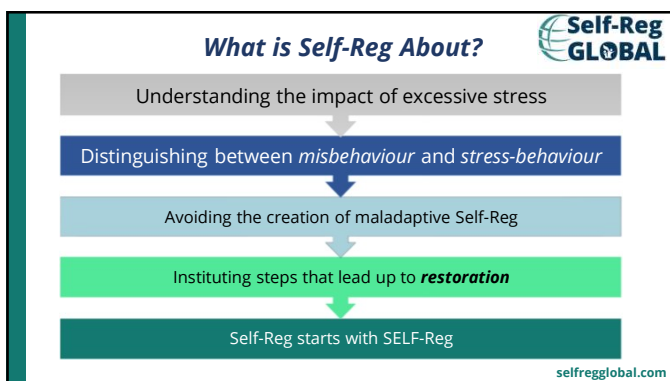
Amygdaloid Hyperarousal

Cellular repair compromised

Inflammation







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SELF-REG BOOKS

SELF-REG
How to Help Your Child (and You) Break the Stress Cycle and Successfully Engage with Life
DR. STUART SHANKER with Teresa Barber

Calm, Alert, and Learning
Simple Strategies for Self-Regulation
Stuart Shanker

SELF-REG SCHOOLS
A HANDBOOK FOR EDUCATORS
STUART SHANKER • SUSAN HOPKINS

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