



Learning with Experience LLC

# Self-Soothing Skills and Techniques

Beta version  
June 11, 2020



Learning with Experience LLC

**Jana Basili**

ICF Master Certified Coach  
Team Coaching Advanced Practitioner

- Leadership and Executive Coaching
- Business Team Coaching and Facilitation
- Experiential Learning in Leadership and EQ

## Webinar Objectives

Introduce sampler platter of self-soothing tools, using 3 entry points

- Thoughts
- Body Sensations
- Feelings and Emotions

Provide a chance to experiment with tools

Participants will identify 1 (or more) promising tools for further practice

## Session Agreements

- Invitation to try something new
- Use **“Medium Intensity”** feelings (define for yourself)
- **Self-compassion** and self-care
  - Monitor & attend to your own comfort level
- Invited to share feeling **labels** and **intensity #s**
- **Please do not share any feeling content**
- Confidentiality
  - Slides available - no recording

## Self-Soothing Skills: Worksheet

The **Medium Intensity** feeling(s) I want to work with: \_\_\_\_\_

Scenario or relationship in which this feeling typically occurs:  
\_\_\_\_\_

The **Body/Sensation-focused tool** I'll practice:

The **Feelings-focused tool** I'll practice:

The **Thinking-focused tool** I'll practice:

## Plan the use of your

- ... comfort objects
- ... comfort actions
- ... comfort spaces

# Arriving

## Part 2

- Identify (silently) your **current feeling** or **physical state**
- **Grounding exercise**
- Identify (silently) your **NEW feeling** or **physical state**

# Emotional Intelligence

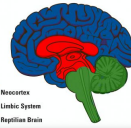
The multiple roles of self-soothing

	Recognition	Regulation
Personal Competence	Self-Awareness	Self-Management
Social Competence	Social Awareness	Relationship Management

Although many of us may think of ourselves as thinking creatures that feel, biologically we are feeling creatures that think

— Jill Bolte Taylor —

Sensations ↔ Feelings ↔ Thoughts



Paul MacLean's Triune Brain

### Green Brain: Hindbrain -- Lizard

- Somatics, Physical Sensations
- Ancient, Instantaneous
- Perceived threat: "Freeze"

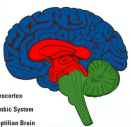
### Red Brain: Mid-brain/Limbic -- Mammal

- Emotions, Feelings, Heart
- Old, Fast (1/6th second)
- Perceived threat: "Amygdala Hijack" / "Fight/Flight"

### Blue Brain: Neocortex -- Human

- Thoughts, Symbols, Language
- Slow, not in charge

Sensations ↔ Feelings ↔ Thoughts



Paul MacLean's Triune Brain

### Green Brain: Hindbrain -- Lizard

- Somatics, Physical Sensations

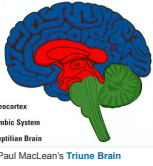
### How does your body give you information?

- Heart rate
- Palms/Feet
- Stomach/GI
- Muscles
- Gut instinct (100's of millions of neurons)

# Flooding



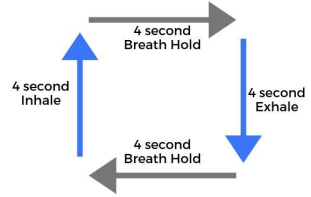
**Sensations** ↔ **Feelings** ↔ **Thoughts**



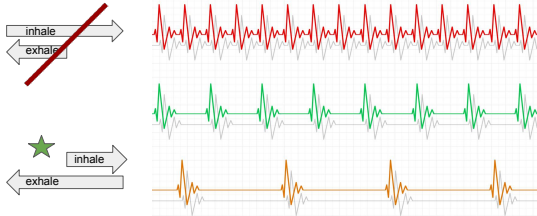
**Tools**

- Flooded? Disengage/Take a break
- +Sleep, +exercise, (-)caffeine, etc
- Connect Feet - Back - Legs to support
- Tune into and comfort the senses
  - Touch, Smell, Sound, Taste ...
- Breathe

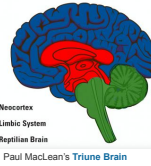
**Experiment: Box Breathing**



**2:1 Breathing Ratio: Right Tool for the Task**



**Sensations** ↔ **Feelings** ↔ **Thoughts**



**Red Brain: Mid-brain/Limbic -- Mammal**

- Emotions, Feelings, Heart

**Primary Feeling Families**

- Mad, Sad, Bad, Glad, Afraid ("Egad!")
- Disgust, Interest/Surprise, Sexual feelings

**Primary Feeling Families**

MAD	SAD	BAD		GLAD		AFRAID "EGAD!"
		Vulnerable	Confused	Happy	Caring	
Agitated Exasperated Resentful Pissed off	Discouraged Hurt Sad Upset	Apologetic Exposed GUILTY Regretful	Puzzled Misunderstood Stuck Unsettled	Cheerful Delighted Optimistic Playful	Admiring Empathetic Trusting Warm-hearted	Alarmed Anxious Nervous Worried

Self-Inquiry: Any Feelings about your Feelings?

adapted from Gary Deater, PhD and Michael Terrell, 2015

**Compassion for the feelings**

## Experiment: Digest feelings with the body

### Body Sensations:

Gently notice



### Thoughts:

Label and let float away



© 2020 Learning with Experience, LLC

## The Feelings Volcano

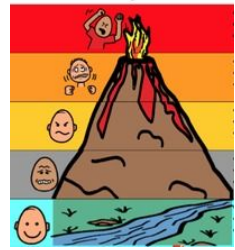
Out of Control

Frustrated and really angry

Getting mad

OPPORTUNITY → Unhappy

Happy and calm



© 2020 Learning with Experience, LLC

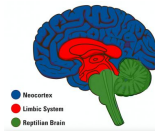
teacherspayteachers.com

## Early Signals to Intervene

High Intensity	Disgusted Furious Irate Outraged	Depressed Crushed Grieving Hopeless	Ashamed Disgraced Humiliated	Overwhelmed Powerless Shocked	Ecstatic Elated Overjoyed Thrilled	Adoring Passionate Protective of Wild about.	Distressed Panicked Paralyzed Terrified
MEDIUM Intensity - Learning Zone	<b>MAD</b>	<b>SAD</b>	<b>BAD</b>		<b>GLAD</b>		<b>AFRAID</b> "EGAD!"
	Agitated Exasperated Resentful	Discouraged Hurt Sad Upset	Vulnerable Apologetic Exposed Guilty Regretful	Confused Puzzled Misunderstood Stuck Unsettled	Happy Cheerful Delighted Optimistic Playful	Caring Admiring Empathetic Trusting Warm-hearted	Alarmed Anxious Nervous Worried
Mild Intensity	Annoyed Grouchy Impatient Irritated	Disappointed Down Unhappy	Bashful Embarrassed Reluctant Hesitant	Bothered Distacted Unsure Undecided	Grateful Content Satisfied Pleased	Appreciative Interested Intrigued Understanding	Cautious On edge Tense Uncomfortable

© 2020 Learning with Experience, LLC

Sensations ↔ Feelings ↔ Thoughts



Paul MacLean's Triune Brain

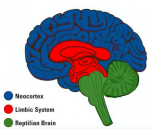
### Self Soothing Tools

- Treat it when it's small(er)
- Kindness and compassion
  - Soften the "Feelings about the Feelings"
- 90 second energy event
  - BODY - YES - Allow body to digest the wave
  - BRAIN - NO
- Gratitude

© 2020 Learning with Experience, LLC

H

Sensations ↔ Feelings ↔ Thoughts



Paul MacLean's Triune Brain

### Blue Brain: Neocortex -- Human

- Thoughts, Symbols, Metaphors, Language and Images

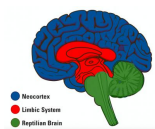
### Thoughts Drive Feelings and Sensations

- Assumptions, Associations, Interpretations, Predictions, "Shoulds", Stories

© 2020 Learning with Experience, LLC

H

Sensations ↔ Feelings ↔ Thoughts



Paul MacLean's Triune Brain

### Tools

- Mindfulness meditation/labeling
  - "Thinking" ... "Story"
- Simple tasks
- NLP
- Curiosity
- Byron Katie's Four Questions

© 2020 Learning with Experience, LLC

H

"Self care is not a waste of time.  
Self care makes your use of time  
more sustainable."

— Jackie Viramontez

## Session Learnings

*One insight I'm taking away ...*

*One tool I commit to practicing ...*

© 2020 Learning with Experience, LLC

J

You can't  
calm the storm,  
so stop trying.  
What you can do is  
**CALM YOURSELF.**  
The storm will pass.

*Timber Hawkeye*

[tinybuddha.com](http://tinybuddha.com)

**Survey** (optional, and appreciated)

**Resources** (slides, links)

I'll stay on to help anyone who hasn't found a tool

**Thank you**  
[jana@learningwithexperience.com](mailto:jana@learningwithexperience.com)

© 2020 Learning with Experience, LLC