

WINDOW OF TOLERANCE

Hyperarousal **fight or flight response**

Feeling anxious, overwhelmed,
angry, out of control



Optimal arousal zone **feeling a sense of safety and calm**

Feelings are tolerable, reason and emotion are
accessible, the body feels balanced and relaxed

Use mindfulness, meditation, breath work, physical
movement, and grounding exercises to get here

Feeling depressed, numb, disconnected,
unmotivated

shutting down response **Hypoarousal**

WINDOW OF TOLERANCE: BUILDING AWARENESS

Build an awareness and identify the symptoms you experience in each state. Check the ones that you feel and rate their intensity from 1 to 5, where 1 is low intensity and 5 is the highest intensity.

Hyperarousal – fight or flight

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Anxious | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Intrusive imagery | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Fight/flight |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Angry | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Emotional overwhelm | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Irritable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Tense | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Feeling unsafe | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Panicky |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Shaking | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Hyper-vigilant | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Defensive | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Impulsive | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Racing thoughts | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Highly reactive | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Chaotic responses | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Rigid | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ _____ |

Window of tolerance – optimal

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Feeling safe | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ At ease | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Curious |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Calm | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Able to self-soothe | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Non-reactive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Relaxed | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Engaged | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Connected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Present | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Alert | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Mindful | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Feeling in control | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Empathetic | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Comfortable | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Open | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Balanced | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ _____ |

Hypoarousal – shutting down

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Disconnected | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Memory loss | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Feeling flat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ No energy | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Depression | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Lethargic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Numb/no feelings | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Can't say no | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Passive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Ashamed | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Freeze response | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Shut down | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Dissociated | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Unmotivated | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Exhausted | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ____ On auto-pilot | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ Not present | <input type="checkbox"/> ____ _____ |

WINDOW OF TOLERANCE: BUILDING AWARENESS

I NOTICE I AM IN MY WINDOW OF TOLERANCE WHEN I...

(reflect and write down what puts you in your optimal state; this could be self-care activities, connecting with people, doing something you enjoy or feel passionate about, self-soothe, etc.)



MY WINDOW CLOSES WHEN I AM...

(reflect and write down what things affect your window of tolerance, such as being hungry and tired, feeling lonely and isolated, in physical pain, scared, reminded of painful memories, etc.)



THINGS I CAN DO WHEN I AM HYPERAROUSSED:



THINGS I CAN DO WHEN I AM HYPOAROUSSED:



WINDOW OF TOLERANCE: COPING SKILLS

DOWN-REGULATING ACTIVITIES FOR HYPERAROUSAL

- Deep and slow tummy breathing
- Slowly drinking from a straw
- Weighted blanket
- Warm water
- Shaking out excess energy
- Gentle stretching or yoga
- Listening to calming music
- Tensing and releasing parts of the body
- Brisk walk / marching on the spot
- Squeezing a stress ball
- Rolling over a yoga / therapy ball
- Scribbling to music
- Visualizing going to a favorite place
- Using the 5 senses to describe an object

UP-REGULATING ACTIVITIES FOR HYPOAROUSAL

- Stimulating the senses
- Smelling a candle / essential oils
- Eating chewy, crunchy food
- Using a sensory shaker
- Rolling a pencil between palms
- Hand washing / massage
- Squeezing a stress ball
- Feeling the soles of the feet on the floor
- Quick tempo music and dancing
- Wiggling toes while breathing
- Using the 5 senses to describe an object
- Rocking chair
- Jumping or running
- Taking a cold shower

GENERAL COPING SKILLS

- Calling a trusted friend
- Journaling
- Reading a book
- Practicing mindfulness
- De-cluttering your space
- Asking for a hug
- Doing a favorite hobby
- Writing 3 things you're grateful for
- Saying 5 things you love about yourself
- Trying something new
- Meditating
- Listening to relaxation sounds
- Solving a puzzle
- Spending time with family and friends