

BALANCING CHALLENGE AND SUPPORT

- Staying in the learning zone (ZPD), Working at the edges of windows of tolerance (WOT)
- They are learning to work in the comfortably uncomfortable zone. What does this look like for them?
- Much more complicated than the function of behavior, and avoid or approach, or loss or gain.

What's happening in them and us?		What's happening between us?	How do I create new options?
Brain and Body States to understand what's happening in them and us.		Relationship Dynamics to understand what's happening between us.	Being an External Regulator to help support creating new templates and options.
Related Concepts	<p><i>Stress Reactions Continuum and Perceived Threats</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the world looks and feels to us in that moment. • Behavior is about safety; the body takes over and we may never be able to identify the perceived threat. <p><u>Escalation:</u> Meeting them where they are</p>	<p><i>The set-up and information processing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We experience in our system what they are experiencing, offering insight into their experience. • We are processing less than 1% of data consciously. <p><u>Escalation:</u> Feeling felt, seen, and heard and understanding we're not reacting to here and now.</p>	<p><i>Windows of Tolerance and Neuroplasticity</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not static, gets smaller when we do not regulate. • Offering my regulatory capacity and growing WOT. • Shifting their perception by having new experiences, and promoting self-reflection, so they begin to believe they can manage the experience. • Activating new pathways and choosing top-down approaches that increase the likelihood of creating the new connections we are hoping for while providing bottom-up co-regulatory experiences.
Options	Use Brain-Aligned Strategies	Recognize the set-up and ask, "What is true for me right now?" and "What do I need to regulate?"	Practice one foot in and one foot out
Bottom Line	When there is a perceived threat and I do not think I can manage it, then I'm outside WOT, and not in my Pre-Frontal Cortex (PFC). In those moments I have no choice or control of my behavior.	Often, neither of us can easily explain our behavior. We are having a parallel experience, and it is easy to get stuck in a cycle of interacting.	When I can regulate myself, it is my opportunity to step in and create or shift templates for students. We are re-wiring brains and re-patterning nervous systems; this is a process that takes time.
Tying it together	<p>Without access to the cortex, learning does not occur. Part of our job is preparing brains to learn. [Brain and Body States] To do this requires that I am not outside my window of tolerance, even though I am experiencing their dysregulation with them. [Relationship Dynamics] To avoid getting lost in this activation, I need to be able to regulate myself in moments of dysregulation. Not only does this support my well-being, but it creates new templates for students. [Being an External Regulator] This balance of challenge and support is the key to truly shifting behavior.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Our work is not simply figuring out what to do in "the moment" to change or stop the behavior. Our goal is to create an option for that behavior to change. If our main focus is only on what to do in "the moment," we are missing the big picture, and students will not develop the capacity for self-initiated, sustainable change.</p>		