

Hyper-arousal might describe you during times when you are feeling very sensitive to threats (both physical and psychological).

“Fight or flight” mode activates. Fast heart rate, shallow breathing, high blood pressure. Emotionally you might feel frightened, panicked, enraged, furious, stressed, impulsive, aggressive.

Try some calming relaxation techniques.

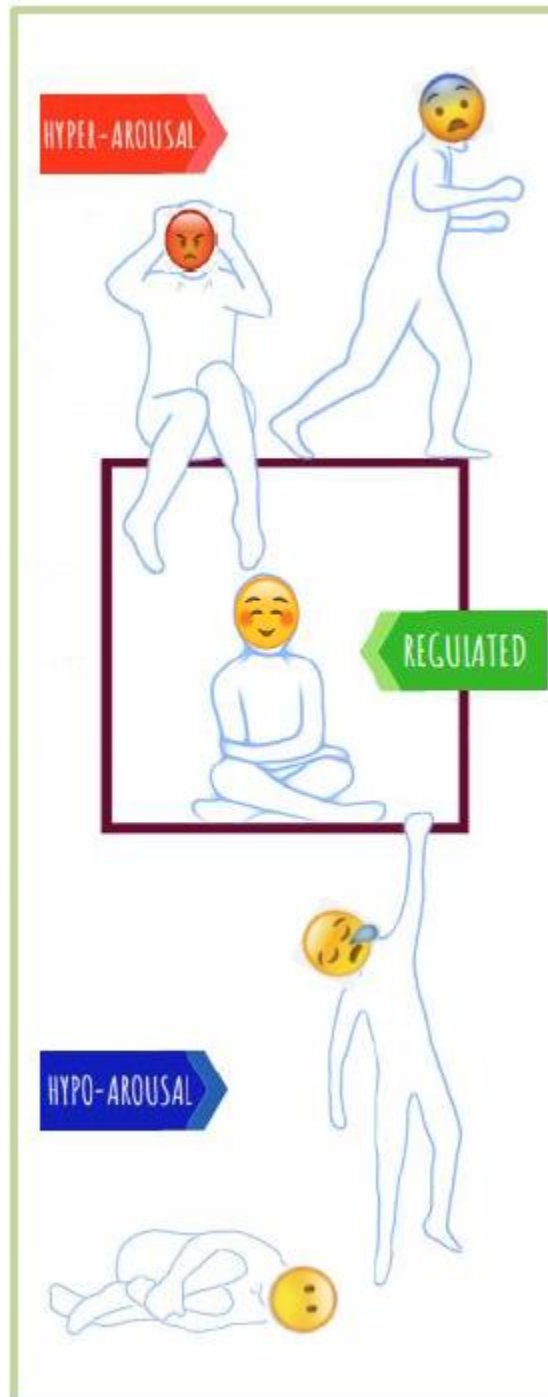
The Window of Tolerance describes the psychological state of calm, when you are able to handle stress. You may still have worries, but they are not overwhelming. You might feel calm, curious, interested, energised.

You might be ready for a challenge – to try something new or to test your skills!

Hypo-arousal might describe you during times when you are feeling detached, dissociated, or numb.

“Freeze” mode activates. It’s difficult to focus on tasks. Your heart rate might decrease and your blood pressure fall. Your body slows down. You might feel sluggish, confused, helpless, depressed, foggy, “not yourself”.

Try some activating techniques.



Hyper-arousal

What are some relaxing things you can try when you are in “fight-or-flight mode”?

Regulated

What are some challenges you want to try when you are in your Window of Tolerance?

Hypo-arousal

What are some activating things you can try when you are in this “freeze mode”?

The Window of Tolerance was coined by psychologist Dr Dan Siegel. It describes the interval when you feel able to tolerate difficulties. In Zones of Regulation, this is the “green zone”.

- When you are calm
- When you can think clearly
- When you feel connected and supported
- When you feel like you have the skills and resources you need
- When you feel psychologically safe

However, different things (such as life events, problems, or unforeseen difficulties) can push us out of our Window of Tolerance. Then it can be harder for us to achieve our goals or enjoy our experiences. We might feel hyper-arousal (the “red zone” in Zones of Regulation) or hypo-arousal (the “blue zone” in Zones of Regulation).

When you are out of your Window of Tolerance, you might feel unable to cope with things that you would normally be able to deal with just fine.

It's normal to feel bad sometimes! But if it's getting overwhelming, there are some things you can try.

Top Tips

When you are out of your Window of Tolerance:

- Do something different: when in “fight-or-flight” or “freeze” mode, take a break and do something else to get away from the trigger.
- Physical activity: take a walk, go for a run, jump on a trampoline.
- Mindfulness: grounding exercises can help bring you to the here-and-now, instead of focussing on stressors in the past or future.
- Talk to a friend: a friend or family member may be able to help you get a different perspective, or just take your mind off the trigger.
- Reflect: when you feel calm, consider the trigger that put you out of your Window of Tolerance, and what you might be able to control. Plan what you can do next time to manage how you feel and react.

Your Window of Tolerance

