



Take Five

Principal Name: Amanda Pyle

School Name: Eastern Hancock Elementary School

Principal's Email Contact: apyle@easternhancock.org

Background Leading to My Inquiry (Slide 3)

I discovered that even though I had multiple years of experience leading my building, the job wasn't getting any easier. I felt exhausted at the end of most days and would take that exhaustion and frustration home. This resulted in me giving less than my best to my family at home and resulted in loss of precious time due to stress and anxiety about work.

The Purpose of My Inquiry (Slide 4)

Therefore, the purpose of my action inquiry was to look at my daily interactions and demands and try to figure out how to get out of this daily stress response. I wanted to get in control of my anxiety and stress and be better rounded in my personal and professional life.

My Wondering (Slide 5)

With this purpose, I wondered if I would feel less stressed and more fulfilled if when distress starts, I deliberately take 5 minutes to meet my psychological needs and help create a reset?

My Actions (Slide 6-8)

To begin my action research, I decided that I must first be aware and identify stressors that occur so that I would be more easily able to identify when they were occurring. After that brainstorming session, I started taking five minutes to remove myself from a stressful situation and reset. Lastly, I would fill out a Google form to track my data.

Data Collection (Slide 9)

After "Taking 5", I would complete The Self-Reflection & Reset Google Form that asked 4 simple questions.

1. What is the distress?
2. How am I feeling?
3. Psychological need utilized for reset?
4. What was the result of "Taking 5"?

My Data (Slides 10-11)

From The Self- Reflection & Reset Google Form, I analyzed my data and was able to identify distressors to find patterns and reoccurring themes. I was also able to identify emotions that surfaced in those stressful situations.

Sample 1st Degree Distressors

- Difficult meeting with DCS
- Long meeting where opinion seems to be ignored
- Anticipation of a hard meeting
- Overwhelmed with tasks at hand
- Doubt/Not feeling heard during meeting
- Worry/anxiety about a parent meeting
- Day with lots of meetings
- Student behavior (aggression, elopement)
- Staff member not coming to work, again
- Long meeting that seemed to get no where

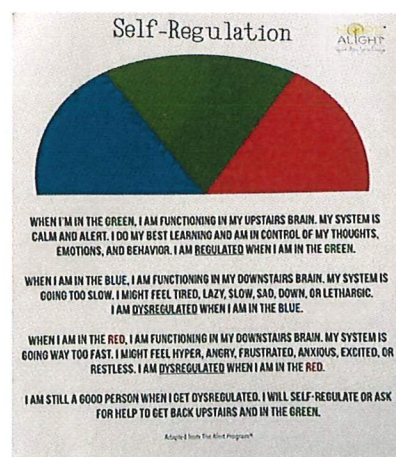
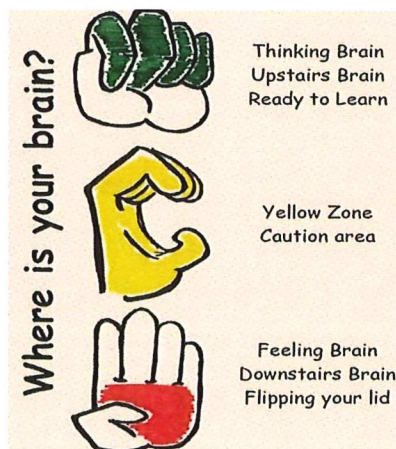
How Am I Feeling?

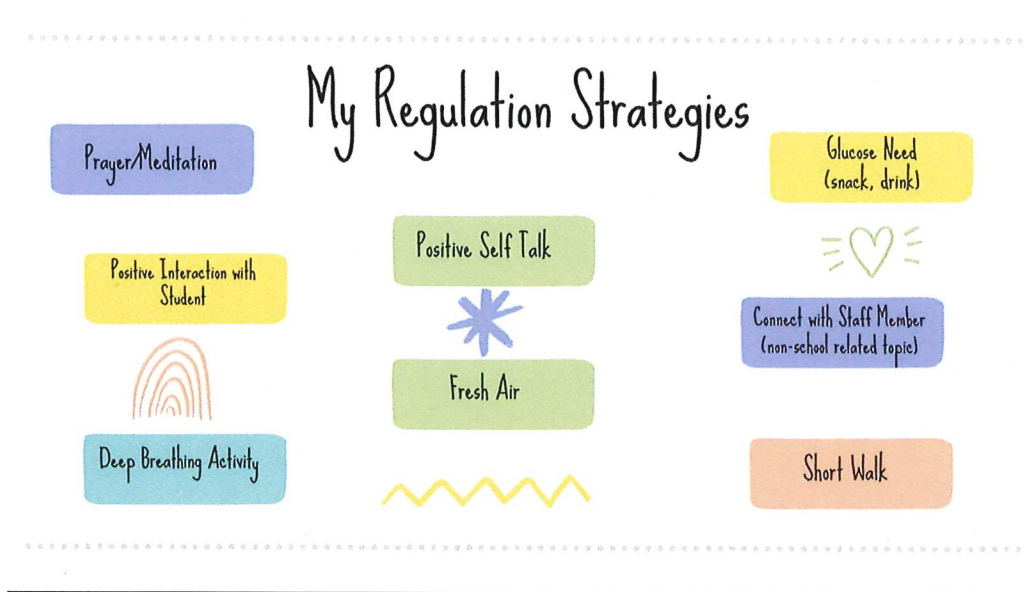
- Overwhelmed & scared
- Frustrated, undervalued
- Nervous, overwhelmed
- Overwhelmed, behind
- Not confident, became quiet, reverted to not talking and just listening
- Worried/playing through the what ifs
- Like I am not good enough for the job, imposter

My Discoveries (Slide 12-16)

Below are my three learning statements from my action research project:

- Learning Statement One: I discovered that despite "Taking 5," moments of distress were still occurring regularly.
 - Learning Statement Two: I learned that I needed to add a component of being proactive to the "Take 5".
 - Learning Statement Three: I learned that I could use what I have learned personally to model for students and staff alike.
1. I discovered that despite "Taking 5," moments of distress were still occurring regularly. My moments of distress were shorter in duration but were happening regardless. I used my list of first degree distressors gathered from the Google Form to identify common threads during my school day that was causing the majority of my anxiety, worry and unhappiness.
 2. I learned that I needed to add a component of being proactive to the "Take 5". At the same time, I was completing the AR project and gathering data, we also implemented TBRI, Trust-Based Relational Intervention in our school. One focus of TBRI is teaching students how to regulate their body and emotions so that they could stay in the optimal zone of, green. As I started using this language with students and staff, I had an aha moment. I too needed to practice what I was preaching and regulate not only my body but my emotions and thoughts. At that moment, I started focusing on proactively "Taking 5" to regulate before triggering situations so that I could operate in the green. The proactive approach has been a game changer for me. I discovered that by starting difficult meetings, conversations, etc. in the green zone, I was able to approach upcoming tasks with a better response and felt happier about my job in general.
 3. I learned that I could use the knowledge I gain personally to model for students and staff alike. I think often as leaders we have the mentality that we must have it all figured out. That couldn't be farther from the truth. This project has helped be more honest and vulnerable with staff and students. By being constantly aware of my window of capacity, I can help others become regulated more quickly when needed and offer help or assistance.





Where I Am Heading Next (Slide 17)

As I move forward, I want to continue to make sure my needs are met so I can be the best person I can be, which then results in being a better leader. I have identified four areas in which I want to be intentional. Although I have seen the benefit of "Taking 5", I must make sure that I continue to take the time day in and day out. I will continue this by being proactive and meeting my needs. I will model regulation with staff members and share honestly about my struggles and successes of finding more fulfillment by taking time and remaining regulated. Most importantly, moving forward I must use positive self-talk and increase my confidence. When doubt and fear set in, I will remind myself of my past success and that I am a capable leader. With that, I am going to continue to grow in my confidence of all areas of school leadership. As my confidence increases and my leadership bandwidth increases, I hope to bring staff along and create more opportunities for them to be leaders in the building.

Bibliography (Slide 18)

HopeAlight LLC. (2022). *Hope Alight TBRI Training: Ignite Change*. Location: Greenwood, IN.
Publisher: HopeAlight LLC.

Spigelmyer, L. (2022, July 22). *The brain in the palm of your hand: Dan Siegel's hand model*. The Behavior Hub. Retrieved March 12, 2023, from <https://www.thebehaviorhub.com/blog/2020/10/12/the-brain-in-the-palm-of-your-hand-dan-siegels-hand-model>

TAKE FIVE

1



AMANDA PYLE

EASTERN HANCOCK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

APYLE@EASTERNHANCOCK.ORG

Principal Pyle@EHES_Royals



2



BACKGROUND LEADING TO MY INQUIRY

This is my twelfth year of leading my building. Instead of it becoming easier, I felt like I was barely hanging on and I was suffocating under that daily pressures of the job. After dealing with leading a building through COVID, I felt like my body was in a stress response that I couldn't get out of. Also, last school year we also got a new superintendent. He is an amazing leader but the compounded stress of learning a new way of doing things only exasperated my feelings of stress and anxiety.



3

The Purpose of My Inquiry

I found myself mentally and physically exhausted at the end of most school days. I wanted to make sure that my psychological needs were being met so that I could be the best me and avoid living in the depths of distress and stress.



4



I wonder if I would feel less stressed and more fulfilled if when distress starts, I deliberately take 5 minutes to meet my psychological needs and help create a reset?



5

My Actions

1. PROBLEM SOLVED AND IDENTIFIED DISTRESSORS AT SCHOOL SO THAT I COULD EASILY IDENTIFY WHEN THEY WERE HAPPENING.

6

My Actions

2. IN THE MOMENT WHEN DISTRESS OR STRESS STARTED TO OCCUR, I WOULD "TAKE 5" TO REMOVE MYSELF FROM A STRESSFUL SITUATION AND RESET.

7

My Actions

3. AFTERWARDS I WOULD FILL OUT A GOOGLE FORM SO I COULD TRACK COMMON DISTRESSORS AND "TAKE 5" STRATEGIES THAT WERE MOST SUCCESSFUL IN GETTING MY DESIRED OUTCOME OF BEING ABLE TO RETURN TO TASK AND BE A BETTER LEADER.

8



Self-Reflection & Reset

Google Form Questions

What is the distress?

How am I feeling?

Psychological need utilized for reset?

Result.

9

Sample 1st Degree Distressors

- Difficult meeting with DCS
- Long meeting where opinion seems to be ignored
- Anticipation of a hard meeting
- Overwhelmed with tasks at hand
- Doubt/Not feeling heard during meeting
- Worry/anxiety about a parent meeting
- Day with lots of meetings
- Student behavior (aggression, elopement)
- Staff member not coming to work, again
- Long meeting that seemed to get no where

10

How Am I Feeling?

- Overwhelmed & scared
- Frustrated, undervalued
- Nervous, overwhelmed
- Overwhelmed, behind
- Not confident, became quiet, reverted to not talking and just listening
- Worried/playing through the what ifs
- Like I am not good enough for the job, imposter

11

My Discoveries

Learning Statement One:

I learned that after two months of collecting data and consistently "Taking 5", I was still having lots of moments of distress. They were shorter in duration but were still happening, regardless.

- Upon reflection at stressors/distressors I was able to identify common threads during my school day that was causing the majority of my anxiety, worry and unhappiness.

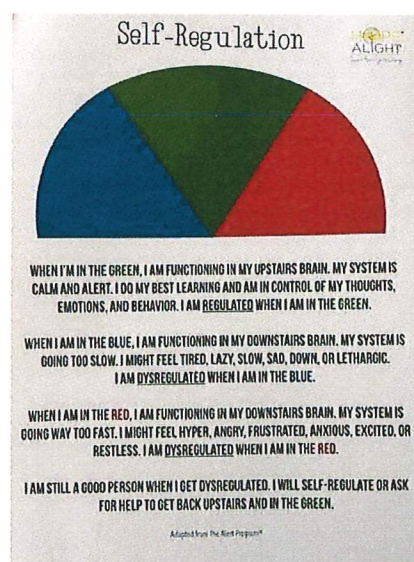
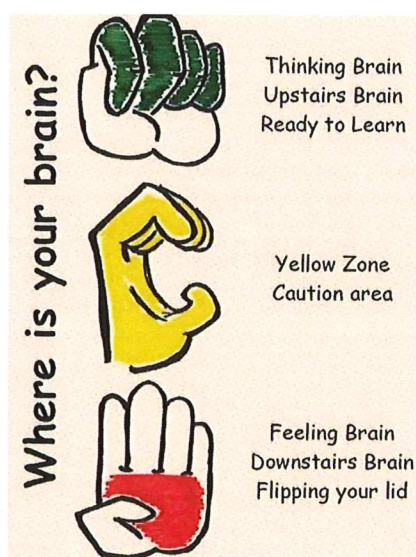
12

My Discoveries

Learning Statement Two: I learned that if I proactively addressed the stress response that certain situations bring, I could prevent the distress cycle from happening.

- I was able to identify parts of my job that brought on a stress response from the data I collected previously.
- I identified regulation strategies to try when I knew that I would be put into a situation that might make me in the red or blue zone.
- By taking time to get in the "green" zone, I was able to approach the upcoming tasks or the current task with a better response and felt happier about my job in general.

13



14

My Regulation Strategies

Prayer/Meditation

Glucose Need
(snack, drink)

Positive Interaction with
Student

Positive Self Talk



Connect with Staff Member
(non-school related topic)

Deep Breathing Activity

Fresh Air



Short Walk

15

My Discoveries

Learning Statement Three: I was able to become a better leader in the building and model to students and staff alike that it is okay to get into the red zone, that it happens to all of us, and that we have to work hard to get back into the green zone.

- Constantly checking my engine has allowed me to feel more calm and relaxed. This has allowed me to be better engaged at difficult meetings and more confident to share my ideas and thoughts.
- I have been able to much more quickly help dysregulated students become more regulated. I approach the situation with the "what do they need" attitude instead of why are you wasting my time now.
- My awareness of self, has allowed me to identify triggers in staff and offer them the opportunity to step out of the room and get regulated so that they can turn around the direction of their day.

16

Be Proactive

I'm going to continue to take time to proactively meet by needs so that I can stay in the green and be the best leader I am capable of.

Model Regulation

As we transition and implement TBRI in the building, I will use the struggles that I had and the things I learned about myself to encourage staff to stay regulated.

Positive Self Talk

I am going to remind myself when doubt and fear set in that I am a capable leader and has past successes to verify that.

Increase Confidence

I am going to continue to grow into a confident school leader that can help her staff become better in their current roles and leadership roles that will need filled.

17

Resource Page

Hope Alight TBRI Training: Spark Hope, Ignite Change. Copyright 2022, HopeAlight LLC 704 S Sr 135 Greenwood, IN 46143

<https://www.thebehaviorhub.com/blog/2020/10/12/the-brain-in-the-palm-of-your-hand-dan-siegels-hand-model>



18