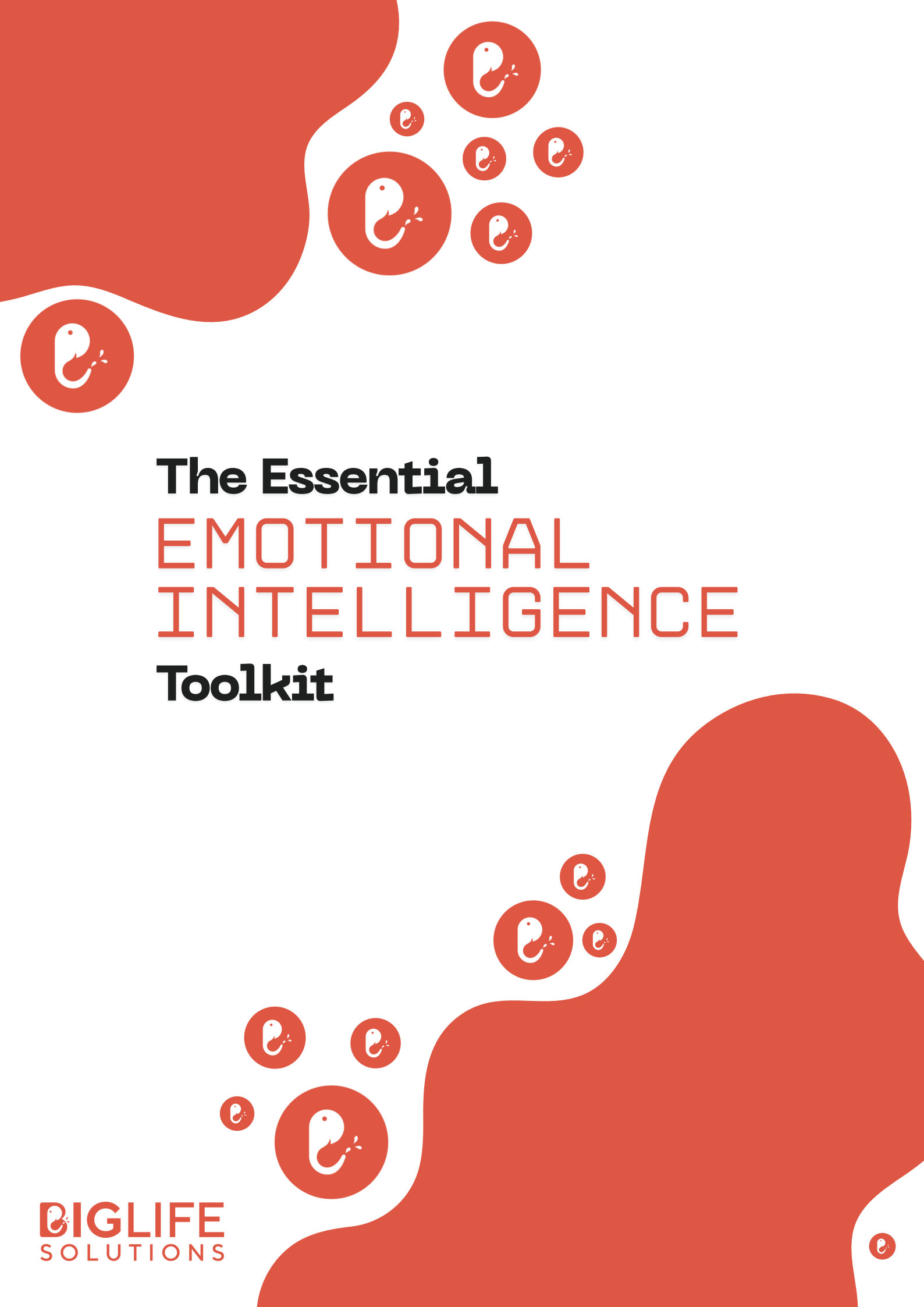


The background features large, flowing red abstract shapes in the top-left and bottom-right corners. Scattered throughout the white space are several circular icons of varying sizes. Each icon contains a white stylized bird-like figure with a small branch in its beak. The title is centered in the upper half of the page.

The Essential EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE **Toolkit**



Before You GET STARTED

1

Introduction

Emotional Intelligence (or 'EQ' as it is sometimes known) is essentially your ability to notice, understand, and work with emotions - your own and other people's. It's about being tuned in to what's happening beneath the surface, so you can recognise when frustration is building before it spills over, pick up on a colleague's unspoken anxiety, or know how to lift the mood in a difficult meeting, for example.

Unlike IQ, which tends to stay fairly fixed, EQ is something you can genuinely develop throughout your life. And that matters because research consistently shows EQ is one of the strongest predictors of success in all walks of life.

For example, research shows that People with higher EQ are able to handle stress more effectively, communicate more clearly, navigate conflict with greater skill, and build stronger connections with others.

The good news is that EQ is not some mysterious talent some people are born with and others aren't. It's a set of practical skills. And like any skill, they can be learned, practised, and strengthened over time. That's exactly what this toolkit is designed to help you do.

2

How to Use the Toolkit

This toolkit is designed to help you explore your relationship with your emotions and build up your levels of Emotional Intelligence. Each exercise provides an opportunity to explore different aspects of how your emotions show up, what that means for you and the people around you, and how you can take steps to put yourself in control.

While there is some theory attached to each one (they are all grounded in the science of Positive Psychology), they are designed to be *practical*. That means you'll need a way of capturing your thoughts and reflections as you work through the exercises to make sure you don't lose any of your insights. So, you'll want a notepad or some other way to keep a record.



3

The Tools

There are five tools included in this toolkit:

1

POSITIVE EMOTIONS BRAINSTORM (PAGES 4-5)

2

ANGER ICEBERG (PAGES 6-7)

3

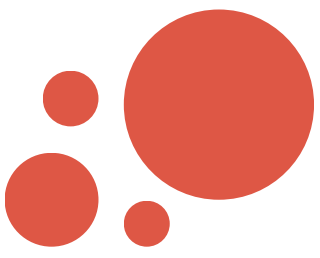
DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS (PAGES 8-9)

4

UNLOCKING YOUR WISE MIND (PAGES 10-13)

5

WINDOW OF TOLERANCE (PAGES 14-16)



Positive Emotions

BRAINSTORM

1

A Bit of Background

We all have emotional blind spots - positive feelings that rarely show up in our lives because we haven't created the right conditions for them. This short exercise, which stems from the Broaden-and-Build theory of positive emotions developed by social psychologist Dr. Barbara Fredrickson, helps you spot those gaps and dream up practical ways to fill them.

2

Why it Matters

Positive emotions aren't just pleasant, they're genuinely useful. When we feel good, our thinking opens up. We notice more, connect ideas more freely, and become more creative in solving problems.

These effects compound over time. Regular doses of positive emotion help us build lasting strengths: better coping skills, deeper relationships, and greater resilience when things get difficult, for example. That's why it's worth paying attention to which positive emotions might be underrepresented in your life, and doing something about it.

Here are 10 clusters of positive emotions that you will use as a starting point to work through the steps on the next page:

- Amused, fun-loving, or silly
- Awe, wonder, or amazement
- Grateful, appreciative, or thankful
- Hopeful, optimistic, or encouraged
- Inspired, uplifted, or elevated
- Interested, alert, or curious
- Joyful, glad, or happy
- Love, closeness, or trust
- Proud, confident, or self-assured
- Serene, content, or peaceful



3

What to Do

01

Spot the Gap

Using the ten clusters of positive emotions on page four, identify which of them you experience *least* often. Which feels most *absent* from your typical week? Pick the **one cluster** that stands out to you.

02

Name It

Write the **three** emotions from your chosen cluster at the top of a sheet of paper to keep them front and centre as you brainstorm.

03

Generate Ideas

Spend **10 minutes** listing every idea you can think of to bring more of these emotions into your life. Don't filter yourself - capture *everything*, however small or ambitious. Aim for **fifteen** ideas or more. Consider:

- Things you already enjoy but could make more time for
- Something entirely new you've been curious about
- A different way of approaching something you already do

04

Pick Your Starting Point

Once you've got your list, scan back through it. What feels doable? What sparks a bit of energy? Choose **one or two ideas** to experiment with over the coming week. You're not committing to everything - just taking a first step.



The Anger ICEBERG

1

A Bit of Background

Anger is one of our most visible emotions. When it shows up, everyone knows about it - including us. But anger rarely exists on its own. More often than not, it's sitting on top of something else: hurt we haven't acknowledged, needs that aren't being met, or fears we'd rather not face, for example.

Think of an iceberg. The part you see above the waterline is just a fraction of what's really there. Most of the mass is hidden beneath the surface. Anger works the same way. The flash of frustration or surge of rage is just the visible tip. beneath, there's usually a *lot* more going on.

In this exercise, designed by the Gottman Institute, there are three layers to the iceberg:

- **Layer 1 - The Surface.** This is the bit of the iceberg (or your anger) that is visible
- **Layer 2 - The Hurt and Unmet Needs.** This is the bit of the iceberg (or your anger) that sits just beneath the surface
- **Layer 3 - The Fear Beneath.** This is the part of the iceberg (or your anger) that sits deep below the surface, properly hidden

2

Why it Matters

When we only deal with anger at the surface level, we miss what's really driving it. We might vent, or suppress it, or act on it in ways we later regret - but the underlying cause remains untouched, ready to trigger us again next time.

By exploring what's beneath your anger, you gain real insight into what you actually need. Sometimes that leads to a conversation you've been avoiding. Sometimes it points to a boundary you need to set, or a fear you need to face. Either way, you're dealing with the *root cause* rather than just the symptoms.

So, grab some paper and a pen, and work through the steps on the next page.



3

What to Do

01

Layer 1: The Surface

Start with a recent situation that made you angry. It doesn't have to be dramatic, it could simply have been a dose of mild irritation. Describe what happened and how you reacted.

02

Layer 2: The Hurt and Unmet Needs

Now go a level deeper. Beneath the anger, there's usually some kind of hurt - maybe feeling dismissed, disrespected, let down, or overlooked, for example. Beneath that hurt, there's often an unmet need. So, in the situation you've identified, what hurt did you feel, and what did you need that you weren't getting?

03

Layer 3: The Fear Beneath

At the very bottom of the iceberg, we often find fear. This is the layer we're *least* likely to acknowledge, even to ourselves. But it's often where the real insight lies. So, ask yourself what fear might be lurking beneath your hurt and unmet needs.

04

Next Steps

Now you know what's beneath your anger, you have options. You could share some of it with the person involved - the hurt, the need, or even the fear. Honesty like this can open up conversations that anger cannot. Or maybe there's something you need to do for yourself: set a boundary or perhaps some self-care, for example.

And remember, other people have their own icebergs, too. So, next time someone directs anger at you, maybe ask yourself what may be going on under the surface for them



Dealing With COMPLAINTS

1

A Bit of Background

We all know someone who seems to have an endless supply of grievances - about work, the weather, other people, life in general. And while a bit of venting can be healthy, being on the receiving end of constant negativity is draining. Moods are contagious. Spend enough time listening to complaints and you'll start to feel the weight of them yourself.

This exercise gives you a practical three-step approach for responding to complainers in a way that's genuinely helpful - both for them and for you. It's not about fixing their problems or cheering them up (that rarely works). It's about acknowledging what they're feeling, helping them become more aware of their emotional state, and gently redirecting the conversation towards something more constructive.

2

Why it Matters

Our usual responses to complainers tend to backfire. Offering advice? They're not looking for solutions. Trying to cheer them up? It often feels dismissive. Joining in with your own gripes? You've just doubled the negativity. And simply avoiding them isn't always possible - or kind.

The approach here works differently. By naming the emotion behind the complaint, you help the other person become conscious of what's actually going on for them. That awareness alone can shift the dynamic. And by asking a simple question about what they might do, you invite them to move from passive venting to active thinking - without lecturing or prescribing.

Keep in mind, though, that this isn't about shutting people down or being unsympathetic. It's about responding in a way that acknowledges their experience without getting pulled into a spiral of negativity yourself. You're not offering solutions - you're helping them notice what they're feeling and consider what they might do about it.

3

What to Do

01

Acknowledge What They're Saying

Start by briefly acknowledging the complaint. You don't need to agree with everything they're saying, you are simply showing that you've heard them. A nod, eye contact, and a short phrase is enough. The goal is to signal that you're paying attention.

Phrases like "I hear you", "That sounds really difficult", "I can see this is getting to you", or "That does sound frustrating" can be really helpful here

02

Name the Feeling

This is the key move. Help the person notice and name the emotion underneath the complaint. When we put words to feelings, something shifts as we become observers of our experience rather than just being swept along by it.

For example, if you notice someone appears to be frustrated or angry, simple observations like "You seem really frustrated", "It sounds like you're feeling pretty angry about this", or "I can see this has left you feeling overwhelmed" can bring surprising clarity

03

Redirect Gently

Ask a question that invites them to think about what they might do - not to solve the problem necessarily, but to take some kind of action or manage how they're feeling. This shifts the conversation from passive *venting* to active *thinking*. Even if nothing can be changed, we can *always do* something about how we respond to a situation.

Question that will work well include: "What do you think you'll do?", "Is there anything that might help, even a little?", "How are you going to look after yourself with all this going on?", "What would make this feel more manageable?"



Unlocking Your WISE MIND

1

A Bit of Background

Have you ever been completely calm and rational one moment, then found yourself in an emotional whirlwind the next? Perhaps a reasonable conversation with someone you care about somehow escalated into a row, and you weren't quite sure how you got there. This exercise helps you understand why that happens - and what you can do about it.

In this exercise, developed by psychologist Dr. Marsha M. Linehan as a core component of her Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), you will use three chairs that each represent three different 'modes' of thinking to explore a challenging situation and experience the difference between purely logical thinking, purely emotional responding, and something more balanced - what we call the Wise Mind.

● The Reasonable Mind

When you're operating from your Reasonable Mind, you're all logic. You weigh facts, follow procedures, and make decisions based on evidence and practicality. Feelings don't enter the equation. This is the mode you're in when planning a route, following a recipe, or working through a spreadsheet.

The Reasonable Mind is incredibly useful - we couldn't function without it. But lean on it too heavily and life becomes mechanical. You might choose a house purely on investment potential, ignoring whether it actually feels like home. You might make the 'sensible' career move whilst ignoring what genuinely interests you.

● The Emotional Mind

In Emotional Mind mode, your mood shapes what you think and do. Logic takes a back seat. This is the mode you're in when you snap at someone during an argument, make an impulse purchase, or burst into song at an inappropriate moment because you're happy.

Your Emotional Mind isn't all bad, though - passion and enthusiasm live here, and spontaneous gestures can strengthen relationships. The trouble comes when emotions lead to actions with consequences you haven't considered. You might buy a house because it '*felt* right' without noticing the damp, the dodgy roof, or the flight path overhead, for example.



● The Wise Mind

The Wise Mind sits at the intersection of the other two. It's where you can acknowledge your feelings without being overwhelmed by them, and consider the facts without losing touch with what matters to you. It draws on logic, emotion, intuition, values, and lived experience - all at once.

When you're house-hunting from your Wise Mind, you check the survey results and ask yourself whether you can picture being happy there. You notice your gut reaction and weigh it against the practical realities. You make a decision you can live with.

● The Three Minds at a Glance

Reasonable Mind	Emotional Mind	Wise Mind
• Facts and evidence • Logic and analysis • Problem-solving • Practical considerations	• Feelings and moods • Impulses and urges • Gut reactions • Spontaneity	• Present-moment awareness • Values and needs • Intuition • Integration of head and heart

2

Why it Matters

Most of us default to one mode or the other. Some people lean heavily on logic, dismissing feelings as irrelevant. Others are swept along by emotions, making decisions they later regret. Neither extreme serves us well. The goal isn't to eliminate emotion or abandon reason - it's to access both at once, so our choices reflect what we actually need and value.

3

What to Do

01

Get Set Up

You'll need three chairs arranged in front of you - or three distinct spots if you're standing. Each position represents one of the three minds. As you move between them, you'll explore the same situation from each perspective. Once you are set up, work through steps two to five.

02

Choose Your Situation

Think of a recent situation that stirred up difficult feelings - e.g. a disagreement with someone, a frustrating interaction at work, or a decision you're wrestling with. Think about it as vividly as you can.

03

Adopt the Reasonable Mind

Sit in the first chair and adopt a purely analytical stance. Set aside feelings and focus only on facts and logic. Work through these questions:

- What are the objective facts here - what *actually* happened?
- What's the most *logical* explanation for what occurred?
- What *evidence* supports my perspective?
- What would be the most *practical* way to address this?
- Setting aside what feels 'right', what's the most *sensible* course of action?



04

Adopt the Emotional Mind

Move to the second chair and let your feelings take centre stage. Don't censor or judge - just notice what's there. Explore these questions:

- What *emotions* come up when I think about this situation?
- How *intense* are these feelings?
- How *uncomfortable* or *painful* is this emotion?
- If consequences didn't matter, what would I want to do *right now*?
- If consequences didn't matter, what would I want to *say*?

05

Adopt the Wise Mind

Move to the third chair. Before answering, take a moment to ground yourself - a few slow breaths, feet on the floor, arriving in the present moment. Then explore:

- What are my *feelings* telling me about what I actually *need* here?
- How can I honour the *facts* without ignoring what *matters* to me?
- What does this look like from a wider perspective?
- What's my *intuition* saying?
- What *strengths* or *resources* could I draw on?
- What might I *learn* from this?
- How could I respond in a way that fits with the person I *want* to be?

06

Reflect

Take a moment to reflect by asking yourself these questions:

- When do I tend to get stuck in reasonable mind when wise mind might serve me better?
- How can I honour the facts without ignoring what matters to me?
- When do I tend to get stuck in emotional mind when wise mind might serve me better?
- What would change for me if I spent more time in wise mind?
- What would change for the people around me?



Window of TOLERANCE

1

A Bit of Background

We all have a zone where we function at our best - where we can handle life's curveballs without losing our footing. When we're in this zone, we can think clearly, stay present, and respond to challenges rather than just react. This is your Window of Tolerance.

But we don't always stay there. When stress builds up or something triggers us, we can tip out of our window in one of two directions. We might become overwhelmed and agitated - what's sometimes called being 'revved up'. Or we might shut down and disconnect - going 'flat'. Both are our nervous system's way of trying to protect us, but neither is a great place to make decisions or navigate difficult situations from.

As you explore this concept and work through the steps in the exercise, originally developed by Dr. Dan Siegel, a clinical professor of psychiatry, remember that your window isn't fixed. It narrows when you're tired, hungry, stressed, or unwell - and widens when you're rested, connected, and taking care of yourself.

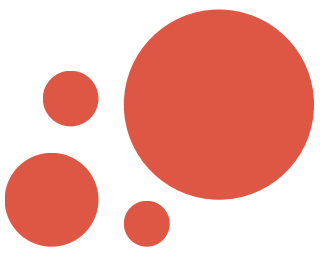
The more you practice noticing where you are and using strategies to return to your window, the wider it becomes over time.

So, let's look at the three zones in a bit more detail.

● Zone 1: Revved Up (Hyperarousal)

This is when your system is on high alert. You might feel anxious, angry, or out of control. Your heart races, thoughts come thick and fast, and you're primed to fight or flee. Small things feel like big threats. Common signs:

- Racing thoughts or mind won't switch off
- Feeling on edge, irritable, or snappy
- Difficulty sitting still or relaxing
- Reacting more strongly than the situation warrants
- Physical tension, shallow breathing, or racing heart



● **Zone 2: The Window of Tolerance**

This is your optimal zone - calm but alert, grounded but flexible. You can handle stress without being thrown off balance. Emotions are present but manageable. You're able to think, reflect, and respond thoughtfully. Common signs:

- Feeling present and engaged
- Able to think clearly and make decisions
- Emotions feel manageable
- Open to connection with others
- Body feels relatively relaxed and settled

● **Zone 3: Shut Down (Hypoarousal)**

This is when your system goes flat. You might feel numb, disconnected, or like you're watching life from behind glass. Energy drains away. It's hard to think, hard to feel, hard to move. This is the freeze response. Common signs:

- Feeling numb or emotionally flat
- Disconnected from yourself or others
- Low energy, hard to get going
- Foggy thinking or difficulty concentrating
- Wanting to withdraw or hide away

2

Why it Matters

The width of your window isn't fixed. It shifts throughout the day depending on how rested you are, what's been happening, and how resourced you feel. It also varies from person to person - and it can be widened over time with practice.

This exercise helps you recognise when you're inside your window and when you've tipped out of it. Once you can spot the signs, you can take steps to bring yourself back - before things escalate.

01**When You Stayed in Your Window**

Think of a recent time when something stressful happened, but you managed to stay grounded. You didn't tip into overwhelm or shut down - you handled it. What was that like? Use these prompts to help you explore it:

- What was the situation?
- What did you notice in your body and mind?
- How did things turn out?

02**Your Warning Signs**

Knowing your personal warning signs helps you catch yourself before you tip too far out of your window. What do you notice when you're starting to become revved up or shut down? Use these prompts to help you explore it:

- What are the signs that I'm tipping into 'revved up'?
- What are the signs that I'm tipping into 'shut down'?

03**Getting Back to Your Window**

Different strategies work for different states. When you're revved up, you need things that calm and ground you. When you're shut down, you need things that gently activate and reconnect you. Use these prompts to help you explore it:

- When I'm revved up, what are things that help me settle (e.g., slow breathing, stepping outside, cold water on face, grounding exercises)
- When I'm shut down, what are things that help me reconnect (e.g. movement, talking to someone, a brisk walk, music, warm drink)