Zones of Regulation Lesson Plan

**Presenters:** Tiffany Schuette (School Counselor) & Kelly Davies (Occupational Therapist)

**Unit:** Understanding Myself & Emotional Regulation

**Title:** Zones of Regulation

**Grade Level:** 4th Grade

**Time:** 30 Minutes

**Materials:**

* *Zones of Regulation –* Teacher Survey (Copied in Yellow)
* *The Zones of Regulation (Reproducible E)* – Visual on board
* *Inner Coach and Inner Critic Worksheets (Reproducible X & Y) - Handout*
* *Zones toolbox poster* – to be posted in the classroom
* *Zones of Regulation Toolbox (Reproducible Z)–* Handout
* Computer, document camera, and projector for videos
* Lesson Derived from The Zones of Regulation: A Curriculum Designed to Foster Self-Regulation and Emotional Control. A book by Leah M. Kuypers

**Learning Activities:**

1. Introductions – Mrs. Davies - What she does in her job at school as an occupational therapist. Hand out teacher and student surveys at this time if you are administering the surveys.
2. Introduce topic – Zones of Regulation. Project Reproducible E (the Zones chart). Enlarge so only the faces on the chart are showing and the words on the bottom cannot be seen by the students. Point to the title of the chart and explain that the Zones are the four different colors and that all of the feelings we experience can fit in these four different colors (blue, green, yellow, and red). Point to the word Regulation. Explain that this also means self-regulation and it means helping yourself. So if you are angry (point to the Red Zone), you do something to help yourself feel better and move to Green Zone. “If you are feeling sad you don’t want to feel sad all the time, you want to self-regulate – you want to help yourself feel better and move to Green Zone so you feel happy again.”
3. Continue to use Reproducible E on the projector to explain each Zone with the visual on the board. Encourage kids to look at the facial expressions in each Zone to get them to guess what feelings fit in each color. Keep Reproducible E enlarged and the feelings words in each Zone hidden to help aid in discussion and get their responses. (It is important that students learn to recognize facial expressions.) Ask students to respond and tell about a time when they felt they were in the Blue, Green, Yellow, or Red Zones.
4. Explain to students that there is no such thing as a “bad” Zone because there are times in which we all experience each Zones (even adults do!). Also make it clear that this is different than any behavior modification system they have in their classroom.
5. Explain to students that we have many different emotions and there are times it is expected to be in a certain Zone; now we are going to review strategies on what to do when we are in a Zone but need to get to another Zone. Using the Zones Toolbox Poster, encourage the students to offer suggestions on what they can do when they are in the Blue, Green, Yellow, and Red Zone. Fill out as a class until the poster is full or they can add strategies later with their teacher when they think of other strategies. They can also fill out a copy of their own toolbox (Reproducible Z) while the poster is being completed.
6. Describe to students that we all use self-talk. Ask them to consider what they would say to themselves if they reach for something in a hot oven (“It’s hot”, “Be careful”, “Get an oven mitt”). Explain that these are things they may think in their head, but not necessarily say out loud, so we call it self-talk.
7. Describe to them that sometimes self-talk takes a negative (not-so-good) tone, which they can call their “inner critic,” and in this activity we will learn about replacing it with more positive (good) self-talk that they can call their “inner coach.”
8. Hand out the Inner Coach worksheet. Explain that we all have an inner coach who helps cheer us on and helps us though difficult situations. Brainstorm different things the inner coach might say to them and have them fill out their “Inner Coach” paper. Walk through each question on the worksheet as a class and elicit responses they can write on their worksheet.
9. Explain that in addition to an inner coach, we also have an inner critic who works to put negative (not-so-good) thoughts in our head, like “You can’t do it; don’t even try.” Brainstorm things the inner critic might say to them. Have students fill out their “Inner Critic” worksheet. Walk through each question on the worksheet as a class and elicit responses they can write on their worksheet.
10. Discuss that their brain is in control of those whom they listen and allow to have the power. Using their Zones Toolbox or poster, have students indicate which Zone or Zones they feel the inner coach can help them.
11. Assess students’ knowledge by asking the following:
    * How can using the inner coach as a tool help you?
    * Can you think of a time in your life where using the inner coach would have been helpful? If you would have used the inner coach as a tool, would it have affected what those around you thought about you? If so, how?
12. Tell students that now if they hear their teacher say “you are in Blue Zone” they know what it means and can use strategies to move to Green Zone. They can use the Zones as a tool to help them self-regulate or feel calm and ready to learn.
13. Collect the completed survey from the teacher or send a survey via Google forms for the staff to complete.