

# Getting it Right for Autistic Learners in Mainstream Settings

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We are not a  
problem to be  
solved

We are  
promise not  
yet realised...





My World is  
overwhelming





**FEET  
TAPPING**

**LIGHTS  
FLICKERING**

**SMELL OF  
LUNCHES**

**SOUND OF  
WRITING**

**SQUEAKY  
FLOOR**

**SOMEONE  
FARTED**

**PENCIL  
TAPPING**

**LABEL  
ITCHING**

**CLOCK  
TICKING**

**WIND  
WHISTLING**



Meltdown ↔ Shutdown







Fight, Flight

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Optimal Zone

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Freeze, Faint



Meltdown



Optimal Zone

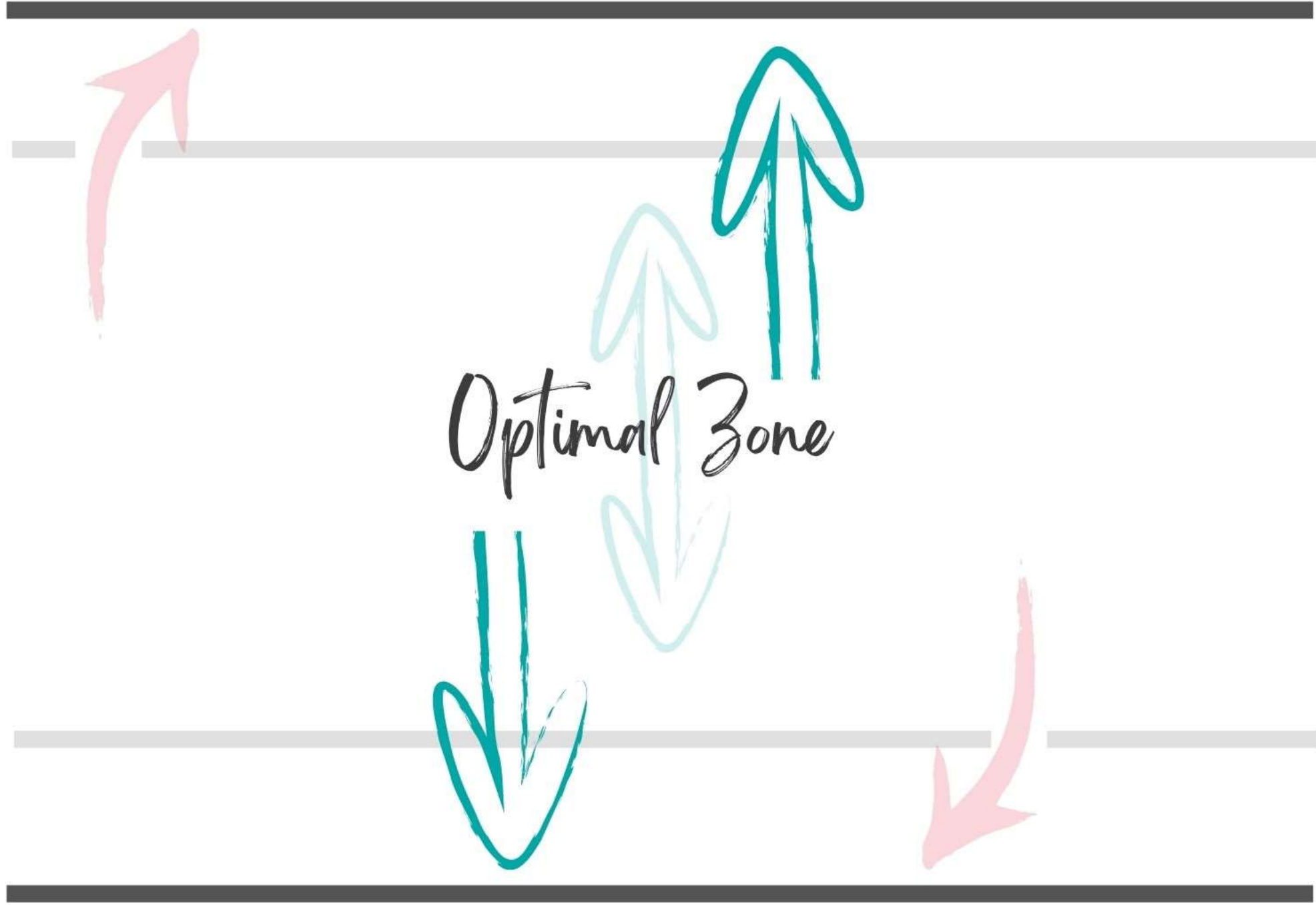


Shutdown

*Looks different, but the same things can help both*







# What Might Help?

Physical  
wellbeing

SAFE  
classroom

BORING  
(predictable &  
consistent)

Safe  
Adults

Reduce  
'noise'

Rules &  
routine





# SAFE setting

S social

I know how interactions work. I know what is expected of me and what I can expect of others

A academic

I can be bold and brave in my learning. I can try new things. I am not fearful about making mistakes

F physical  
(Free from harm)

No physical or health harm will come to me

E emotional

I can emotionally regulate or co-regulate. I can seek the support of adults as needed. My fear response will not be triggered



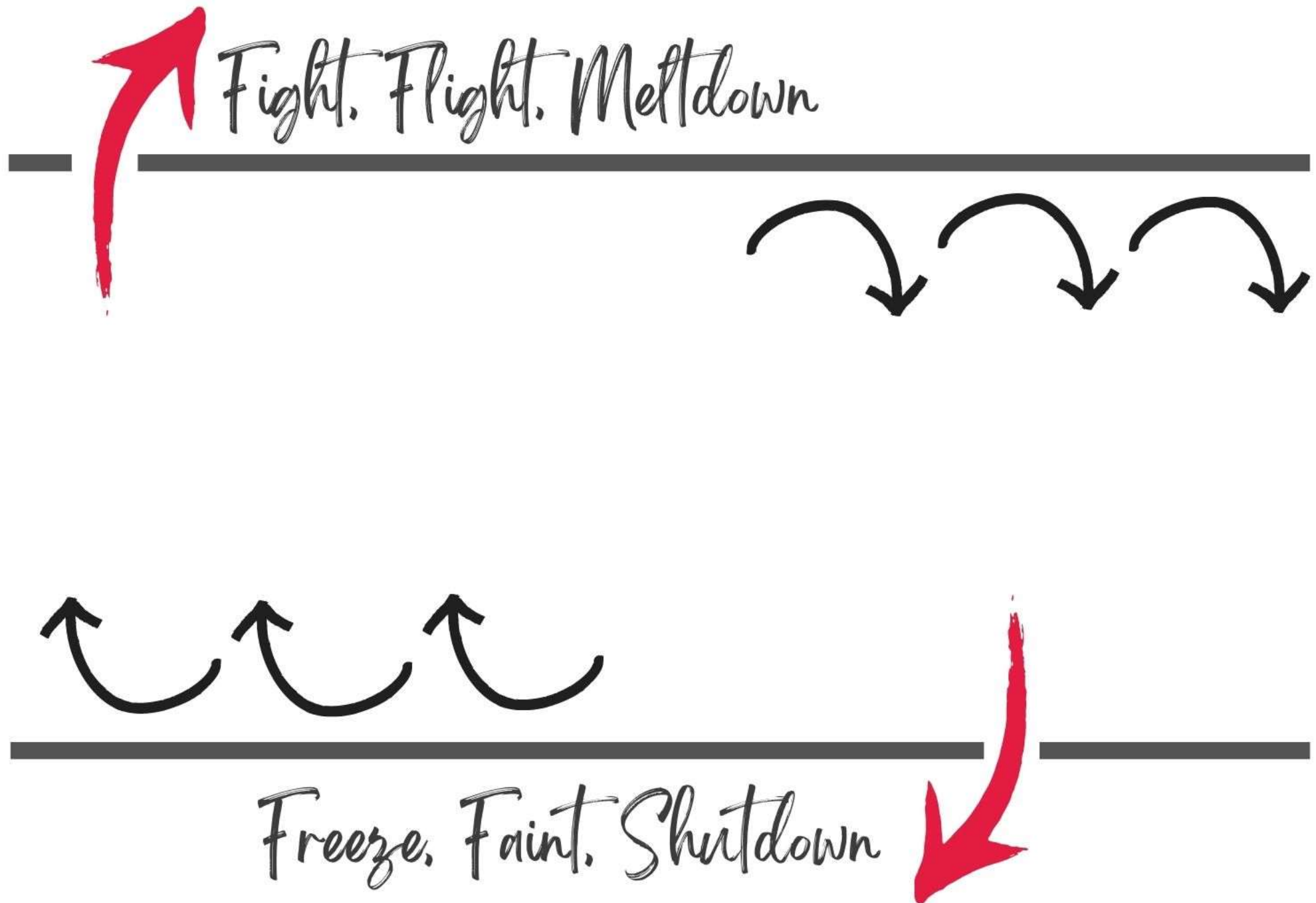


# Increase Window of Tolerance

Today → Sound calm & in control by speaking Slow-Low-Low

Tomorrow → Step into your classroom in their shoes, reduce 'noise'

Next Term → Longer-term changes for a SAFER setting





# What Might Help?

Safe space  
and face  
coregulation

Quiet lunch  
space

Avoid the  
crush  
start/end of day

Organised  
fun at  
breaks

Calming  
activities at  
transitions

Self-soothe  
strategies

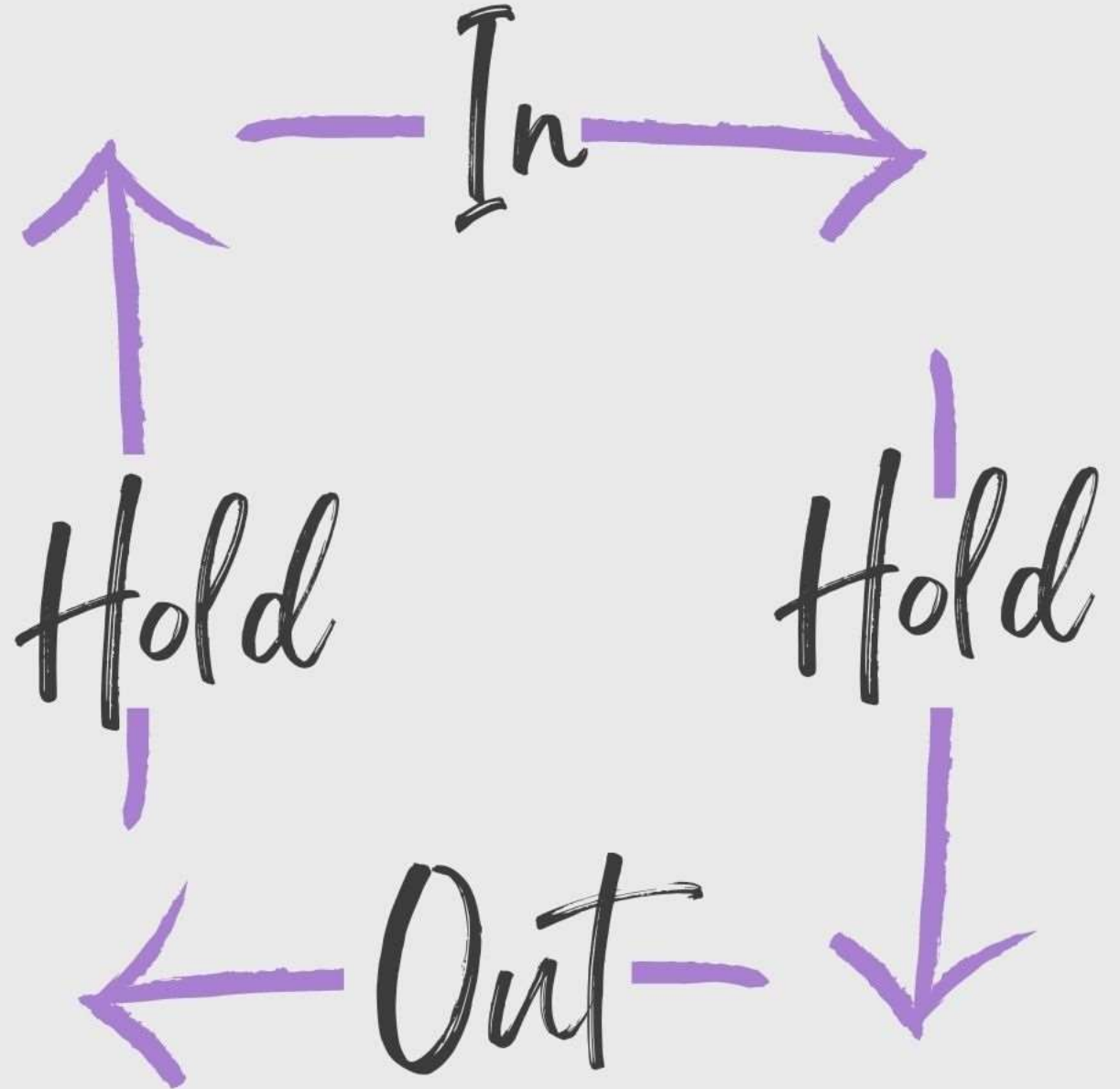


# Box Breathing

Box breathing has four simple stages:

1. Breathe in for the count of four
2. Hold for the count of four
3. Breathe out for the count of four
4. Hold for the count of four

Repeat as needed





Processing  
takes me  
longer







What happens when you give me directions...



Walk to the tree at the end  
of the street...

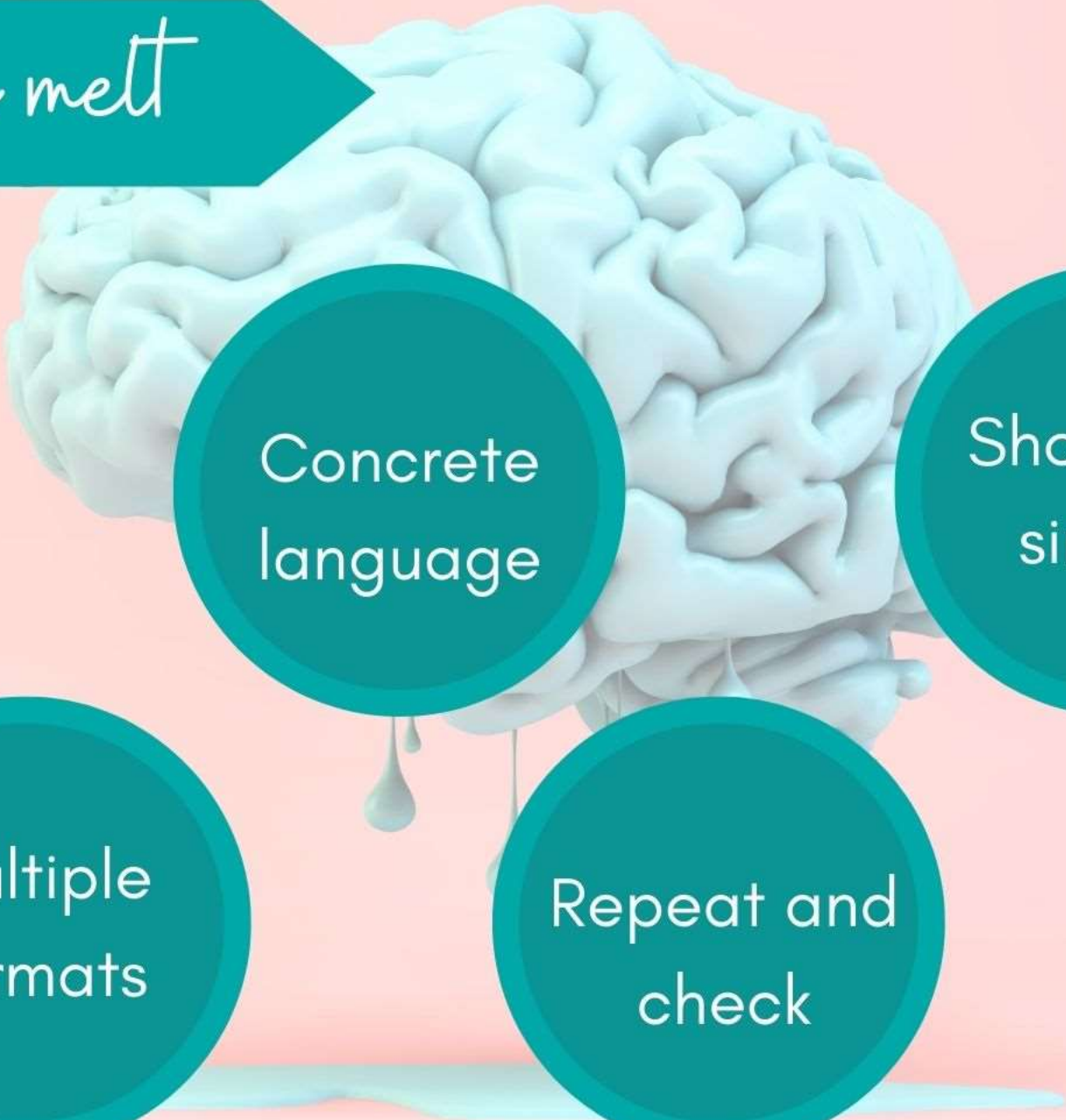
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blah... blah... blah... blah... blah...

...and it's directly on your right,  
okay?



Oh he means that  
massive horse  
chestnut, it had the  
greenest leaves,  
they were catching  
the light just so. I  
love conkers,  
they're so shiny and  
smooth. He smells  
kind of good,  
sandalwood I think.  
That jacket looks  
so itchy. I wonder  
if he thinks I'm  
weird? Did I  
remember to nod  
and smile?

# Avoiding brain melt



Talk then  
STOP

Concrete  
language

Short and  
simple

Multiple  
formats

Repeat and  
check

Give me  
TIME



Lyra's  
holiday  
homework

# Shakesperean Sonnets

A shakespearean Sonnet has:

- Has fourteen lines
- Ten beats per line (iambic pentameter)
- A special rhyming format ABAB|CDEC|EDEF|GG
- Three quatrains (a verse of four lines)
- A rhyming couplet at the end

Sonnet 18

1 Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? A  
 2 Thou art more lovely and more temperate: B  
 3 Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May, A  
 4 And summer's lease hath all too short a date: B

5 Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines, c  
 6 And often is his gold complexion dimm'd: D  
 7 And every fair from fair sometime declines, c  
 8 By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd: D

9 But thy eternal summer shall not fade, E  
 10 Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st: F  
 11 Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade, E  
 12 When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st: F

13 So long as men can breathe or eyes can see, G  
 14 So long lives this, and this gives life to thee. G

Oberon

1 I have this juice that makes you fall in love A  
 2 In love with the first creature that you see, B  
 3 Into her eyes I'll squeeze it from above, A  
 4 And when she wakes I'll watch her, filled with glee, B

Puck

5 These men rehearse their play but they are crass, c  
 6 So I will bring a little spice to life, D  
 7 I wave my wand, Bottom becomes an ass! c  
 8 The men run scared, oh I have caused some strife! D

Titania

9 Yawning I wake and open up my eyes, E  
 10 I see a lovely face in front of me, F  
 11 Go fall in love so fast may not be wise, E  
 12 But oh you are divine and I love thee, F

13 And thus it was Titania, wise and fair, G  
 14 Gave to an ass her love to our despair. G

My sonnet



## Enabling Processing

Today → Say a little and then STOP and count to ten (slowly!)

Tomorrow → Chunk instructions, supplement verbal with handouts

Next Term → Revise expectations: do less, do it better?



I hate myself



**WEIRDO**

**NAUGHTY**

**DIFFERENT**

**CAN'T KEEP UP**

**DON'T GET THEM**

**LEFT OUT**

**DON'T BELONG**







# Boosting Self-Esteem

Peer  
education

Strengths  
first  
approach

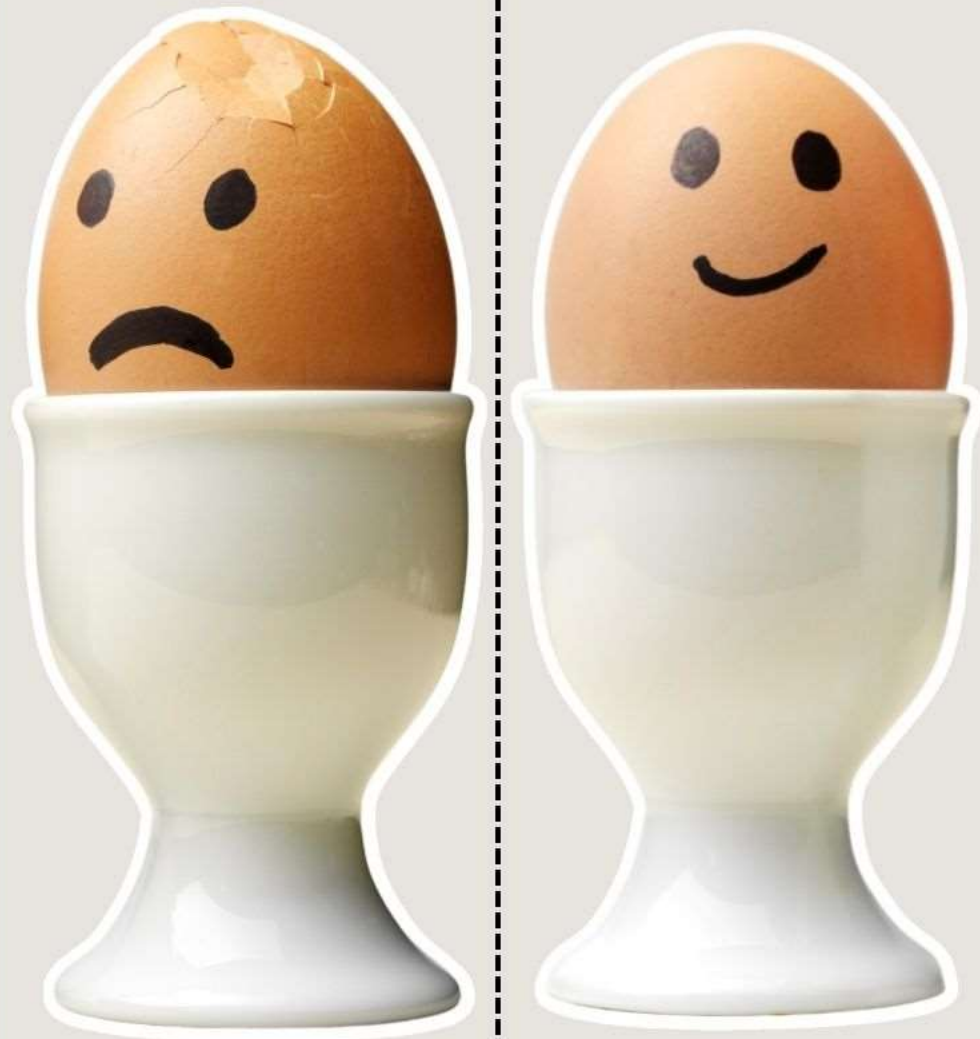
Tap into  
their  
interests

Clubs  
geared to  
their likes

LISTEN

(Quiet)  
praise

CK is a LAC with ASD. His emotional regulation is poor and attendance is 63%. He is low achieving.



Calvin is funny and kind. He's a brilliant big brother and a great goalie. He loves to draw and has a keen interest in dogs.





The story we tell  
about a child is the  
story they will tell  
about themselves

Make sure they  
know they're a  
good egg...



Start  
with  
Strengths

My strengths -1-  -2-  -3-	My hopes & dreams		My safe -People-  -Places-  -Phrases-
	<div>BIG ones</div>	<div>tiny ones</div>	
I'm scared of	My favourite	Hi, My name is:	I love to talk about
	<div>Colour</div> <div>Animal</div>	<div>add photo here</div>	
	Things I love	Proud moments	I like to communicate by
			<div>Talking</div> <div>Writing</div> <div>Drawing</div> <div>-----</div>





## Boosting Self-Esteem

Today → Commit to telling different stories by starting with strengths

Tomorrow → Suspend your disinterest in a child's special interest

Next Term → Run lunch clubs that enable belonging and connection

A collection of white paper boats on a blue background. One red paper boat is positioned at the top right, with a dashed white line trailing behind it, suggesting a path or direction. The other white boats are scattered around, some following the path and others not.

Small sustainable  
changes are the  
key to long-term  
impact.

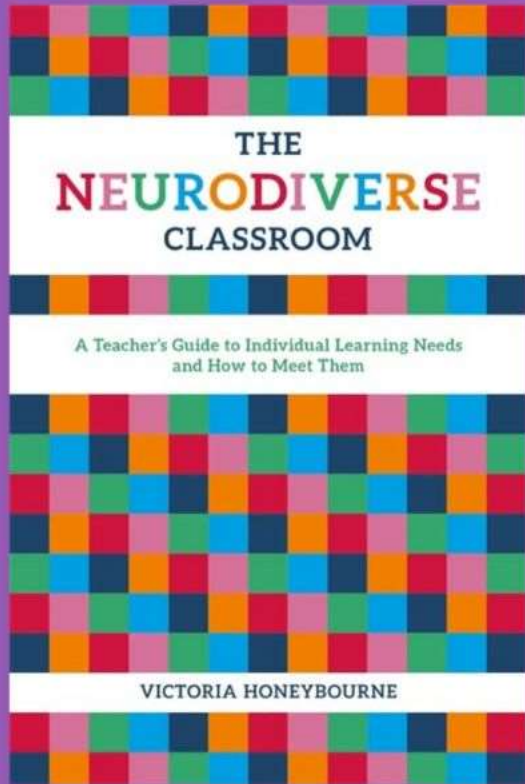
What will you start  
with?

Today | Tomorrow | Next Term



# To Learn More You Could...

- Read -



- Watch -



[youtube.com/pookyh](https://youtube.com/pookyh)

- Listen -



[pookyh.buzzsprout.com](https://pookyh.buzzsprout.com)

All this  
and more  
here

