

Levels-System Implementation Protocol

*Examples Below

Material: computer, paper, printer, laminator (optional)		
Purpose: The purpose of the levels-systems framework is to provide individuals with a systematic approach to understanding and managing one's emotions, facilitating self-awareness, and promoting effective emotional regulation skills.		
Staff	Student/Adult	Contingency
Review <u>expectations, levels, and calming routine</u> -Identify relevant expectations -Personalize different levels (Level + What I Feel Like + What It Looks Like + What Can I Do + What My Staff Will Do) -Individualize calming routine -Finalize and Prepare Materials -Introduce and Implement -Monitor and Adjust *Create a blank template to be personalized for each individual in the target setting.	Engage individual in the process by helping identify expectations, levels, and calming routine	Prompt and assist the individual in their participation, as needed.
<u>Identify Expectations</u> Expectations should be based off someone's goals and requirements at the target setting. Choose 3-4 appropriate expectations. Each expectation should be person-centered, age appropriate, and based in self-determination.	Assist and agree on chosen expectations and goals.	Prompt and assist the individual in their participation, as needed. Expectations can change as the person masters certain skills or their goals change.
<u>Personalize Levels: Level + What I Feel Like</u> To personalize the levels for an individual, it's essential to understand how they experience and manage their emotions within each specific level. Level Green: The individual feels calm, focused, and ready to learn, which is ideal for engagement and productivity. State 3-4 words that describe what the person feels like when they are in level green. Level Yellow: The individual feels a bit anxious, frustrated, or excited. They may be starting to lose some control but can still be redirected. State 3-4 words that describe what the person feels like when they are in level yellow. Level Blue: The individual feels sad, tired, bored, or unmotivated. Their energy levels are low, and they need strategies to re-energize. State 3-4 words that describe what the person feels like when they are in level blue.	Assist and agree on different feeling words for each level. Ensure accuracy and understanding of each level.	Use pictures, words, or a combination of both based on the person's reading level. For someone with a visual impairment, ensure that the pictures and font are large enough for the person to see. Begin to help a person identify what they may be feeling if they are not yet able to themselves.

<p>Level Red: The individual feels extremely upset, angry, or out of control. They are in a heightened state of stress and need help to calm down. State 3-4 words that describe what the person feels like when they are in level red.</p> <p>Everyone feels a wide range of emotions, but not every level is required for each person. Base the appropriate levels on the individual's regulation needs.</p>		
<p><u>Personalize Levels: What It Looks Like</u> It is crucial that there is a deep understanding of what it looks like for each person across each level. If there is no awareness around this, complete direct observations or questionnaires to gain a deeper understanding.</p> <p>Across each level, state brief descriptions of common behaviors seen when in different emotional states.</p> <p><u>Examples:</u></p> <p>Level Green: Relaxed posture, engaged in activities, and able to communicate effectively.</p> <p>Level Yellow: Increased alertness, signs of frustration or excitement, and mixed emotions.</p> <p>Level Red: Agitated body language, aggressive actions, and difficulty communicating.</p> <p>Level Blue: Slumped posture, withdrawn behavior, and feelings of sadness or apathy.</p>	<p>Assist and agree on what it looks like for each level.</p> <p>Ensure accuracy and understanding of each level.</p>	<p>It's perfectly fine to help define and agree on the characteristics of each emotional level, such as frustration, sadness, or anger. You can achieve this by identifying the level and then describing the specific behaviors that indicate the person is experiencing that emotion.</p> <p>Ex: "{Name} I see that you may be in yellow because you are starting to raise your voice. Is this true? What should we do?" and then help transition the person to their calming routine.</p>
<p><u>Personalize Levels: What Can I Do</u> Explain what tools or actions the individual can utilize to stay on level green or to self-regulate to get back to green. 2-4 suggestions per level.</p> <p><u>Examples (a calming routine should always be included in levels yellow and red):</u></p> <p>Level Green: Keep up the good work, ask for help, follow schedule</p> <p>Level Yellow: Complete calming routine, take a break, ask for help</p> <p>Level Blue: Physical movement, take a break, ask for help, calming routine</p>	<p>Assist and agree on different calming and regulation techniques.</p> <p>Ensure accuracy and understanding of each level.</p>	<p>The person might need prompted to complete the tasks on the list. Prompting, as needed, is okay!</p>



<p>Level Red: Ask for space, initiate calming routine (repeat as necessary), ask for help</p>		
<p><u>Personalize Levels: What My Staff (any support person) Will Do</u> Explain what tools or actions the staff person can utilize to assist the person in staying on level green or to self-regulate to get back to green. 2-4 suggestions per level.</p> <p><u>Examples (a calming routine should always be included in levels yellow and red):</u></p> <p>Level Green: Rehearse levels and calming, remind me to follow schedule and take breaks, give me time and remind me to ask for help, reinforce positive behavior</p> <p>Level Yellow: Recognize level, remind me to go to my calming area, complete calming routine, reinforce positive behavior</p> <p>Level Blue: Recognize level, reinforce positive behavior, encourage movement</p> <p>Level Red: Complete calming routine or take a walk, reinforce positive behavior, give space</p>	<p>Assist and agree on different ways a support person can be helpful in remaining in a calm state, and what is needed when you are in different levels.</p>	<p>What the support person can do can change as you find more ways that encourage positive behavior in the person.</p>
<p><u>Individualize Calming Routine</u> Identify a calm space and activities that assist the target individual in regulation and returning to a calm state.</p> <p>A calming routine can be adapted to the person’s needs. It can include multiple steps and can be repeated as necessary. 3-5 steps are recommended.</p> <p><u>Examples:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I will take a walk to a calm area (if loud in the office, go to a different quiet spot). 2. While walking, I will squeeze one of the stress balls in the front pocket of my backpack. 3. I will listen to calming music for 10 minutes with headphones on while alone in my cubicle. 4. I will use my letterboard or TouchChat to communicate that I need scratches or other sensory input. I will check my levels and return to my schedule when I’m ready. 	<p>Practice the calming routine while in a calm state to</p>	<p>When you practice calming techniques regularly, they become a part of your muscle memory. This makes it easier to recall and implement them during stressful situations.</p> <p>Learning and mastering new techniques can be challenging under stress. By practicing while calm, you reduce the cognitive load and can focus on mastering the techniques without the interference of stress or anxiety.</p>
<p><u>Level Cards</u></p>	<p>Receive the card and initiate calming</p>	<p>Cards can be faded away, as needed. If the person starts to independently recognize their</p>



<p>Level cards can be used simultaneously with the levels system. A red, yellow, blue, and red card can be printed and act a visual cue to represent what level a person is in.</p> <p>For example, you may see someone getting frustrated and this is a sign they are in yellow. You can state, “ ___ I see that you are in yellow by ___.” Hand the person the yellow card and then state, “Let’s go to your space and start your calming routine.”</p>	<p>routine, when needed.</p>	<p>own level and initiate their calming routine, the cards can be removed. They can be reintroduced as needed for the person.</p>
<p><u>Finalize and Prepare Materials</u> Once the choice board is finalized, prepare the materials for use. This may involve printing and laminating visuals, assembling the choice board components, and gathering any additional materials needed for the activities.</p>	<p>Help place levels across settings to ensure consistency.</p>	<p>Based on need, the choice board can stay in one location or move with the individual across settings. Create backup boards in case of damage or it being misplaced.</p>
<p><u>Introduce and Implement</u> Introduce the choice board to the individuals who will be using it. Provide clear instructions on how to use the choice board and encourage them to explore the activity options independently or with guidance.</p>	<p>Review levels everyday at least three times per day. Practice calming routine when in a calm state.</p>	<p>Use gestures and physical prompts to help the learner identify what level they are making. Initially, it is okay to model! The goal is for the individual to utilize their levels independently, but assistance is okay if needed!</p>
<p><u>Monitor and Adjust</u> Monitor the use of the levels system and gather feedback from individuals regularly. Be prepared to adjust the person’s expectations, levels, and calming routine based on their experiences and suggestions to ensure its effectiveness and relevance over time. By following these steps, you can create a self-regulation tool that effectively helps people become aware of their internal emotional state and regulate back to a calm state. This provides individuals with meaningful independence and self-management options that lead to more positive life outcomes.</p>		

Levels and Calming

Do's and Don'ts of My Environment

1. I will keep a calm body (hands and feet to self)
2. I will use my words to communicate.
3. I will engage in activities on my schedule
4. I will use my calming routine.

Level	How I Feel	What it looks like	What I will do	How will my teachers help me?
Green	Calm Happy	 Smiling Following Schedule	Keep up the good work Keep following my schedule Take breaks as needed Ask for help	Rehearse levels and calming Remind me to follow schedule and take breaks Give me time and remind me to ask for help
Yellow	Things are too loud for me Annoyed Something hurts Someone is upsetting you	 Slapping leg Fiddling with ear Longer than usual respond time. Saying "No"	Ask for help Ask for my calming routine/board Immediately walk back to office	Recognize level Think Encourage me to walk back to the office Encourage me to do my calming routine Reinforce positive behavior Stay out of cubical

Orange	Anxious Frustrated Nervous	 Not responding to questions or redirection. Crying Stomping feet Hitting the table	Meditation/Jazz Do calming routine/board	Recognize level Think Right away, prompt me to start calming board. Staff will put on Jazz Stand outside the cubical and pull table, remind me why you are pulling the table (To keep you and myself safe) Reinforce positive behavior Stay out of cubical
Red	Upset Angry Hurt	 Grabbing hair Destroying property Hitting other people Throwing items Crying	Take a break Do calming routine	Recognize my level and Think about my calming routine Walk away from me toward the calming area Reinforce all positive behavior Stay out of cubical





Self-Regulation Routine:

1. Sit in cubicle or stay in area
2. Do calming board activity/while listening to Jazz
3. Check my levels
4. If calm, return to schedule. If still in Y/O or /R, repeat calming routine until In Green

Levels and Calming

Do's and Dont's of My Environment:

1. I will speak at an appropriate volume
2. I will follow my' schedule and directions of staff, and I will treat my staff kindly
3. I will use my calming routine & go over my levels
4. I will respect others' personal space and ask permission before touching others

Level	How I Feel	What it looks like	What I will do	How will my teachers help me?
Green	Calm Happy Excited	 Joking / smiling Engaging in conversation Following Schedule	Keep up the good work Keep following my schedule Take breaks as needed Ask for help	Rehearse levels and calming Remind me to follow schedule and take breaks Give me time and remind me to ask for help
Blue	Sleepy Hungry Complaining of pain Sad	 Verbal Refusal of task, "I'm tired", "My feet hurt", "I'm hungry" Falling asleep at desk	I can have a snack I need to sit down- my feet hurt If he is really tired, he is able to take a nap in the storage cubicle	Recognize level Think about calming routine Go over level system Give a snack- if hungry Remind- if we follow schedule, we can write a letter
Yello W	Frustrated Annoyed	 Refusal to follow schedule- "No" "I hate IMPACT. I wanna go home." Noncompliance with a group activity Being verbally Mean to staff & associates	Ask for help Review my Levels Do my calming routine	Recognize level Think about calming routine Verbally say "___ we are in yellow. Let's do our calming routine" Do calming routine Remind- if we follow schedule, we can write a letter Check levels by going over schedule again
Red	Upset Angry Mad	 Yelling at staff or associates Pushing staff/ getting into a fight position Throwing items- iPad	Do calming routine Take some deep breaths Do a 5 minutes break (redo if needed)	Recognize my level and Think about my calming routine Do calming routine Limit verbal communication "We are in red ___; we are doing our calming routine & I will get Joann.." Check levels by going over schedule again

		Pounding on desk/ pushing chairs or desk hard		
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Self-Regulation Routine:

1. I will go to my area and *sit* down
2. Set timer for **5 minutes**
3. I will turn ***on calming music**** and complete calming activity (e.g., looking through a graphic novel, calming board, any independent activity- **NOT** letter writing)
4. I will check my levels and return to my schedule when I'm ready

***Staff should play calming music on their phone and he should not have access to an iPad during this time. This will cause more frustration for him when he has to give the iPad up. Do not allow him to have access to your phone while playing calming music.**