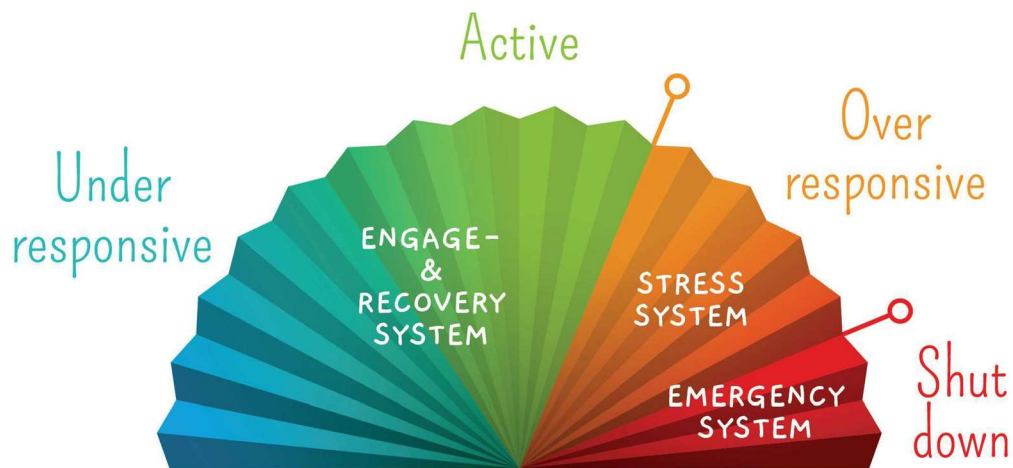


The Sensory Fan-model

The Sensory Fan-model illustrates the three systems. It is meant as an aid for explaining to your student what systems are active in their body and how they can influence the systems. Although these systems usually function automatically and unconsciously, we can learn to influence them. One of the ways in which you can do this is by using activating and calming strategies. You'll find more on how to use the Sensory Fan-model in Chapter 4. First, let's look at the model.



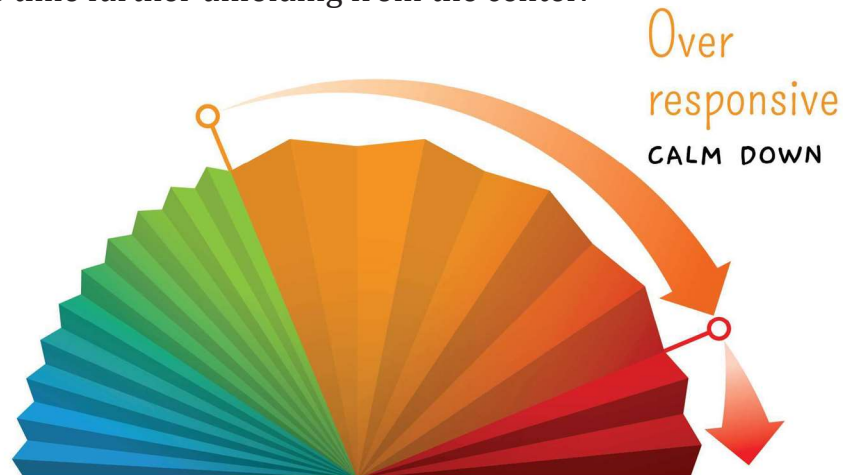
Sensory Fan-model by Thoonsen & van der Gaag (2021)

The engage and recovery system is shown on the left-hand side of the fan. The stress system is shown towards the right-hand side of the fan, and the emergency system on the far right.

An underresponsive person needs more activating sensations, so the left-hand part folds together and the centre unfolds more.



An overresponsive person needs calming sensations, folding the right-hand-side and at the same time further unfolding from the center.



You would like your student to move to a state where they function mostly in the area in the middle of the model. This does not mean they are never in the areas to either side. Rest and recovery happen on the left-hand side. And sometimes you experience stress, which means you are on the right-hand side of the fan. This does not have to be a negative thing. Stress can be a helpful part of life, as long as it is not chronic and debilitating (Parker, 2015).

