


SELF-STIMULATING BEHAVIOURS

THE TYPES OF STIMMING

VISUAL STIMMING

 Stimming that involves vision and sight.





Visually
Appealing Videos




Visual
Fidget Tools



Visually
Interesting Objects

 Some people who struggle with visual input may use sunglasses or tinted glasses. 

AUDITORY STIMMING

 Stimming that involves sound or hearing.





Music or
Specific Noises




Auditory
Fidget Tools



Making Noises
Verbally or with
Objects

 Noise cancelling headphones are one way someone may cope with noises. 

TACTILE STIMMING



 Stimming that involves feel and touch.




Fidgets with
Tactile
Elements





Soft
Comfortable
Objects

 Some people may be sensitive to specific textures, fabrics, or types of clothing. 

TASTE/ORAL STIMMING

 Stimming that involves the mouth.




 Some people may struggle with food textures and tastes. 



Biting, Licking,
or Sucking.

Sensory
Foods

SMELL STIMMING

 Stimming involving the nose/scent.




 Many people experience reactions to strong smells. 

Aroma-
therapy

Specific
Smells

VESTIBULAR STIMMING

 Stimming involving movement / balance.





Swinging, Spinning
or Rocking




Amusement
Parks



Hand, Leg, or Face
Movements

 Some people who struggle with vestibular input may have issues with balance and coordination. 

PROPRIOCEPTIVE STIMMING

 Stimming that involves weight and awareness of one's body in space.





Weighted
Blankets



Compression



Pressure to
Body Parts

 Some people may struggle to sense changes and needs in the body. 

SELF - STIMULATING BEHAVIOURS

WHAT IS STIMMING ?

WHAT IS IT?

The word stim is short for self-stimulation. It is most associated with autism and often manifests as repetitive body or sensory actions that vary in type, intensity and frequency. Stimming can bring enjoyment and help people to cope with uncomfortable or stressful situations. Almost all people experience and engage in some form of self-stimulating behaviours, though they are often referred to as fidgeting rather than 'stimming'.

WHY DO SOME PEOPLE STIM?

There are several known causes for stimming:



OVER-STIMULATION



PAIN REDUCTION



DISCOMFORT MANAGEMENT



UNDER-STIMULATION



SELF-REGULATION



EMOTIONAL REGULATION

WHAT HELPS

- Attempt to understand the stim.
- Accommodate the stim if you can.
- Manage the sensory environment if necessary.
- Work to de-stigmatize behaviour.

WHAT DOESN'T

- Trying to stop non-harmful stimming behaviours.
- Judging self-stimulating behaviours.
- Asking people to stop stimming.
- Reinforcing pre-existing stigmas.

EXAMPLES

VISUAL

Watching Videos
Using Visual Fidgets
Eye Movements

AUDITORY

Listening to Music
Covering Ears
Making Throat Noises

TACTILE

Using Soft Blankets
Using Tactile Fidgets
Petting or Tapping

SMELL/SCENT

Using Aromatherapy
Rhythmic Breathing
Sniffing Objects

MOUTH

Sucking or Licking
Sensory Foods
Mouth Movements

VESTIBULAR

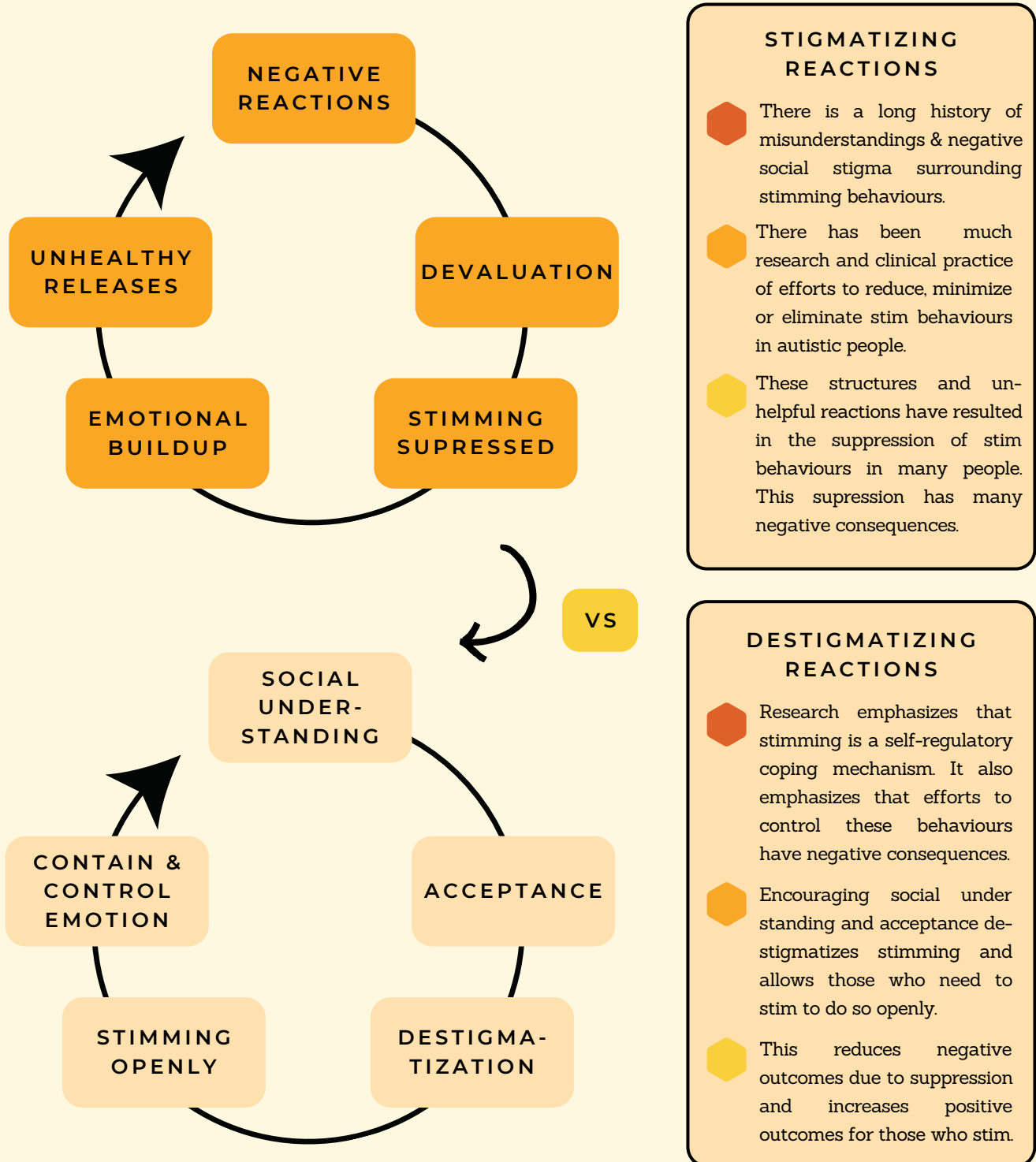
Hand Flapping
Swinging or Rocking
Spinning

PROPRIOCEPTIVE

Using Weighted Blankets
Pressure/Self-Massage

HOW WE RESPOND TO STIMMING

While there is evidence of the benefits of stimming, many still report experiencing negative social stigma and judgement surrounding stims. How we individually respond to and societally respond to stimming behaviours greatly influences the outcomes for those who need to stim in order to cope, regulate, focus, and more.



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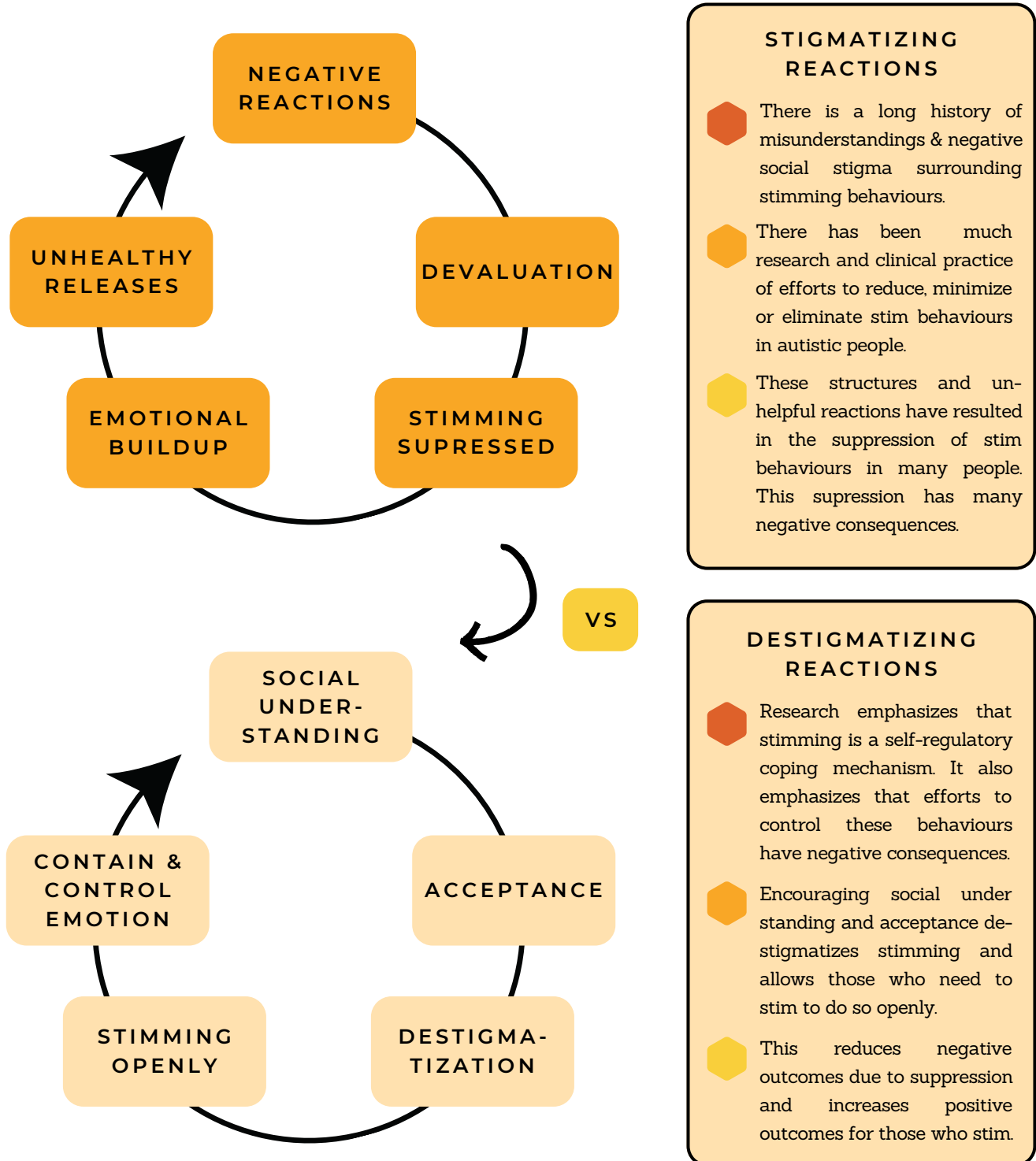
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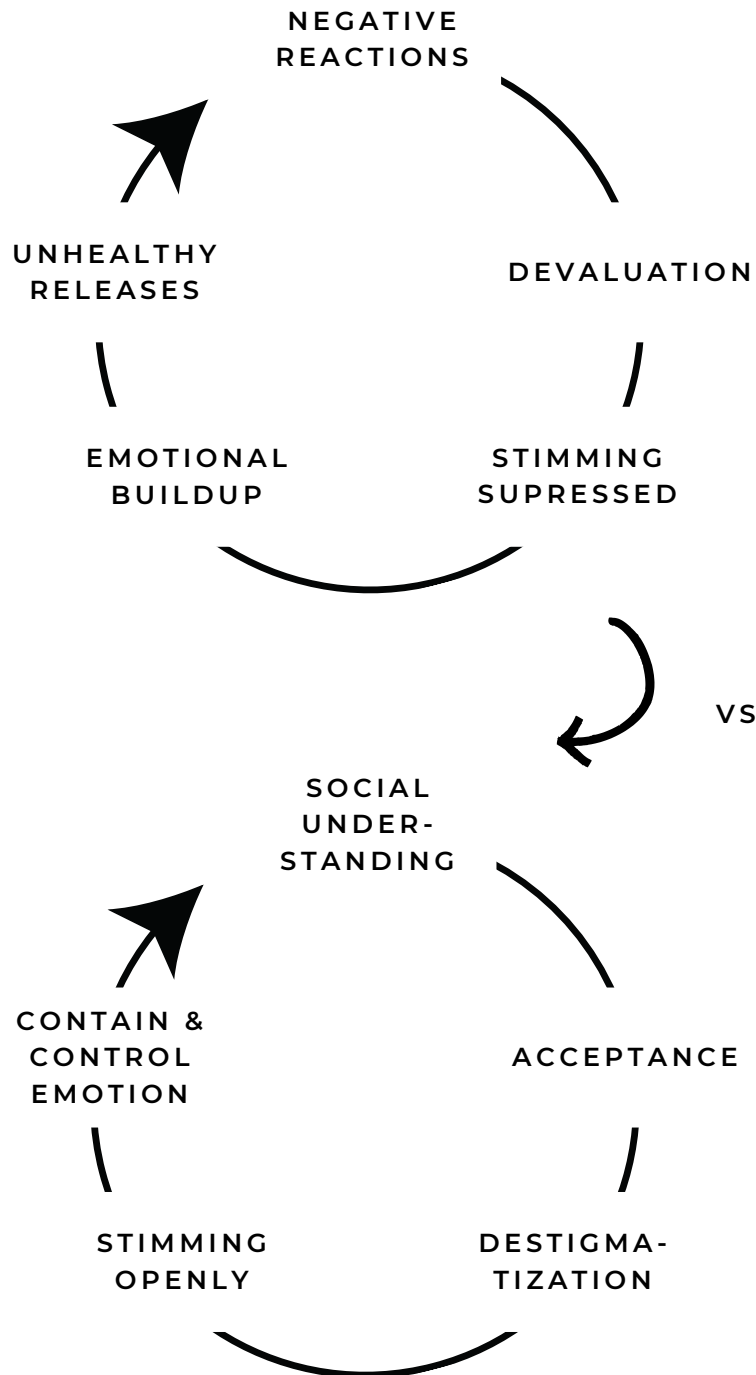
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STIGMATIZING REACTIONS

- There is a long history of misunderstandings & negative social stigma surrounding stimming behaviours.
- There has been much research and clinical practice of efforts to reduce, minimize or eliminate stim behaviours in autistic people.
- These structures and unhelpful reactions have resulted in the suppression of stim behaviours in many people. This suppression has many negative consequences.

DESTIGMATIZING REACTIONS

- Research emphasizes that stimming is a self-regulatory coping mechanism. It also emphasizes that efforts to control these behaviours have negative consequences.
- Encouraging social understanding and acceptance destigmatizes stimming and allows those who need to stim to do so openly.
- This reduces negative outcomes due to suppression and increases positive outcomes for those who stim.

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BENEFITS OF STIMMING

