

EMOTIONAL REGULATION 101

Understanding feelings and responding with more skill.

Stronger people. Kinder systems. A brighter tomorrow.

People Heal
in
Connection

1 What is emotional regulation?

Emotional regulation means **noticing, understanding, and responding** to emotions in ways that are **helpful**. It involves being aware of what you feel, making space for your emotions, and choosing how to respond, rather than reacting automatically.

It does not mean never feeling upset.

All emotions are valid. Regulation helps you move through them with more skill and care.



Emotions are part of being human. Regulation helps you respond in ways that align with your values.

You can feel it and handle it.

2 What emotions do

Emotions are not problems to eliminate — they are important and serve a purpose. Emotions:



Give information

They signal what matters to you and help you notice what's happening in and around you.



Mobilize action

Emotions prepare your body to respond, protect you, and motivate you to meet your needs.



Communicate needs

Emotions let others know what you might need — such as safety, support, understanding or a change.

4 A simple regulation path

Try these steps when emotions feel big. You don't have to do them perfectly — just practice, one step at a time.



Notice

What is happening in your body, mind and environment? What do you feel?



Name

Put a name to the emotion (e.g., anger, sadness, fear, frustration).



Normalize

Remind yourself, "It makes sense I feel this way. My feelings are valid."



Nurture

Use a skill, a soothing activity or reach out for support.



Next Step

Choose one small, helpful step. What do I need right now?

Progress, not perfection.



3 What makes regulation harder?

Many factors can make it more difficult to manage emotions. You might notice:



Exhaustion

Being tired lowers your capacity to cope.



Stress

Ongoing pressure can make emotions feel bigger and harder to manage.



Trauma

Past experiences can increase sensitivity and make it harder to feel safe.



Sensory Overload

Too much noise, light, activity or stimulation can quickly overwhelm your system.



Conflict

Disagreements or relationship stress can trigger strong emotions.



Hunger

A hungry body is a more reactive body.



Shame

Feeling ashamed can lead to self-criticism and make it harder to regulate.



Invalidation

When your feelings are dismissed or minimized, it can be harder to trust yourself and manage emotions.



Things regulation is not

Emotional regulation is not:



Not stuffing emotions

You don't have to push feelings away.



Not pretending to be fine

It's okay to be honest about how you feel.



Not perfection

You won't always get it right, and that's human.



Not never getting triggered

Triggers happen. Regulation means finding your way back with support and skills.

5 Helpful skills

These skills can support you in regulating your emotions. Try what feels helpful for you.



Grounding

Use your senses to come back to the present moment.



Paced Breathing

Slow, steady breaths can calm your nervous system.



Opposite Action or Gentle Action

Do a small action that supports how you want to feel (even if it's hard).



Taking a Pause

Give yourself a moment before responding.



Movement

Move your body in a way that feels good to release energy and tension.



Journaling

Write out your thoughts and feelings to gain clarity and self-understanding.



Talking to Someone Safe

Share what you're feeling with a trusted person who listens without judgment.



Self-Compassion

Be kind to yourself. You are doing your best, and that is enough.

"Feelings are real. They are also workable."

Kind
Brave
Capable
You Got This