

# EMOTION REGULATION HANDOUT 1

(Emotion Regulation Worksheet 1; p. 271)



## Goals of Emotion Regulation

### UNDERSTAND AND NAME YOUR OWN EMOTIONS

Identify (observe and describe) your emotions.

Know what emotions do for you.

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### DECREASE THE FREQUENCY OF UNWANTED EMOTIONS

Stop unwanted emotions from starting in the first place.

Change unwanted emotions once they start.

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### DECREASE EMOTIONAL VULNERABILITY

Decrease vulnerability to emotion mind.

Increase resilience, your ability to cope with difficult things and positive emotions.

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### DECREASE EMOTIONAL SUFFERING

Reduce suffering when painful emotions overcome you.

Manage extreme emotions so that you don't make things worse.

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **EMOTION REGULATION HANDOUT 2**

(Emotion Regulation Worksheets 2–4a, 16; pp. 275–282, 312)

### **Overview: Understanding and Naming Emotions**

#### **WHAT EMOTIONS DO FOR YOU**

There are reasons why we have emotions.

We need them!

#### **FACTORS THAT MAKE REGULATING EMOTIONS HARD**

Lack of skills, reinforcing consequences, moodiness, rumination/  
worrying, myths about emotions, and biology can interfere  
with changing emotions.

#### **A MODEL FOR DESCRIBING EMOTIONS**

Emotions are complex responses.

Changing any part of the system can change the entire response.

#### **WAYS TO DESCRIBE EMOTIONS**

Learning to observe, describe, and name your emotion  
can help you regulate your emotions.



## What Emotions Do for You

### EMOTIONS MOTIVATE (AND ORGANIZE) US FOR ACTION

- Emotions motivate our behavior. Emotions prepare us for action. The action urge of specific emotions is often “hard-wired” in biology.
- Emotions save time in getting us to act in important situations. Emotions can be especially important when we don’t have time to think things through.
- Strong emotions help us overcome obstacles—in our minds and in the environment.

### EMOTIONS COMMUNICATE TO (AND INFLUENCE) OTHERS

- Facial expressions are hard-wired aspects of emotions. Facial expressions communicate faster than words.
- Our body language and voice tone can also be hard-wired. Like it or not, they also communicate our emotions to others.
- When it is important to communicate to others, or send them a message, it can be very hard to change our emotions.
- Whether we intend it or not, our communication of emotions influences others.

### EMOTIONS COMMUNICATE TO OURSELVES

- Emotional reactions can give us important information about a situation. Emotions can be signals or alarms that something is happening.
- Gut feelings can be like intuition—a response to something important about the situation. This can be helpful if our emotions get us to check out the facts.
- **Caution:** Sometimes we treat emotions as if they are facts about the world: The stronger the emotion, the stronger our belief that the emotion is based on fact. (Examples: “If I feel unsure, I am incompetent,” “If I get lonely when left alone, I shouldn’t be left alone,” “If I feel confident about something, it is right,” “If I’m afraid, there must be danger,” “I love him, so he must be OK.”)
- If we assume that our emotions represent facts about the world, we may use them to justify our thoughts or our actions. This can be trouble if our emotions get us to ignore the facts.



## What Makes It Hard to Regulate Your Emotions

### BIOLOGY

- Biological factors can make emotion regulation harder.

### LACK OF SKILL

- You don't know what to do to regulate your emotions.

### REINFORCEMENT OF EMOTIONAL BEHAVIOR

- Your environment reinforces you when you are highly emotional.

### MOODINESS

- Your current mood controls what you do instead of your Wise Mind.
- You don't really want to put in time and effort to regulate your emotions.

### EMOTIONAL OVERLOAD

- High emotional arousal causes you to reach a skills breakdown point. You can't follow skills instructions or figure out what to do.

### EMOTION MYTHS

- Myths (e.g., mistaken beliefs) about emotions get in the way of your ability to regulate emotions.
- Myths that emotions are bad or weak lead to avoiding emotions.
- Myths that extreme emotions are necessary or are part of who you are keep you from trying to regulate your emotions.

# EMOTION REGULATION HANDOUT 4A

(Emotion Regulation Worksheet 3; p. 279)

## Myths about Emotions

1. There is a right way to feel in every situation.  
*Challenge:* \_\_\_\_\_
2. Letting others know that I am feeling bad is a weakness.  
*Challenge:* \_\_\_\_\_
3. Negative feelings are bad and destructive.  
*Challenge:* \_\_\_\_\_
4. Being emotional means being out of control.  
*Challenge:* \_\_\_\_\_
5. Some emotions are stupid.  
*Challenge:* \_\_\_\_\_
6. All painful emotions are a result of a bad attitude.  
*Challenge:* \_\_\_\_\_
7. If others don't approve of my feelings, I obviously shouldn't feel the way I do.  
*Challenge:* \_\_\_\_\_
8. Other people are the best judges of how I am feeling.  
*Challenge:* \_\_\_\_\_
9. Painful emotions are not important and should be ignored.  
*Challenge:* \_\_\_\_\_
10. Extreme emotions get you a lot further than trying to regulate your emotions.  
*Challenge:* \_\_\_\_\_
11. Creativity requires intense, often out-of-control emotions.  
*Challenge:* \_\_\_\_\_
12. Drama is cool.  
*Challenge:* \_\_\_\_\_
13. It is inauthentic to try to change my emotions.  
*Challenge:* \_\_\_\_\_
14. Emotional truth is what counts, not factual truth.  
*Challenge:* \_\_\_\_\_
15. People should do whatever they feel like doing.  
*Challenge:* \_\_\_\_\_
16. Acting on your emotions is the mark of a truly free individual.  
*Challenge:* \_\_\_\_\_
17. My emotions are who I am.  
*Challenge:* \_\_\_\_\_
18. My emotions are why people love me.  
*Challenge:* \_\_\_\_\_
19. Emotions can just happen for no reason.  
*Challenge:* \_\_\_\_\_
20. Emotions should always be trusted.  
*Challenge:* \_\_\_\_\_
21. Other myth: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Challenge:* \_\_\_\_\_

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# EMOTION REGULATION HANDOUT 5

(Emotion Regulation Worksheets 4, 4a; pp. 281–282)



## Model for Describing Emotions

