

Emotional regulation & resilience

It's safe to say there's a **strong link between resilience and regulating our emotions**. Research has shown that no matter how you look at it, resilience often involves an **experience of significant adversity** that challenges us, regardless of whether it is examined as a trait or an outcome.

These challenging experiences are often **packed with emotions**. So, when we talk about being able to "bounce back" from a tough or ongoing situation or being able to be more resilient, it's important to acknowledge the emotional rollercoaster that comes with it and **think about how people manage their feelings**.

Resilience

The ability to **bounce back from adversity**. It also increases the ability to regulate emotions because it **enhances self-esteem** and the **perception of social support**.



Emotional resilience

Our ability to **emotionally cope with**, and adapt to, **stressful situations** – and at the core of this is emotion regulation...



Emotion regulation

The ability to **manage our own emotions**.



Understanding emotional regulation

Emotional regulation refers to the **ability to effectively manage and control our emotions** in a healthy and adaptive manner. It can also be known as a form of **self-regulation**. It involves **recognising** and **understanding your emotions** and then employing strategies to modify or regulate them in order to achieve **desired emotional states and responses**.

Emotional regulation is an important aspect of psychological wellbeing and plays a crucial role in various areas of life, including relationships, decision-making, and overall mental health.

Effective emotional regulation can involve several key components and strategies:

Awareness and identification of emotions



It is important to be **aware of** and **accurately identify the emotion** you might be experiencing. This involves recognising the specific emotions, understanding their intensity, and being aware of the triggers or situations that elicit them.

Acceptance of emotions



Accepting your emotions **without judgment or criticism** is a fundamental step in emotional regulation. Instead of suppressing or avoiding emotions, it is healthier to acknowledge and accept them as **valid responses to certain situations**.

Understanding the causes and triggers



Gaining insight into the underlying causes and triggers of certain emotions can help in developing **effective strategies** for emotional regulation. This may involve **reflecting on past experiences, identifying patterns, and understanding personal vulnerabilities**.

Cognitive reappraisal



This strategy involves **reframing or reinterpreting a situation to change the emotional response**. By challenging negative or distorted thoughts and replacing them with more positive and realistic ones, individuals can regulate their emotions more effectively.

Relaxation techniques



Engaging in relaxation techniques such as **deep breathing, meditation, progressive muscle relaxation, or engaging in activities like yoga or tai chi** can help reduce stress and promote emotional regulation.

Problem-solving



When faced with challenging situations, developing effective problem-solving skills can help regulate emotions. This involves **identifying the problem, brainstorming potential solutions, evaluating the pros and cons, and implementing a solution.**

Seeking support



Connecting with others and seeking social support can be instrumental in emotional regulation. **Sharing emotions and experiences** with trusted individuals, such as friends, family, or mental health professionals, can provide **validation, perspective, and guidance.**

Emotional regulation is a skill that can be learned and improved over time with practice and self-awareness. It is not about suppressing or eliminating emotions but rather about managing them in a healthy and adaptive way to promote overall wellbeing.



Problem-solving activity for emotional regulation

Step 1

Figure out and **describe the problem** situation.



Step 2

Check the facts (all the facts) to be sure you have the right problem situation!

- If your facts are **correct** and the situation is the problem, **continue with Step 3**.
- If your facts are **not correct**, go back and **repeat Step 1**.

Step 3

Identify your goal in solving the problem.

- Identify **what needs to happen or change** for you to feel OK.
- **Keep it simple**, and choose something that can actually happen.

Step 4

Brainstorm lots of solutions.

- Think of as many **solutions** as you can. **Ask for suggestions** from people you trust.
- **Do not be critical** of any ideas at first; wait until **Step 5** to evaluate ideas.



Step 5

Choose a solution that fits the goal and is likely to work.

- If you are unsure, **choose two solutions** that look good.
- Complete a **pros and cons list** to compare the solutions.
- Choose the **best option** to try first.



Step 6

Put the solution into action.

- **Act!** Try out the solution.
- **Take the first step**, and then the second . . .



Step 7

Evaluate the results of using the solution.

- It **worked?** Yes!
- It **didn't work?** Go back to Step 5 and **choose a new solution** to try.