

# EMOTIONAL REGULATION & ACCEPTANCE

Emotional regulation is the ability to influence our emotions, increasing positive feelings like happiness and gratitude while decreasing negative ones like anger or sadness. It's not about blocking negative emotions, as feeling angry or fearful can be appropriate. Instead, it helps us manage the intensity of our emotions, allowing us to experience them without being overwhelmed.

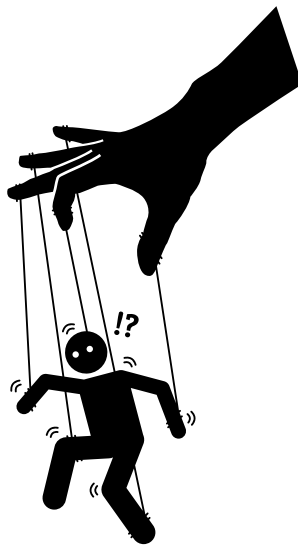
Typically, when we're experiencing an emotion, we try to get rid of it through...

## Problem Solving



**HOWEVER**, emotions don't follow rational principles. Problem-solving often makes things worse by trapping us in our heads, arguing with feelings that don't respond to logic.

## Trying to Control Emotions



**HOWEVER**, fighting to control our emotions is futile. We can influence them by modifying our thoughts and behavior, but we can't change how we feel through sheer willpower. Emotions don't respond to attempts at control.

## Avoiding & Blocking Emotions



**HOWEVER**, maybe we can avoid emotions for a while but they keep coming back only more and more intense, leading to greater emotional distress and potential outbursts. Avoidance also limits how we live our lives as we end up isolating ourselves thus further intensifying our emotions.

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Therefore, it's important to accept our emotions, even if they're uncomfortable or painful. Acceptance is the first step to effective emotional regulation. When we stop fighting our emotions and accept them, they often lose some intensity or stop escalating.



## 1. NAME AND ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR EMOTIONS

A lot of times, we feel bad but we don't know exactly what it is so we need to put a name to how we're feeling. All we need to say to ourselves is "I feel sad" or "I'm feeling angry". The simple act of identifying your emotion can help calm us down and stop the emotions from escalating.



## 2. VALIDATE YOUR EMOTIONS

Have you ever noticed yourself saying things like "I shouldn't feel this way" or "why can't I just get over this"? Validating your emotions means giving yourself permission to have them. Tell yourself that these are natural human emotions and everyone feels them sometimes.



## 3. REMEMBER, EMOTIONS ARE TEMPORARY!

Just because you're feeling this way now, doesn't mean you're going to feel this way forever! Emotions come and go all the time without us ever having to do anything. In fact, the more we try to do something about an emotion - other than accepting it - the longer it sticks around.