

STRATEGIES for MINDFUL LIVING

Courtesy of UAB Employee Assistance & Counseling Center

Emotional Regulation Strategies

Emotional regulation is the ability to exert control over one's own emotional state. It doesn't mean pretending everything is fine; it means understanding and managing your emotional responses in a healthy and productive way. This may involve rethinking a challenging situation to reduce anger or anxiety, hiding visible signs of sadness or fear, or focusing on reasons to feel happy or calm.

Whether you're facing a stressful deadline, a difficult conversation, or an unexpected setback, emotional regulation can help you think clearly and navigate challenges more effectively. Follow these actionable steps to gain control when your emotions run high:



Pause and Take a Breath

Create a physical gap between a trigger and your response. Take slow, deep breaths to physically calm your nervous system.

"Name it to Tame it"

Identify and articulate exactly what you are feeling (e.g., "I feel anxious" or "I feel frustrated"). This simple act reduces the intensity of the emotion in the brain.



Practice Cognitive Reappraisal

Challenge your immediate thoughts. Ask yourself if your thoughts are exaggerated or based purely on frustration, and try to find a balanced, logical perspective on the situation.

Shift Your Environment

Sometimes actions dictate feelings. Take a quick, brisk walk, step outside, or do a productive task to help reset your mind.



Take Care of Your Body

Emotional control relies heavily on your physical state. Ensure you are getting adequate sleep, maintaining a balanced diet, and moving daily, as these foundations support emotional well-being.

— Adapted from *Psychology Today*