

How To REGULATE EMOTIONS in Real Time

Emotions are information from our bodies. When emotions are suppressed, they don't disappear. They can intensify and manifest in different ways, such as increased stress, emotional numbness, strained relationships and even physical health challenges.

We can learn to manage emotions and the feelings that come in response. This practice of emotion regulation supports overall wellbeing. It protects our mental and physical health, strengthens relationships and improves our ability to navigate challenges with resiliency by building emotional awareness. It's all about being present, paying attention and addressing emotions in real time so they don't compound. Furthermore, it's a muscle we can strengthen over time.



When an event or someone's actions or words catch us off guard and we notice an emotional response, we can:

1. Breathe. Talk to your body. Address the physical cues of emotions first. Quiet the nervous system response, so you can think clearly and logically and acknowledge the emotion in real time. A couple body-based strategies for responding to the physiological responses of emotions include:

Physiological Sighs: Take two deep, quick inhales through your nose, followed by one long, slow exhale through your mouth. Do this three to five times to stimulate the parasympathetic nervous system or the body's overall "rest and digest" mode. The parasympathetic nervous system conserves energy, slows the heart rate, and stimulates digestion and relaxation after a period of stress.

Dive Reflex: Splash cold water on your face or hold an ice pack to your cheeks and eyes for 30 seconds while holding your breath. The cold triggers the mammalian dive reflex, which slows heart rate. It's a fast physiological reset without

medication. Talk to your healthcare provider first if you have a cardiovascular condition.

Find comfort. Do something to find comfort for yourself that supports overall wellbeing (i.e., is healthy). Place your hand over your heart (the warmth and pressure activate your body's soothing system); wrap yourself in a blanket; sit in the warm sunshine; or close your eyes and imagine somewhere relaxing or peaceful. Encourage a sense of safety, security, peace and calm to help further quiet the response and settle.

2. Label the emotion(s) you are experiencing. Get as specific as you can. There are more than 20 of them! When we name what we're experiencing, it dials down the brain's alarm system and activates the regions we need for a thoughtful response. It also elevates our self-awareness and restores a mild sense of control.

This is an important first step in processing emotions and gleaning helpful information from them. It also helps us build self-trust, which ultimately leads to the best choices for ourselves and those we love, which supports optimal wellbeing.

3. Dive deeper. Explore the reasons why you might be feeling this way. Your emotions may be signaling that it's time for a shift, pivot or change, especially if the response is recurring.

4. Communicate. When we view the bigger picture of why we had an emotional response, it can help us be more self-aware and then communicate with those around us and those we care most about by:

- Actively creating healthy boundaries
- Asking for help
- Describing feelings

When we show up with the presence to regulate emotions, we stop running from them and start working with them. Our relationships deepen, anxiety recedes and self-trust evolves. We give ourselves permission to feel and function. It can change how we live our lives.

"Emotional Regulation Is A Skill, Not A Personality Trait," innerwell.com, July 30, 2025.

"15 Emotional Regulation Exercises for Adults That Actually Work," innerwell.com, March 24, 2026.

"Emotion Regulation Is the Lynchpin for Mental Health," medicine.yale.edu, Sept. 4, 2025.

"How to Express Emotions: 12 Ways to Communicate Feelings," Susan McGarvie, positivepsychology.com, Jan. 16, 2025.



Greek Yogurt Deviled Eggs

Prep Time: 10 minutes | Cook Time: 10 minutes | Serves: 6

- 6 large eggs
- ¼ cup full fat Greek yogurt
- 1 tablespoon pickle relish or 1 small dill pickle, sliced
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- Pepper, to taste
- Smoked paprika, for garnish

1. Place the eggs in a large saucepan and cover with water by at least 1 inch. Bring the water to a boil over high heat. Let the water boil for 30 seconds, then cover and remove from heat. Let the eggs sit for 10-12 minutes.
2. Drain the water or use a slotted spoon to remove the eggs from the hot water. Transfer the eggs to a bowl of ice water or place the eggs in a colander and run cold water over them. Either method will stop the cooking process and cool the eggs.
3. Peel the eggs by tapping all over to crack. Remove the shell by starting at the larger side of the egg (with the air pocket) and slicing in half lengthwise. Remove the yolks and place in a small mixing bowl to the side.
4. To the yolks, add the Greek yogurt, relish, Dijon mustard, apple cider vinegar, salt and pepper. Mash everything together with a fork. Taste and season with additional salt and pepper, if desired.
5. Spoon the yolk mixture into the center of each egg white. You can also add the yolk mixture to a plastic bag and cut the corner off to pipe the filling into the eggs.
6. Sprinkle them with smoked paprika and serve.

Nutrition Facts (per serving)

Serving: 2 halves, Calories: 85kcal, Carbohydrates: 2g, Protein: 7g, Fat: 5g, Sodium: 164mg, Sugar: 1g

Recipe adapted from: eatingbirdfood.com

HOW TO STAY HYDRATED THIS SUMMER

If you're someone who struggles to drink water regularly, you've likely heard of different "creative" ways to stay hydrated, like eating watermelon or adding fruit to your water if you don't like the taste!

Those are fine ideas, but surely not the only ways to stay hydrated during your busy life. When it comes to the summer months and staying hydrated, it's important to know why your body needs water before figuring out how to get enough.

No matter your age, gender or activity level, over half your body is made up of water. Water is an integral part of your body's processes, from helping your heart pump, to propelling your brain to answer your local coffee shop's daily riddle, to keeping your body cool on the most stifling summer days.

So, when you lose a lot of it in a short amount of time, you might start feeling worse for wear. But that's where unique suggestions for staying hydrated can be useful! If you're a water bug or live near a lake/ocean, unfortunately, you can't absorb your way to hydration in the pool. But you can eat, sip and freeze your way to hydration this summer!

CONSIDER:

Mocktails. Yep, you read that right! Mocktails have become a much more extensive option at restaurants and bars over the past few years. If you're out enjoying a cocktail, throw in a mocktail. Alcohol (what most cocktails are made of) is a diuretic, meaning it creates more urine (which in turn makes your body lose water). Mocktails can replace your lost hydration.

Hydration jellies. No one likes to feel sloshy, especially at the beach, the pool, or on a run. Hydration jellies deliver the electrolytes and water your body needs without forcing you to guzzle down a Bubba Keg of water.

Gazpacho. Soup is a summertime food, as long as it's chilled! From the classic Andalusian Gazpacho to strawberry soup that's basically a dessert, gazpacho remains a filling, hydrating side dish to complement meals.

Ice. Simple in theory but effective in practice: notwithstanding any dental issues that would negatively affect you, try chomping on some ice if you're leaving the house during a particularly hot day. Like the sensation of gum, you'll chew on something that provides hydration, which in turn helps your body to cool!

"Gazpacho: The Ultimate Guide to Spain's Most Iconic Cold Soup," travelcookeat.com, May 7, 2026.

"About Water and Healthier Drinks," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), cdc.gov, March 5, 2026.

"Staying Hydrated, Staying Healthy," American Heart Association, heart.org, accessed 2026.

