

Emotional Regulation

Co-Regulation Skills

- Gentle eye contact
- Feeling someone's heartbeat
- Hearing a calm voice
- Being on the same level
- Holding on to the good in the other while they are ungrounded
- Sitting in supportive silence
- Doing tasks alongside each other
- Repeating back what someone is sharing or feeling
- Wanting to understand and validate
- Staying present and curious
- Set a boundary. Say no.
- Write a note to someone you care about
- Find something that makes you laugh
- Serve someone in need
- Care for or play with a pet
- Be an encouragement to someone else
- Call a friend. Be wise here. Don't call the friend who is always full of "You shoulds" and advice. She's awesome for a lot of things, but she's not the person you call when you just need to vent and be heard. Call the person who will quietly listen, validate your feelings, distract you, or make you laugh. Be thoughtful about what you need and how to get it.

Grounding Techniques

- EARTH - feel the ground underneath you, stomp on it, grab it with your toes, feel how solid it is. AIR - take a couple of deep breaths, in through the nose and out through the mouth. WATER - imagine for at least 30 seconds biting into a juicy lemon. Feel the saliva gathering. IF you cannot feel your mouth becoming moist, take a second to create some saliva in your mouth. FIRE - find four things around you that remind you of fire.
- FOCUS ON YOUR SENSES - What do you smell? See? Taste? Hear? Feel to the touch? Feel inside?

Emotional Regulation 2

- Go outside! Notice the sun, the breeze, touch a leaf or tree bark. Notice your surroundings.
- Go find water - Water has such power to move us and calm us! Go to a creek, river, lake, fountain even and enjoy the sight, sound, smell, and feelings of being near the water! Drink something cold. Take a hot shower or bath. Run ice along your inner arm. Put a cool washcloth on your forehead and take some deep breaths.
- Set an intention. If touchstones help you, use them. Bracelets and pocket-sized crystals are terrific for this. "I will be more patient. I'll be a better listener. I'll slow down today. I'll reach out to three friends I haven't talked to for awhile. I'll finish my proposal. I'll be outside as much as possible. Today, I'll be the most mindful version of myself." There is no judgment when it comes to intention. You're the only one who needs to understand how it influences and affects you. Knowing that helps you offer more to the world around you simply by thinking and acting with intention. Knowing what we are doing and WHY we are doing it makes all the difference. It will revamp your connection to your soul.
- Try pushing firmly against the wall with your arms fully extended, your head up, and using your energy to ground down through the feet. Notice the feeling of sturdiness in your body as you push.

Welcoming Ourselves

- Greet anxiety (or any other emotion): Pretend your anxiety is a person, a friend of yours. You hear a knock on the door. You open it and invite her inside. Like you would with any guest, find out what she needs – a drink? A seat? Someone to listen to her? What has she come to say? Take the time to really listen to anxiety and see what she needs. She is trying to communicate to you with the tightness in your back, sweaty palms, and difficulty breathing. Try to listen like you would to a friend.

If it feels hard to imagine this all in your head, write it down like a story. Could you follow through on meeting her needs? Get yourself a drink, have a seat, or journal about what is worrying you. Let anxiety know someone is listening.

- Put your hands over your heart. Speak out loud, "I have experienced suffering. Suffering is part of being human. I give myself permission to be kind and compassionate to myself and to forgive myself for my imperfections."

Emotional Regulation 3

- One of the most powerful tools I know for dealing with anxiety is to acknowledge it. Stop trying to run from it, pretend it isn't there, block it, or mask it.
- Journal and ask the following questions: What is the need that isn't being met? Can you ask for that need to be met by another? Can you fulfill that need yourself? Can you choose to express how you feel? Can you look under what you feel?
- Separate what is in your control from what is not. There are things you can do, and it's helpful to focus on those.
- Challenge yourself to stay in the present. Perhaps your worry is compounding—you are not only thinking about what is currently happening, but also projecting into the future. When you find yourself worrying about something that hasn't happened, gently bring yourself back to the present moment. Notice the sights, sounds, tastes and other sensory experiences in your immediate moment and name them. Engaging in mindfulness activities is one way to help stay grounded when things feel beyond your control.
- If feeling frozen or panicked - Sit comfortably in a chair or sofa, and wrap yourself in a comforter or blanket. Begin to focus on taking full, slow breaths, continually bringing your thoughts back to the present moment. Create a mantra for such moments, such as "I can be present and watch the waves of energy go by without getting caught in the story."
- "Shaking off the freeze" - Begin by slowly jumping off the ground, and shaking the arms out when feet land back on the ground. Take full breaths, mindfully inhaling when you jump, and exhaling fully when your feet land back on the ground. You can also say something to yourself like, "I'm safe. I'm letting go."
- Using thoughts - Name your reaction to yourself as a defense response, thus reframing the experience. Say to yourself, "This is just a memory," or "I'm just triggered right now." You might also try saying to yourself, "I can be here — right here, right now."
- Mindfully not dealing works too - Give yourself permission to avoid, dissociate, or disconnect. But when you do, try to be mindful of your need to check out. Also make plans to give yourself needed TLC (like these exercises) as soon as you can — and follow through!

Breathing Exercises

- Focus on the inhale and exhale of your breath.
- Notice how the air feels in your nostrils, your chest, your stomach.

Emotional Regulation 4

- Notice how the air feels leaving your body and the sensations throughout your body. Practice for 30 seconds, 45 seconds, and eventually master 1 minute.
- Inhale a breath. When at the top (or end) of the inhale, imagine a rounded quality. Then let the inhale roll over into the exhale. Notice where the breath rolls — front, back, side to side (wherever it seems to go). Repeat 5 to 10 times. This breath is also useful when feeling hyperaroused.
- Deep breathing using a pinwheel, bubbles, or a feather

Meditations

- Describe a place, imaginary or real, where you can be alone and feel safe and comfortable, Describe this place using all of your senses (what you see, smell, hear, taste, feel to the touch and feel emotionally)
- Begin with 'Thank you'. Say it out loud and often. You can direct your thank yous to anything or anyone. "Thank you pillow for helping me have such a restful night of sleep. Thank you coffee for already being made. Thank you person whom I love for being the first face I see upon opening my eyes.
- Centering Exercise - Put one hand over your heart, and rest your other hand on your belly. Lengthen your spine. Take several full, slow breaths. Notice the fullness of your body as you let your breath come and go.
- Walking Exercise - Bring all your attention to your body as you walk (and out of your head and worries). Notice how your feet hit the ground, how your feet roll, the movement in your knees, and corresponding sensations in your hips and shoulders. Play with your usual gait. Practice pushing off with your feet, or walking at different paces. Notice the corresponding changes in body sensations.
- Container Meditation - I want you to bring some sort of secure container to your mind's eye, perhaps in this room, or in another secure place. This container will be strong enough to hold all the disturbing stuff – the memories, images, thoughts, physical sensations, sounds, smells, emotions. What would this container have to be like in order to securely hold your distress? (e.g. a safe, office drawer, shipping container, crate,) Can you describe it to me? What is it? What colour is it? How big is it? What does it look like? What is it made of? What makes it safe and secure?

Emotional Regulation 5

- Now imagine taking the distressing images and putting them inside or sending them to the container, then shut the door.
- Now take the distressing thoughts..... (then go through sounds, physical sensations, smells, emotions, thoughts).
- Anything else that needs to go in there?
- Now shut the door securely. How do we make the door more secure? OK, can you do that now? Is it secure now? Is there anything else you need to do to make it more secure?
- How does this feel now?
- Shall we leave this container in the room here, or is there a different secure place where we can leave this container?
- During the week (or until next time), if anything disturbing comes up, just imagine sending it here (there) and putting it all in this container.

Physical Activities

- Jump up and down
- Take off your shoes and feel the ground beneath you
- Eat something slowly and mindfully (noticing the smell, sight, taste, texture, flavors, etc)
If you are comfortable with touch, get a hug, have someone you trust place their hands on your shoulders and press down slightly, get a massage)
- Take a walk around the block
- Ride your bike
- Play some music and dance around the house
- Go swimming!
- Stretch your muscles in some gentle movements
- Sweat it out!
- Take a nap

Distractions

- Take a shower or bath

Emotional Regulation 6

- Take a walk
- Watch a show or videos on YouTube
- Go shopping
- Clean your environment
- Write a list of goals
- Write a list of strengths
- Eat a little chocolate
- Be out in nature
- Take Rescue Remedy (From Orchard Supply)
- Drink some water.
- Squeeze stress ball
- Play a game
- Go shopping
- Clean
- Take a drive
- CALM DOWN KIT
 - lavender scented play dough
 - rescue remedy
 - gum
 - massager
 - headphones and iPod
 - water bottle
 - tapping directions
 - drawing paper and pens
 - stress ball - make your own with flour in balloon
 - comics
 - fidget spinner
- Make a list of categories like your favorite books, movies, people, places, etc
- Describe the colors in the room
- Describe the object you are holding (shape, texture, smell, color, etc)
- Choose a sensory object to carry with you (a cotton ball with a couple of drops of essential oil in a plastic bag, special rock or talisman, stress ball to squeeze, gum to chew, ring that you can spin, etc)

Emotional Regulation 7

- Create a mantra to repeat in your head or out loud with each intake and outage of breath (This too will pass. Keep breathing. This isn't permanent. I've totally earned a cookie for dealing with this today. I give myself compassion in this moment. Just ride this wave. I choose calm over anxiety. I love my body and my body loves me... Find more on Pinterest!)
- Make a playlist of soothing songs
- Make a playlist of your favorite dance songs
- Make a playlist of loud music that gives you the option to scream along with it