

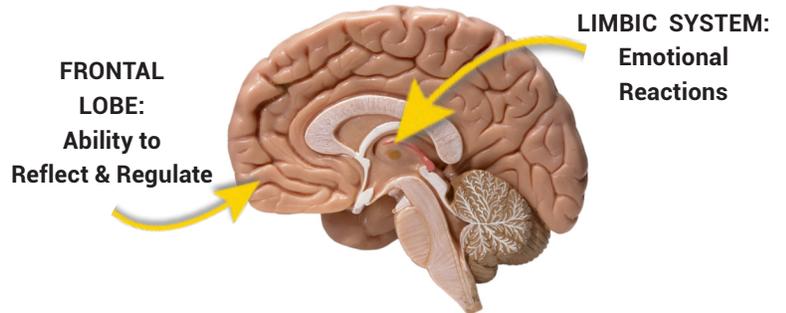
Emotion Regulation Definitions & Discussion Questions



Emotions: Simply put, emotions are energy that give us information. The brain reacts to our experiences then generates a neurophysiological response in the form of feelings, thoughts, and sensations such as changes in heart rate, sweating, shortness of breath, and tightness in different parts of the body. These physiological responses may occur outside of conscious awareness resulting in an emotional reaction without thought or reflection.

Emotional Literacy: The ability to consciously identify and label an emotion and its corresponding physiological responses. This skill improves as the Frontal Lobe develops and increases the brain's ability to consciously reflect on the neurophysiological responses generated from our experiences.

Alexithymia: Problems identifying, describing, and processing one's emotions.



Emotion Regulation: The ability to engage the Frontal Lobe to reflect on experiences before reacting out of emotion. Using good judgment in order to respond to situations in a mature manner.

Monitoring and regulating emotions develops emotional management skills that reduce anger, stress, anxiety, and depression. These abilities allow us to re-think and change perceptions about challenging situations and release negative emotional energy.

Critical Thinking Section

Students:

- On a scale of 1-10, 10 being the best, rate your emotion regulation skills.
- How do you know when you need to regulate your emotions?
- Do you live in emotional extremes? Either 1, 2, or 3s or 8, 9, or 10s? What about the people you live with?
- Which emotions are easy to regulate? Which emotions are difficult to manage?
- How good are you at identifying your own emotions? How good are you at identifying other people's emotions?
- Have you ever emotionally dysregulated? What happened?
- What are your most effective ways to regulate your emotions/behavior?

NEGATIVE EMOTION REGULATION

Successful emotion regulation requires activating the Frontal Lobe to engage in the following techniques:

- Problem-Directed Action
- Planning to Avoid Future Problems
- Cognitive Reappraisal (Finding Meaning in Negative Events)
- Using Self-Reward to Think or Do Something Pleasant
- Exercise (excellent energy release)
- Meditation or Relaxation
- Socializing or Seeking Comfort or Advice from Others
- Distraction or Avoiding Rumination
- Spending Time Alone
- Accepting Events They Way They Are
- Gratitude and Focusing on the Positive
- Helping Others or Acts of Kindness
- Using Humor and Laughter

Staff & Family:

- How do you model good emotion regulation to your students or kids?
- When have you displayed poor emotional regulation in front of your students or kids?
- How do you teach young people to control their emotional reactions or change their perceptions?
- Has your emotion regulation improved with age? Why or why not?
- What are your favorite ways to regulate your emotions?
- What triggers emotion dysregulation?
- When did you fail to regulate an emotion and face consequences? What do you wish you had done differently?