

Ify Otuya Mental Health Toolkit

10 Emotional Regulation Skills

Feel it, don't fear it.

Emotions are a natural part of being human — it's how we respond to them that shapes our mental well-being. Emotional regulation is the skill of noticing, understanding, and managing your emotions in healthy, intentional ways — especially in tough or triggering moments.

This guide offers practical tools to help you stay centered when your emotions feel intense or overwhelming. Whether you're learning to pause before reacting, name what you're feeling, or gently shift out of emotional spirals, these skills are here to help you move through emotions — not be ruled by them.

Let's explore how you can meet your emotions with compassion, awareness, and strength.

10 Practical Emotional Regulation Skills

These everyday tools can help you manage intense feelings without becoming overwhelmed or reactive:

1. Name It to Tame It

Identifying and labeling emotions (e.g., "I feel disappointed" instead of just "I'm off") helps the brain process them more clearly.

2. Pause Before Responding

Building in a moment to breathe or reflect before reacting can prevent regret and promote more thoughtful actions.

3. Self-Soothing Techniques

Gentle activities that calm the body, like listening to music, taking a warm shower, or holding something soft, support emotional balance.

4. Reframing

Looking at the situation through a different, more empowering lens helps shift how it feels emotionally.

5. Using “I” Statements

Communicating feelings without blame (“I feel hurt when...” vs. “You always...”) lowers conflict and helps express emotions respectfully.

6. Emotion Journaling

Writing about emotions rather than suppressing them can help process feelings and gain clarity.

7. Visualization & Imagery

Mentally picturing a calm place or a peaceful version of yourself can help regulate the nervous system during distress.

8. Practicing Self-Compassion

Replacing self-criticism with understanding, like saying, “This is hard, and I’m doing my best,” creates emotional resilience.

9. Distress Tolerance (DBT skill)

Skills like “TIPP” (Temperature, Intense exercise, Paced breathing, Paired muscle relaxation) are designed to get through emotional crises.

10. Checking the Story

Asking, “What else could be true?” when you're spiraling in a narrative helps reduce emotional overwhelm and promotes flexibility in thinking.

Author's Bio:



Hi, I'm Ify Otuya, a mental health advocate, speaker, and founder of June E-waste Academy. I create empowering mental health content to educate, inspire, and destigmatize mental health struggles. Join me on my journey to mental wellness.

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