



Self-Care



TU Dublin Student
Counselling Service



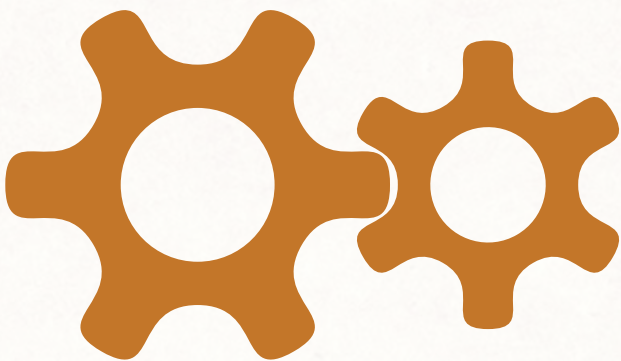


What is Self-Regulation?

Self-regulation is the ability to control one's behaviour, emotions, and thoughts in the pursuit of long-term goals. More specifically, emotional self-regulation refers to the ability to manage disruptive emotions and impulses—in other words, to think before acting.

Self-regulation involves the ability to rebound from disappointment and to act in a way consistent with your values.

Self-regulation involves taking a pause between a feeling and an action—taking the time to think things through, make a plan, wait patiently.





Why Self-Regulation Is Important

Self-regulation helps us handle stress and conflict while strengthening our relationships and overall well-being.



Physically

Self-regulation helps us control those impulses and act in more productive ways. Being able to self-calm has physical effects, like slowing a pounding heart..

Emotionally

If a person is upset, sad, angry, or excited, self-regulation helps them calm down, regulate their feelings, and manage emotions so that they are not overwhelming.





Mentally

Self-regulation is necessary in order to learn and perform, in college or on the job. It helps people sit still at a desk, listen to what needs to be done, and refocus after completing a task.

Socially

Self-regulation allows people to behave in socially helpful ways and build relationships by not letting strong emotions or impulses dictate their behaviour





Examples of Self-Regulation

- Being able to handle intense emotions like frustration, disappointment, or embarrassment
- Being able to calm down after something exciting has happened
- Refocusing attention after finishing one task and starting another
- Controlling impulses
- Behaving appropriately and getting along with other people



Qualities of Self-Regulators

- Act in accordance with their values
- Calm themselves when upset
- Cheer themselves when feeling down
- Maintain open communication
- Persist through difficult times
- See the good in others
- Remain flexible and adapting to situations
- Stay clear about their intentions
- Take control of situations when necessary
- View challenges as opportunities





What challenges do I currently face?

A large, empty, rounded rectangular box with a light blue-grey fill, intended for the user to write their current challenges.

How do I react to these challenges?

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Healthy v Unhealthy Coping Strategies

Can you identify which of the below are healthy and unhealthy coping strategies?
Place them in the appropriate text box

Healthy

Unhealthy

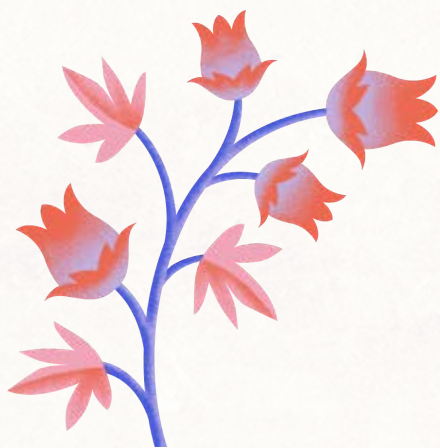
- Aggression
- Drug or alcohol use
- Exercise
- Healthy eating
- Overeating
- Problem-solving techniques
- Procrastination
- Relaxation techniques
- Seeking professional help
- Self-harm
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Social withdrawal
- Talking about your problem
- Using social support

How to Improve Self-Regulation



Self-Awareness

Self-awareness is being aware of one's own emotions, behaviours, and thoughts. Being self-aware will help you understand why you're motivated to respond a certain way and can help you respond more effectively.



Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a way of thinking that involves staying in the present moment and being aware of your environment, your thoughts, and how your body feels. Practicing mindfulness supports self-regulation by encouraging you to slow down and behave in a more conscious way.

Stress Management

Chronic stress can cause mood swings and difficulty concentrating which in turn can interfere with your ability to self-regulate. You can help get stress under control by using stress management techniques like deep breathing, meditation, exercise, and getting enough sleep.



5 Ways To Cultivate Self-Awareness

1

Create Space and Time for yourself daily

2

Practice Mindfulness

3

Journal Your Awareness

4

Practise Listening

5

Gain A Different Perspective





Mindfulness

Observe a Leaf for One Minute

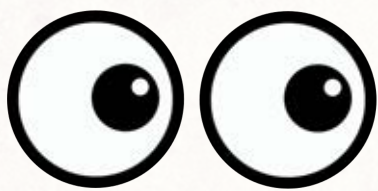
This exercise calls for nothing but a leaf and your attention.

Pick up a leaf, hold it in your hand, and give it your full attention for five minutes.

Notice the colours, the shape, the texture, and the patterns. This will bring you into the present and align your thoughts with your current experience.



Five Senses



Use this exercise to quickly ground yourself in the present when you only have a moment. The goal is to notice something that you are currently experiencing through each of your senses.

Name 1 thing you can taste

Name 2 things you can smell

Name 3 things you can hear

Name 4 things you can feel

Name 5 things you can see

Stress Management



Deep Breathing

1

Breathe in slowly. Count in your head and make sure the inward breath lasts at least 5 seconds. Pay attention to the feeling of the air filling your lungs.

2

Hold your breath for 5 to 10 seconds (again, keep count). You don't want to feel uncomfortable, but it should last quite a bit longer than an ordinary breath.

3

Breathe out very slowly for 5 to 10 seconds (count!). Pretend like you're breathing through a straw to slow yourself down. Try using a real straw to practice.

4

Repeat the breathing process until you feel calm.



Progressive Muscle Relaxation

1

Tense the muscles in your toes by curling them into your foot. Notice how it feels when your foot is tense. Hold the tension for 5 seconds.

2

Release the tension from your toes. Let them relax. Notice how your toes feel differently after you release the tension.

3

Tense the muscles all throughout your calf. Hold it for 5 seconds. Notice how the feeling of tension in your leg feels.

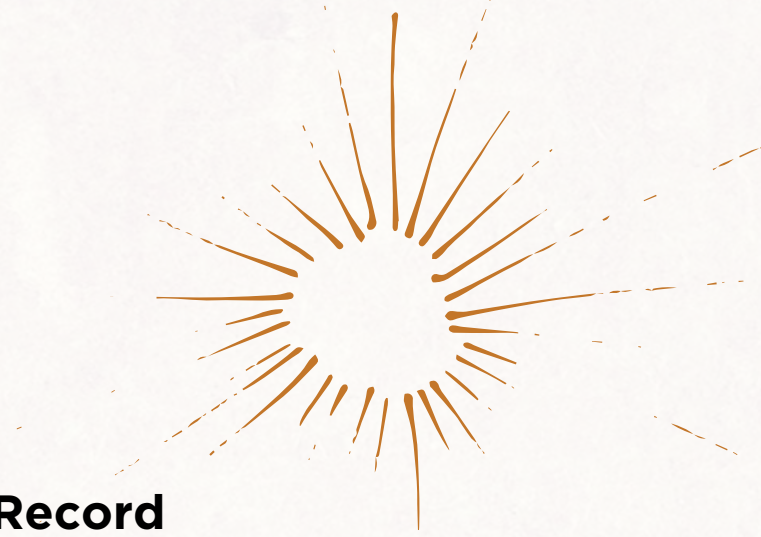
4

Release the tension from your calf, and notice how the feeling of relaxation differs.

Follow this pattern of tensing and releasing tension all throughout your body. After you finish with your feet and legs, move up through your torso, arms, hands, neck, and head.



Cognitive Restructuring



Thought Record

A thought record is a tool for recording experiences, along with the thoughts, feelings, and behaviours that accompany them. This exercise will help you become aware of cognitive distortions that previously went unnoticed, and unquestioned. With practice, you will learn to identify cognitive distortions in the moment, and immediately challenge them.

Situation

Thought





Emotion/Feeling

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Behaviour/Response

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Alternative/Challenging Thought or Response

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