

# Emotion Self-Regulation Guide

A guide to understanding and mastering the internal emotional process.

*Internal Haven. Created by Alyssa Rey*

## (Remember)

*This emotional intelligence development tool will help you understand, process, and grow from your emotions while building stronger connections with others. By focusing on key areas of emotional intelligence—this tool will guide you through practical techniques to process and release emotions in a more healthy way. You'll embrace a deeper understanding of your feelings and triggers, develop thoughtful responses instead of impulsive reactions, and foster greater empathy and connection with yourself and those around you. With this tool, you'll achieve emotional resilience, stronger relationships, and a more balanced, confident approach to life's challenges helping you out of the emotional spiral sooner rather than later.*


## What is an emotion?

**Emotion** is known as *energy in motion*.

Emotions are feelings that move through us, influencing our thoughts, actions, and interactions. When we understand and manage this energy, we can respond to life in a more balanced and intentional way.

## What is Emotional Intelligence?

**Emotional Intelligence (EI)** is the ability to understand and manage your own emotions while also recognizing and responding to the emotions of others in a healthy way. Having high EI, helps you stay calm under pressure, communicate effectively, handle conflicts with care, and build strong relationships.



**Primary Emotions:**

Happiness

Sadness

Fear

Anger

Surprise

Disgust

Positive Secondary Emotions	Negative Secondary Emotions
Joy	Frustration
Love	Guilt
Gratitude	Shame
Contentment	Embarrassment
Excitement	Envy
Pride	Jealousy
Hope	Loneliness
Inspiration	Regret
Compassion	Resentment
Amusement	Anxiety

More Complex Emotions	
Awe	Longing
Nostalgia	Anticipation
Confusion	Relief
Vulnerability	Boredom
Empathy	Curiosity

## 5 Phases to Self-Regulate When Experiencing Emotions

### Emotion Self-Regulation Guide

--- 5 Phases to Process and Release Emotions Efficiently ---

☐ Phase 1: Observation

☐ Phase 2: Identification

☐ Phase 3: Acceptance

☐ Phase 4: Release

☐ Phase 5: Movement

### Phase 1: Observe the Emotion(s)

The first phase to developing emotional intelligence (EI) is learning to observe your inner world without judgment. Observation begins with self-awareness—becoming conscious of your thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations as they arise. In this phase, it's important to remind yourself that *“you are not your thoughts or emotions”*; emotions or thoughts are energetic experiences that are meant to come and go.

By creating a safe, non-judgmental space within yourself, you can approach these observations *with compassion and curiosity instead of criticism*. This practice helps you detach from reactive patterns, giving you the clarity to respond rather than react.

#### Questions during the Observation Phase

1. What am I observing within myself right now?
2. What thoughts are passing through my mind right now?
3. Can I name this thought or feeling without judgment?
4. What might this thought or emotion be trying to tell me?
5. How can I meet this experience with kindness and curiosity?

By answering these questions, you step into the *“observer mode”*, creating space between you and your emotional reactions. This is the foundation for emotional growth and intelligence. Mastering this phase without judgment is crucial to moving forward with more ease to the next phase.

## Phase 2: Identify the Emotion(s)

Once you've observed your inner experience, the next phase is to identify and label the emotions present. Naming an emotion brings clarity and helps neutralize its intensity, ensuring it doesn't take control over your actions. It's important to pay attention to how the emotion feels in your body—what is its texture, color, or even weight, where are you feeling it in your body? This phase requires patience, curiosity, and an expanded emotional vocabulary. Avoid resisting or shaming the emotion; instead, recognize it as a natural part of your experience, here to teach or reveal something important. \*\*\*Denying emotions only causes them to linger in your body, waiting to resurface more intensely when triggered again. By identifying and validating your emotions, you free yourself from their grip and create space for healing and growth.

### Questions during the Identification Phase

1. What emotion(s) am I feeling right now?
2. Where do I feel this emotion in my body? What color am I experiencing?
3. When did this emotion first show up, and what triggered it?
4. Have I felt this emotion before? If so, what was the context?
5. Am I resisting this emotion? If so, what might happen if I allow myself to fully feel it?

By asking these questions, you deepen your understanding of your emotions and begin to release their hold on your body and mind. This process fosters *emotional balance and self-awareness* which are key ingredients to healing and achieving personal growth.

## Phase 3: Accept & Feel the Emotion(s)

The next phase is acceptance, where you allow yourself to fully acknowledge and FEEL the emotion(s) present in your body without resistance. This involves asking yourself if you can accept and sit with what you're experiencing, even when the emotion feels heavy or overwhelming. \*\*\*Research suggests that the physiological response of an emotion—like a rush of adrenaline from anger or a quick heartbeat from fear—typically lasts 90 seconds if left to pass naturally. However, emotions can linger much longer if we feed them with thoughts, memories, or resistance. For example, if you keep replaying an upsetting situation in your mind, the emotion can stay for hours or even days. The key to emotional well-being is learning to process emotions efficiently without getting stuck in them.

By staying grounded in your body rather than getting lost in your mind, you create space for the emotion to flow through you and release naturally. More importantly, acceptance requires courage, especially when facing intense emotions. Denying or avoiding the emotion(s) can trap the energy within your body, causing it to resurface later with greater intensity.

The true nature of acceptance is NOT to be intellectualized—it's to be a felt experience in the body.

*Fully allow yourself to feel the emotions rather than simply understand them.*

### Questions during the Acceptance Phase

1. Am I allowing myself to fully feel this emotion, or am I resisting it?
2. Where in my body am I feeling this emotion most intensely?
3. What would it feel like to let this emotion flow through me, instead of holding onto it?
4. What fears or beliefs might be preventing me from accepting and feeling this emotion?
5. How does acceptance feel in my body—does it bring a sense of release or ease?

This phase can be challenging due to our conditioned beliefs, but by embracing the process, you allow the energy of the emotion to move through you instead of becoming trapped in your body. This practice fosters emotional freedom, resilience, and a deeper connection with yourself and others.

## Phase 4: Release the Emotion(s)

In the next phase of your emotional intelligence (EI) journey is releasing the emotions you've identified and accepted. Emotions are energy in motion—they are meant to flow through you, not remain stuck. By allowing emotions to move, you free yourself from their weight and create space for healing. There are many healthy ways to release emotions, and the method that works best for you is personal. Whether it's crying, laughing, dancing, screaming, singing, writing, or expressing yourself through art, the key is to let the emotion move through your body *in a safe and supportive way*.

It's essential to reframe the release phase in our brains —crying or expressing emotions isn't a sign of weakness; it's a necessary and healthy act of self-care. This practice requires *self-compassion* and *grace*. Avoid judging yourself during the release phase, as many of us have been conditioned to see emotional expression as “bad” or “weak.” Choose a safe space, whether it's alone or with a trusted companion, and honor the release without shame. \*\*\*Letting go is a gift you give yourself, allowing space for true healing and peace.

### Questions during the Release Phase

1. Am I in a safe space where I can freely express and release this emotion?
2. What healthy release method feels most natural to me right now? (e.g., crying, laughing, art)
3. Am I judging myself for needing to release this emotion? If so, why and where does it come from?
4. After releasing, what do I notice about my body, mind, or energy?
5. What affirmation or words of kindness can I offer myself during this process? Or what words would you tell your best friend, if she/he was releasing emotions?

By letting go of limiting beliefs that have kept you from fully expressing yourself, you can release negative emotions and navigate life with greater clarity and ease. Releasing emotions isn't about fixing or changing who you are—it's about acknowledging your needs and giving yourself the space to heal naturally. This process of letting go is a powerful step toward emotional freedom and inner peace.

## Phase 5: Movement from the Emotion(s)

Once you've released the emotion from your body, it's time to shift into the present moment through movement. Engaging in activities that bring you joy and connection to your body helps you stay grounded and prevents you from getting pulled back into overthinking or self-inflicted emotional pain. Movement in this phase is not just physical—*it's about redirecting your attention and stepping fully into the next moment.*

This phase is about letting go and surrendering to the emotion that triggered you, *reclaiming your power* to choose how you want to feel and act moving forward. You don't have to remain stuck in the emotional experience once it's been released. By practicing *self-discipline (control of your own actions)* and *presence*, you can shift your energy into activities that nourish your soul and align with your true self. The key is finding what resonates with YOU—whether that's taking a walk, dancing in the sun, painting, playing an instrument, or even revisiting hobbies you loved as a kid.

### Questions during the Movement Phase

1. What activity can I do right now that brings me into the present moment?
2. What hobbies or activities did I enjoy as a child that I might revisit now?
3. Am I willing to fully let go of the emotion I've just released? Why or why not?
4. What small action can I take right now to shift my focus from my thoughts to my body?
5. What activities make me feel joyful, peaceful, or connected to myself?

This final phase reminds you that the power of choice is always within you. By moving forward with presence and intention, you take ownership of your actions and allow yourself to flow into a new state of being—free from the grip of the past emotion. Movement is how you step fully into your life, aligned, empowered, and whole. I believe in you, now it's time to believe in yourself.





Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Day of the Week: Sun Mon Tues Wed Thurs Fri Sat

### Journal Prompts:

Write about a recent emotional experience.

How can you go through each phase with compassion and flow without resistance and judgement?

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1. Observation Phase:

“What did you observe within yourself during this emotional experience?”

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2. Identification Phase:

“Can you identify the emotion(s) that were most present in your experience and where they were located in your body?”

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3. Acceptance Phase:

“Have you fully allowed yourself to feel and validate your natural feelings toward the emotional experience? What does allowing yourself to feel look like for you?”

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4. Release Phase:

“What method of release feels most natural to you in this moment once you have fully felt the emotion(s)?” *(Remember, it is perfectly natural to cry in this phase!)*

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5. Movement Phase:

“What can you go do now to get your mind off the emotional experience and into the next present moment? How do you want to feel after releasing the energy?”

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*This is a friendly reminder to be kind to yourself and remember that you have the power to create a safe space for releasing emotions that no longer serve your highest good. With practice, this process can help you navigate emotions as they arise in the present moment. You can also use the reflection questions in each phase to better understand and release any stagnant, low-vibration energy.*

Additional Tool: I've also included a link to a flashcard set I created, featuring important emotional vocabulary based on definitions from the book, *The Emotion Code* by Dr. Bradley Nelson. This resource can help you deepen your understanding of the definitions of emotions and support your growth journey

🌐 Emotions Flashcards

