

## The cost of unchecked emotions

Emotional regulation is the opposite of unchecked emotions. It is the ability to manage and respond to emotional experiences, whatever they may be, in a healthy and balanced manner.

Regulating our emotions means to determine which emotions we experience, attend to, label, and choosing when and how to respond. It's a process requiring skills that can be developed. These skills include recognising the emotions, accepting them, and modulating their intensity and expression.

### Why emotional regulation is important



Emotional regulation allows you to respond effectively to challenging situations, build strong connections with others and improve your overall quality of life. Specifically, emotional regulation...

> Helps you maintain emotional balance, manage stress and cope with difficult situations,

> Lets you express your needs effectively, listen to others and build healthy connections,

> Enables you to navigate social situations, manage conflict and prevent emotional outbursts,

> Allows you to think before you act and make rational decisions based on your values, and

> Helps you maintain focus, stay calm under pressure and perform your best.

### The costs of not regulating your emotions

The costs of unchecked emotions are significant and far-reaching. They manifest with varying intensity in multiple ways, including impatience, abrasive and aggressive behaviours, criticising, diminishing, threatening, uncontrollable outbursts of anger, and in extreme cases, physical abuse.

The negative impact has serious consequences for:

- *The leader* who frequently loses emotional control will stall and derail their career. They will be subject to claims of misconduct and bullying, which stick and erode their reputation. They struggle to attract and retain staff or build a high-performing team due to the climate of fear and mistrust that surrounds them.
- *People* feel psychologically unsafe. Their mental and physical health is compromised, resulting in low levels of well-being and morale. Many experience chronic stress, burnout, anxiety, withdrawal, and a loss of confidence and motivation, leading them to resign from jobs they love.
- *The organisation's* employer brand is tarnished by a toxic environment, and poor employee experience. The impact is significant, with diminished engagement, increased absenteeism and turnover. The organisation can't attract and keep top talent. Productivity plummets, and declining organisation performance follows.

## How to manage your emotions

You can learn to manage your emotions in three ways:

1. Recognise *emotional triggers and heed the warning signs*. These can include specific events, and or situations, particular people, fatigue, work and time pressures and overload.
2. *Manage your emotions in the moment*. Tune into your body and breathing. Relax consciously. Accept your emotions and the situation, 'it is what it is'. Reframe the picture—change the story. Take constructive action or let go, learn and move on.
3. *Develop long-term skills*. Enhance your overall emotional intelligence (EQ). Adopt mindfulness practices. Meditate. Don't allow yourself to 'get the grip'. Learn techniques to soothe yourself and de-escalate your emotions. Reflect deeply and regularly; for instance, keep a personal journal. Maintain healthy habits of sleep, diet, and exercise. If needed, seek professional help.

## Remember...

...the words of **Dr Marc Brackett**: *"Each moment is a choice. No matter how frustrating or boring or constraining or painful or oppressive our experience, we can always choose how we respond"*.