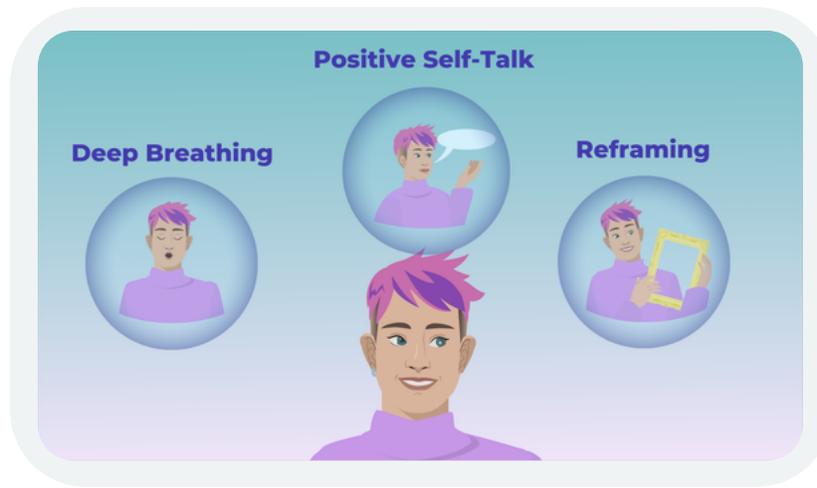


Emotion regulation requires practice and commitment. The most important thing we can do to help youth develop their emotion regulation skills is to develop our own skills. When we regulate our emotional responses, we are better prepared to meet the demands of work, to be available and responsive to youth, and to teach and model the skills of emotion regulation. Here are some helpful strategies to help you regulate your emotions.



## Short-Term Strategies

- 1. Deep Breathing:** Taking control of our breathing relaxes our bodies and increases oxygen flow to our brains to help us think more clearly. Breathing deeply also counters stress and anxiety, while increasing “feel good” chemicals in our brains.
- 2. Positive Self-Talk:** Do you ever hear your own voice in your head? Self-talk can be negative and distressing or positive and encouraging. When we notice ourselves using negative self-talk, we can regulate our emotions by shifting to more positive thinking. We can replace things like, “I’m no good at this,” with “If I keep practicing, I will get better.” Positive self-talk can help short-circuit a negative spiral, reduce stress, boost confidence and build better relationships.
- 3. Positive Reappraisal or Reframing:** Even when we can’t change a situation, we can change how we think about it, and that alone can change how we feel. For example, imagine that a close co-worker forgot our birthday. Rather than thinking, “My co-worker doesn’t care about me,” a thought that might leave us feeling hurt, we might think, “My co-worker may have a lot going on right now.” This shift in how we are thinking about the situation can change that hurt feeling into a feeling of compassion.

## Long-Term Strategies

When we don't take care of ourselves, it can be harder to regulate our emotions in the moment. It may also be more difficult to be patient and feel empathy for youth or our coworkers. Over time, taking good care of our minds and bodies helps us increase our ability to respond to our emotions in helpful ways, even in the moment. Remember that helpful strategies can become unhelpful if they are overused. For example, going to the gym 3 hours per week sounds great but going to the gym 30 hours a week may be less helpful. Here are a few strategies that you can add to your self-care routine.

## Self-Care

<p><b>PHYSICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eat a healthy diet</li> <li>• Exercise/stay active</li> <li>• Get enough sleep</li> <li>• Visit a physician for preventive/immediate needs</li> </ul>	<p><b>SPIRITUAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pray or meditate</li> <li>• Reflect (internally or journal)</li> <li>• Attend worship services</li> <li>• Spend time in nature</li> <li>• Meditate</li> </ul>
<p><b>EMOTIONAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check in on the Mood Meter</li> <li>• Grow your emotion vocabulary</li> <li>• Replace negative self-talk with positive thinking</li> <li>• Write about your feelings</li> <li>• Celebrate who you are</li> <li>• Do what brings you joy</li> <li>• Express your feelings in helpful ways (artwork, therapy, talking with friends, activism, getting active, etc.)</li> <li>• Limit screen time</li> </ul>	<p><b>SOCIAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spend time regularly with friends/family</li> <li>• Surround yourself with people who care about you</li> <li>• Set limits with friends about how much you can support them</li> <li>• Stay connected with important people in your life</li> <li>• Spend time with pets</li> <li>• Reflect on relationships.</li> <li>• Make new friends</li> <li>• Ask for help from when you need it</li> </ul>