

Emotion Regulation at Camp *Elective 1*

AUTHOR(S):	Josh Friedman
SUMMARY:	An opportunity for participants to practice some basic emotion regulation skills and techniques for personal regulation as well as co-regulation with their campers. Also filled with the latest research on the topic. - <i>Submitted by Josh Friedman</i>
TOPIC(S):	Emotion Regulation, for self and others.
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	Participants will be able to identify the emotional regulation needs of campers and peers that would be most appropriate to the current situation, and then apply and help teach techniques to fill those needs.
AUDIENCE:	Counselors or professional managers of any kind, teens.
TIMING:	90 minutes
APPENDICES:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Situated Conceptualization 2. Reappraisal 3. Attentional Deployment 4. Situation Modification 5. Situation Selection 6. Expressive Suppression 7. IAPs image examples 8. Regulation Strategies over time. 9. Scenario Cards
MATERIALS NEEDED:	<p>Flipchart Sticky Pad Paper Markers</p> <p>If possible, a projector with sound, and internet connection. Anything after the projector is bonus. (If no projector, printed out full size versions of the images in Appendix 7...?)</p> <p>1/5 of the total number of participants of each Appendix 2-6</p> <p>1 copy of Appendix 9: Scenario Cards for every 5-7 participants.</p>
SET-UP DETAILS:	<p>A big room with space to move around with the group.</p> <p>An area with chairs in a semicircle and a poster / dry erase board in front of them for diagramming, but the chairs are easily movable and / or there is another open space with no chairs.</p>

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

- 10 minutes: Introduction, Rules of Engagement, Brit Kehilah
- 5 minutes: Getting Comfortable
- 15 minutes: Exploring Emotions & Their Regulation
- 20 minutes: Types of Regulation & Campers' Use of Them
- 5 minutes: Assumption Busting
- 20 minutes: Applied Exercises
- 5 minutes: Closing

10 minutes: Introduction, Brit Kehilah

FL will welcome the group, and introduce themselves, the session, and the Brit Kehilah.

Framing: This session is about exploring how we help regulate emotions of our campers, peers, and supervisors at camp, through activating how we regulate our own emotions today. The goal is not to be exhaustive, performative, or traumatized here today. The goal is to learn through our best teacher: experience. We will begin by regulating our emotions upon exposure to emotional pictures (again, there is nothing traumatic here). We will then move on to prompting ourselves to feel certain emotions, then come back to a baseline, and then experience another emotion. Finally, we will spend the bulk of the time using these experiences as a springboard to understand emotion regulation, in us as humans and specifically at camp. Everything we do today is challenge by choice, you have the option to opt-out of any piece at any time, so long as you respect the participation of others, whatever that may require. You have my word (and I am entirely open to feedback in the moment, or afterwards) that activities have been chosen for appropriate potency and high efficiency.

Brit Kehilah:

- 1) Five Finger Contract: Positivity, Acceptance, Respect, Commitment, and Kindness (Little Guy)
- 2) Emotion Disclosure: all of everyone's emotional experiences are assumed, considered, and respected to be authentic. Nothing said today attempts to argue against anyone have an emotional experience that does not relate to that presented.
- 3) Any additional commitments....?

With any time left here, FL can add in a relatedness mixer: All My Neighbors, Silent Interview, UBUNTU, High Fives, People-to-People, etc.

5 minutes: Getting Comfortable

FL will lead a calm and relaxed meditation designed to release tension in the body and mind and let go of whatever emotions and compulsive thoughts participants entered with. FL will consider including info about situated conceptualizations here.

Framing: This time is to let go of everything else going on, to bring yourself to be present here in this spacetime. With each breath, let go a little bit more of what's out there, and breath a bit more of what's in here. With loving kindness, each time your mind pulls attention away to another place, let it go, and return to your breath, return to this place.

Suggested techniques:

- Simple breath meditation (breathing in and out through your nose, focusing on a part along the pathway, and redirecting your attention to that point every time you notice it astray, with loving kindness),
- Body Scan (begin with Simple breath, then direct attention and focus to different areas of the body, can add a squeeze and release sequence to this process if desired),
- Doodling or otherwise free art creation activity,
- Guided Visualization of a calming scene, a candlelit meditation if conditions are right.
- Eye contact with a partner, again, if conditions are right (more familiar groups)

15 minutes: Exploring Emotions & Their Regulation

FL will ask the group to come sit near the projector / laptop / device for viewing (could also be phones) and split them up into 3 groups:

- 1) These Pps will try to feel whatever emotion they feel *more*, or in other words, up-regulate it
- 2) These Pps will try to simply feel whatever emotion they feel without changing it
- 3) These Pps will try to feel *less* of whatever emotion they feel, or in other words, down-regulate it.

*Note: From this point until the next section, **at any time** that a Pp is overwhelmed in any way, FL needs to immediately consider termination of the activity and use caution in proceeding to other similar activities in this section. It is also encouraged that FL make some attempt to participate.*

FL will then show a series of IAPS images on the projector (see Appendix 7), providing at least 7 seconds for each emotional experience.

After viewing images for a minute or so, FL will invite Pps to share initial reflections, compare the differences in the groups' experiences, and share strategies used to accomplish the task. This can be done in any discussion format.

FL will then lead a few rounds of the emotion game, each with a different aim. The following applies to them all:

- 1) FL will call out an emotion from the following list: Happy, Frustrated, Angry, Excited, Scared, Disgusted, Sad, Blissful, Content, Anxious, Stressed, Bashful, Silly
- 2) Pps will attempt to summon the experience of that emotion through whatever means they can.
- 3) Whenever FL calls out "Freeze" that is the signal to stop and listen for instructions.

In the first round:

- 1) FL will wait no longer than 10 seconds before switching to another emotion. Shallow dip.
- 2) After about 90 seconds, FL will freeze the group and ask for participants to share their strategies, either in summoning emotions or transitioning from one to another.

In the second round:

- 1) FL will introduce the concept of "Neutral", or "Baseline", in which Pps are challenged to both let go what they are currently feeling and *not* feeling anything else instead, but reaching an aloof neutral state. Pps are welcome to do this in movement (jumping jacks, etc., not interactive), in pose, or anywhere in between, and FL should model this.
- 2) FL will wait a little longer or shorter with each emotion depending on activity in the first round, and call "Neutral" in between each one.
- 3) After about 90 seconds, FL will freeze the group and ask for participants to share their strategies, either in summoning emotions, transitioning from one to another, or achieving a 'neutral' state.

In the third round (if energy and engagement is high, skip otherwise):

- 1) FL will re-introduce "up-regulate" and "down-regulate", and now add these to the mix (**responsibly and with extreme caution**) along with the emotions and "Neutral".
- 2) FL will wait a little longer or shorter with each emotion depending on activity in the second round, and intermingle "Neutral", "Up-Regulate", and "Down-Regulate" in between each one.
- 3) After about 90 seconds, FL will freeze the group and ask for participants to share their strategies, either in summoning emotions, transitioning from one to another, achieving a 'neutral' state, or engaging in intentional regulation.

20 minutes: Types of Regulation & Campers' Use of Them

Framing: Now that we have some experiential data, we are going to consider scientific theory born of neuroimaging and behavioral data. We will use this theory and our experience just now to consider how we use these strategies, how we use them with campers, and how campers use these strategies.

FL will break up the group into 5 groups by numbering them off (or some other method), and then hand out one of the 5 Appendices 2-6 to each group. Every Pp should get a copy of the group's regulation strategy appendix.

FL will invite each group to discuss their emotion regulation strategy, and consider the following 3 things (take notes on chart paper, these are also on their handout) for about 10 minutes:

- 1) Have you used this strategy today? When? What was the situation?
- 2) Have you used this strategy at camp? When? What was the situation?
- 3) How do campers (or peers) use this strategy at camp? When? What was the situation?

FL will then have each group designate a presenter for the group to share what they have read about / considered with the other groups.

5 minutes: Assumption Busting

FL will present the following assumptions as well as the figure in Appendix 8:

- 1) Here and now problem;
 - a. We think about regulating emotions now, to 'fix' the present and make them go away, without considering the longer term consequences, and longer term solutions
 - i. Elephant and rider analogy if time allows
- 2) Good and bad problem
 - a. We think certain strategies of regulation are 'healthy' and 'good', while others are 'avoidant' and 'bad'. The research shows, it actually depends on how long since the event occurred that determines the most effective strategy, so this assumption hurts our ability to apply our knowledge.
 - i. Sheppes' Time Course data (Appendix 8)
- 3) Camp will automatically teach healthy regulation
 - a. When we leave things to be done automatically, individuals often slip through the cracks, which can be very dangerous in learning emotion regulation (especially at camp). Taking time to instruct individuals what to do and how to do it can have powerful effects on their ability to do so successfully, and we model *an* answer for our campers every day, may as well be an intentional and helpful one.

FL will then lead a general discussion about emotion regulation, and answer any questions before moving into the real application period.

20 minutes: Applied Exercises

FL will have Pps in each group count from 1 to the total number of group members. Then Pps will find the rest of the people in the room with their same number and make a new group. FL will then hand out Appendix 9: Scenario Cards, to each group

In these new groups, Pps will be tasked with following:

- 1) Consider the scenarios on the cards, what would / could you do in each of them to best help the person in need? Use the regulation strategies as a guide if you are stuck.
- 2) Create your own scenarios from experience or imagination, and challenge other members in your group to answer your scenario as you answered the scenarios on the cards. Discuss as a group when desired.

With any extra time, FL will display, read from, or hand out Appendix 1 to be read by Pps and considered for what it means for their emotions to be *actively constructed*. What does this mean for how we decide to regulate them?

5 minutes: Closing

FL will take close comments and final questions from the Pps.

Then, FL will lead the Pps in a final guided meditation focusing on feeling content, centered, neutral,



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integrated, balanced, etc., and how this is our best platform and foundation from which to assist others. You cannot take care of others unless you also take care of yourself. The same is true appreciation, belief, and love. By helping ourselves, in this case, we are truly helping our campers.