

Psychology of Emotion: Theory and Applications
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Module 9, Lecture 20: Emotion regulation: Introduction

I welcome you all to module 9 of the course, titled Psychology of Emotions- Theory and Applications. This module is about understanding emotion regulation and coping, how they are related and the different aspects associated with emotion regulation, we will be discussing in this particular module. Today's lecture will be mostly on the introductory aspects of emotion regulation. So, just to give you a brief recap of what we did in the last lecture; the last module was about emotion-based disorders, and in that, we covered two major disorders that are emotion-based, one is depression and one is an anxiety disorder. In the last lecture we talked about anxiety disorders, in that more specifically we discussed the DSM 5 criteria for anxiety disorders and we also discussed various categories that are listed under DSM 5 including generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, social anxiety disorder, selective mutism, agoraphobia, specific phobias and so on.

We tried to understand the symptoms of all these disorders, we also discussed the various possible causes of anxiety disorder including genetics and personal experiences of life, and at the end, we also discussed the various treatment options available for anxiety disorders such as cognitive therapies, exposure therapies, and the drug-related therapies. Today we will be talking about emotion regulation and this will be an introductory lecture where we will try to understand the introductory or various concepts associated with emotion regulation. More specifically we will be focusing on emotion regulation and coping, how they are different and we will be talking about why we regulate emotions, what is the need and motivation to do emotion regulation we will also be discussing how we regulate emotion using a model called as a process model of emotion regulation. Let us start today's lecture.

The concept of emotion regulation is something very important and it has a lot of applied implications because, on a daily basis, we regulate our emotions, we experience emotions and we regulate them. What is this regulation all about? When an individual experiences intense emotions it may seem like the body and mind are temporarily controlled by some separate forces. Almost every emotion has its force and it almost takes over our mind-body functioning. However, it may be very intense and sometimes it is almost taken over by the emotions, but still, we have control over emotions in terms of regulating them, in terms of managing them, in terms of deciding where to experience, how much to express, and so on. That part comes under the regulation that despite emotion being very powerful and it almost takes over our mind-body system, we still have the ability and control over the

emotions that we experience.

Regulation is talking about that part. Emotion regulation talks about the methods by which individuals manage the intensity, duration, and type of emotion we experience and do not experience, the circumstances in which they encounter particular emotions, and whether and how they ultimately express those emotions. It includes almost every aspect of the management of emotion. It talks about managing the intensity, if you are managing then to what extent it should express or regulate to what duration, should it be for a brief time or can it linger for a long time or about the type of emotion, should it be a positive emotion or negative emotion and whether to even express it or not to express it, in what circumstances the emotion should be expressed or not. All these come under the umbrella term of emotion regulation.

In short, emotion regulation refers to various strategies we use to manage, which emotions are experienced, when they are felt, and how strongly they are expressed. It includes every aspect of emotion. If you are kind of interfering in terms of its expression and in what situation it should be expressed and what emotions to be experienced, then everything would basically come under the broad term of emotion regulation. There is a related term which is called coping strategies. There is a difference between the term emotion regulation and coping strategies.

Emotion regulation is a very broad term. It includes almost every aspect of whenever there is an intervention in terms of controlling any aspect of emotions. Coping is more specific in terms of reducing negative emotions during and after stressful events. Whenever we experience negative emotions specifically after a threatening or stressful situation, then by using coping strategies we try to minimize those negative emotions that we experience. A coping term is used in that context.

It is the strategy that we use to minimize negative emotions, specifically after stressful encounters and emotion regulation is much broader. It is not just about minimizing. It can even include intensifying emotions and so on. While coping strategies are always aimed at reducing negative emotions, emotion regulation includes attempting to increase or decrease positive emotions or even intensifying the negative emotion if necessary in a particular situation.

Emotion regulation is a very broad term. It may include decreasing negative emotions, increasing negative emotions, increasing positive emotions, and decreasing positive emotions. It can include all kinds of things. Coping is more specific to reducing negative

emotions. This is how these two terms are different.

Individuals use a variety of techniques to regulate their emotions and philosophers and psychologists have long been interested in the implications of different approaches. People use different strategies and techniques to regulate emotions and all these different strategies that we use have their practical applications as well as implications in terms of how it impacts your life and it determines the quality of life. Some methods may be more effective than others. Some emotion regulation strategies could be effective as compared to others because there could be a variety of regulation strategies that we will be talking about now. The most appropriate strategy depends on the situation.

It depends on the situation of what is the best strategy to regulate emotions. There cannot be a generalized strategy that can be talked about here. Mostly, it depends on the situation. In this module, we will be exploring all these various emotion regulation strategies and assessing whether they are effective or not. Emotion regulation as I already said, is a kind of daily phenomenon.

Every day we experience diverse emotions and whenever there is an emotion there will be a regulation part to it. Whether one is effective or not effective is a different question but we keep regulating emotions because all the time we cannot express all emotions in a raw form. We filter emotions, we regulate them to the best extent possible depending on the situation. This emotion regulation is a very common phenomenon in our everyday life. We regulate emotions sometimes by holding back tears that we want to cry but we don't cry so, that is an emotion regulation.

We sometimes pretend to be happy when we are actually not happy so that is also an emotion regulation. Sometimes we overemphasize joy or exaggerate the joy part of it intensifying the joy experience, that is emotion regulation. Sometimes we redirect our anger by slamming doors, kicking trash cans, and so on. That is also an emotion regulation strategy. All these various tactics are employed to regulate emotions, at least whatever is deemed appropriate in the situation according from person to person and this may differ from one individual to another individuals.

How a person deals with emotions or regulates emotions may also vary from person to person. However, all serve to manage emotion in one way or the other. The basic idea is that they try to manage emotion in some ways according to the situation. Sometimes people intentionally regulate emotion means, they consciously try to regulate emotions by putting conscious effort such as, when people say I don't want to watch a particular movie because it will make me sad. Consciously they decide not to watch a film because if they watch

that film it will have an emotional impact and they don't want to experience that, that is conscious decision.

That person is consciously regulating the emotions or if somebody says I am really mad at my friends, let's go and get some ice cream. If somebody is not in a good mood they want to distract themselves that is a conscious decision, if I do this some emotions will be reduced. These are the cases where people intentionally decide to experience some emotion or to not experience or reduce some emotion and so on. Other times individuals regulate emotions sometimes very automatically. Also many times, very unconsciously we regulate emotion such as when we spontaneously avert our gaze to avoid seeing a scene of a car accident. Many times when we see a very disturbing scene we automatically remove our eyes from it, not to see it because we know if we see that it will disturb our minds so automatically we remove our gaze from that kind of disturbing scene.

That's an automatic unconscious emotion regulation strategy. Emotion regulation could be conscious as well as unconscious. The next question that will be addressed here is why we regulate emotions. What is the basic reason behind regulating emotions? Why do people regulate emotion? We will see some of the reasons in Niedenthal and Ric 2017, they listed some of the important motivations behind emotion regulation. Why do people regulate emotion? What could be the possible reasons behind it? One of the reasons is hedonic motivation. Hedonic motivation means that you want to feel better.

Whenever we feel something unpleasant emotions we regulate that emotion or try to change that emotion with a pleasant emotion just to feel better. That's the hedonic component where you try to get more positive experiences and remove the negative, avoid pain, and get more pleasure. That's the motivation. The reason why an individual may wish to modify their experience or expression of emotions could stem from something that they are experiencing in the present moment is unpleasant and you don't want to experience that so you try to change the tone or balance of the experience of the emotion from unpleasant to pleasant. If someone wants to regulate their emotion because they want to feel better, that's the hedonic motivation behind it because they don't want to feel bad that's something very basic motivation.

Hedonic motivation is what prompts people going, let's say see a comedy movie or a comedy club, whatever it is whenever they feel bad or sad or depressed so that is the motivation that propels them to change their mood by seeing some comedy movies or something like that. Feeling bad and wanting to feel good is sometimes associated with people using some strategies that are not very good, which could be harmful, like some people get into gambling and addictive behavior just to feel good which could have bad repercussions. That could also have a hedonic motivation behind it. Some people regulate

emotions because of the instrumental motivation behind them. Instrumental motivation means it serves some purpose in a specific situation.

You regulate emotion because it is necessary to bring out some outcomes or consequences and it is particularly required to do a task. There is an instrumental value to it. Instrumental motivation drives individuals to regulate their emotions, to meet the demands of the specific situation because there is a need or demand in a situation, so people regulate their emotions. For example, when you regulate your emotions because you believe certain emotions are appropriate for a particular task you are motivated by instrumental motivation. If you are doing a particular task and it requires you to express certain kinds of emotions then you are more likely to express that by controlling other emotions and expressing that emotions so basically, it is serving an instrumental purpose.

For example, some studies found even people attempt to increase their emotions sometimes like fear or anger before playing a computer game that involves confrontation with enemies. For playing that kind of game you record certain emotions like anger or sometimes, some kind of fear is required. It has been found that people actually manipulate those emotions, they intensify those emotions before playing those games just to become more effective in that game. It is an instrumental purpose. They are enhancing certain emotions just to do a task in a better way.

That is an example of instrumental motivation behind emotion regulation. Sometimes people regulate emotion for prosocial motives. Prosocial means for the sake of other people. It means people regulate their emotions in order to protect the feelings of others and maintain social relationships. They might be feeling whatever but they express very particular emotions in a particular situation so that others can feel good and it is good for maintaining a certain relationship.

In prosocial emotion regulation, individuals modify their emotions and expressions to fit social norms and expectations. We do not express any emotion in every situation. Depending on the situation we express emotion because certain norms say that this emotion is appropriate for this situation. In any situation where people are sad or sadness is supposed to be expressed for example, maybe the death of someone or something people do not show other emotions like happiness or those kinds of things because that is not appropriate in that situation. In that situation expression of sadness is more appropriate.

Sometimes social norms define what emotions are appropriate and this is how it is required in a situation and also for maintaining relationships with others in that context. There could be many study sources for example, people generally consider it inappropriate to express

feelings of let us say, wanting interest in a partner or one's best friend even though that feeling might be there but they avoid that simply because there is a relationship with the friend and that can damage the relationship with the friend. People regulate their emotions even though they may experience certain feelings towards a certain person but they do not avoid it simply because it is not right in the context or according to the norms or it may hamper the relationship. People also regulate emotions sometimes whenever there is a situation in which self-protection is required. Individuals may engage in emotion regulation for self-protection reasons which involves suppressing certain emotions or displaying an emotion that is not genuinely felt to safeguard their safety.

Even though they may not be feeling something still they will express some other emotion just to protect themselves in a particular situation. For example, an employee might intentionally regulate their feelings of anger and express a calm demeanor in front of their employer to prevent any negative outcomes at work. This could be an example of a self-protection motive for emotion regulation. An employee might simply regulate their feelings of anger; they may be feeling very angry towards the boss but they are less likely to express that emotion towards the boss because it can be dangerous. Your job may be at stake if you express anger to your boss, so people will regulate that anger even though they may be highly angry about that person but they will not express that because it is not appropriate or it may lead to danger in terms of their job and other things.

In order to protect their self-interest they will suppress that emotion and express something else which is required in that situation. That is a self-protection motive example. Sometimes people also regulate emotion for impression management just to give certain impressions to other people they will express certain emotions. People may also have an impression management motive which is driven by the fear of being judged negatively by others or expressing inappropriate emotions. People sometimes are driven by the fear that if they express certain emotions they will be judged negatively.

They control their emotion and express something else. This motivation is based on the knowledge of norms that dictate what emotions are suitable in a particular situation. In Pro-social also it is determined by the norms. In impression management, it is also the norms that sometimes decide why people express certain emotions because certain emotion tells you that this is appropriate and it gives you a certain impression or the right impression to other people. If you don't express the right emotions, it will give a bad impression. In order to make an impression management motive, people sometimes regulate their emotions.

This norm describes both outward emotional displays and feelings that one should experience in a particular situation. It is related to display rules that define the appropriate emotional expression in a particular context and feelings. There are prescribed rules for

what one should experience according to the socio-cultural conventions. For example, in service sectors, employees are often expected to display positive emotions and suppress negative emotions to enhance customer satisfaction. If you see most of the people who are in the sales job and other things even though people may be behaving very rudely and badly towards them, they still don't express negative emotions. They try to make people understand and show positive emotions and manage the situation. This is related to impression management and norms of that particular job profile, if somebody is angry you cannot just be angry towards them again.

In the service sector particularly in sales and other things people generally regulate a lot of emotions for impression management. The next important question is how do we regulate emotions. In that context, we will be using a model called a process model of emotion regulation. It is a very popular model proposed by Gross in 1998 and further he did a lot of research later on. This is called a process model of emotion regulation. We will be talking about the different aspects of this model.

James Gross is a very prominent researcher in the field of emotion regulation. He proposed a process model of emotion regulation that outlines various stages involved in regulating emotions. Regulation of emotion could involve different stages of emotion regulation or the different stages of experiencing emotion may require different emotion regulation strategies. It is a very comprehensive model that talks about emotion regulation in a very comprehensive way. This is known as a process model of emotion regulation and is based on the assumption that emotions are malleable and can be regulated intentionally.

It is based on the concept that emotions are not fixed, you can regulate them and change them depending on the situation. That malleability part is included in the assumptions of the model. That is a depiction of the process model of emotion regulation by Gross and his colleagues. According to this model, we will be talking about all these aspects. Emotion regulation could happen in the situation selection, it may involve situation selection, situation modification- by changing the attention or by manipulating the attention, where we are paying attention, by changing cognition or thought process. Emotion regulation can also be there in the response modulation, even after experiencing an emotion you can still change the emotion or regulate emotion.

These two are related to situation modification, emotion regulation that deals with changing some aspect of the situation. Situation selection and situation modifications are related to the situation, to change some aspect of the situation where you are experiencing emotion. This part is important with the attention, by changing the attention you can regulate the emotion or change the experience of the emotion. This part is about appraisal, how you think about a situation, how you explain a situation, and how you interpret a situation can determine a lot of emotion regulation aspects. This part is about appraisal and this part is

about response, when you respond in an emotional way there also you can have some emotion regulation strategies to change it after even experiencing the emotion itself.

If you see this one, situation selection, situation modification, attention, and cognitive change are all called antecedent focus strategies. These are all strategies that we can use before actually experiencing the emotion itself. These are called antecedent focus strategies. The last one is the response focus strategy, when you experience the emotion itself then after that also you can regulate the emotions. This last stage is called as response focus strategy and all these four are called as antecedent focus strategy.

Let us look into each aspect of this model. This model includes five stages as we have already said these five stages need not be linear you have to linearly experience them but they can be linear and parallel also. The first one is situation selection which we talked about in this model is about situation selection. What happens here in this stage involves the regulation of emotion is related to the situation selection and what situation you are trying to put yourself in. It involves the selection of situations that will either facilitate or prevent the experience of a specific emotion. A lot of our emotion depends on the situation, the situation where we are.

By changing the situation, selecting the right kind of situation, or whatever situation your emotions will also change accordingly. This may involve avoiding a certain situation that triggers negative emotions. If you are avoiding a situation because if you go into that situation it will trigger certain emotions like negative emotions and you do not want to experience that so you avoid this situation. Whenever this situation arises you avoid it and go to some other situations. That is an example of situation selection, you are regulating your emotions by selecting a situation or seeking out a situation that elicits positive emotion.

Let's say, for example, if someone knows that being around a certain person causes them to feel angry or anxious they may choose to avoid spending time with that kind of people. Let's say whenever you may be angry with some person, you don't like the association with a particular person because the moment you see that person you feel angry for whatever reason. The moment you see that person you will avoid that person or hide from that person just to not experience that anger by seeing that person. That's an example of situation selection, you are regulating your emotions by avoiding or selecting some situation.

Alternatively, if someone knows that a particular activity makes them feel happy and calm they may choose to engage in that activity. So, you are selecting a situation just to experience some emotion. That's selecting or avoiding that's related to situation selection.

How situation selection can regulate emotion. Next is situation modification. Here you are changing the situation itself to experience certain emotions. In this stage, individuals modify the situation to change their emotions. This may involve changing the environment, seeking social support, or altering the task at hand to make it less stressful or more enjoyable. So you are changing the situation itself to experience certain emotions.

For example, if someone is feeling down they might modify their environment by rearranging the living space or listening to uplifting music to improve the mood. So let's say, if you feel down or sad you can modify the whole environment or situation you are in so that you feel better. Let's say, you start playing music in that room just to change the environment to feel better or you decorate the whole space in such a way that you feel better. The arrangement of things in the space could also change your mood.

You are changing the situation itself. You are selecting some other situation but the same situation, you are changing just to experience a certain kind of emotion. Regulation of emotion using situation modification. Next is attention deployment, the third category or third stage. Here people redirect attention. Attention is redirected to change the emotional impact of the situation.

Attention is changed from one thing to another thing just to change the emotion. That involves attentional deployment. One may choose to focus on the positive aspect of a situation to reduce the impact of negative emotions or to distract oneself from the distracting situation. For example, In the case of attentional deployment, if someone is feeling anxious before an exam they might focus their attention on breathing to reduce the feeling of panic. Somebody may just feel a lot of anxiety because of let's say examination.

They may just change focus, change their attention or they may redirect their attention to something else. They may close their eyes and focus on their breathing and slowly-slowly they may experience calmness and so on. They are redirecting their attention to something else so that they don't experience certain emotions. For example, even redirecting attention may include when somebody is feeling sad they might redirect their attention to something that makes them feel happy such as watching a funny video or spending time with friends.

You are just changing your attention to something else. You are feeling bad; you are watching some funny videos so you are focusing attention on something else just to make yourself feel better. That's how emotion regulation is done through attention deployment. The fourth part or stage or aspect of emotion regulation is cognitive change. In this stage, individuals use cognitive strategies to modify their emotional responses. This may involve reframing the situation in a more positive light or engaging in self-talk to alter one's emotional response.

Here basically you change the interpretation of the situation, you are not dealing with any situation change or anything, you are not modifying the situation, you are just changing your thought processes, you are changing your interpretation of the way you look at things, what is your attitude towards the things, what are the beliefs about things. You are changing your thought processes to change your emotions. This could be very important because many times we cannot change the situation; the only option we have is to change the thought processes. How do you think about the situation can change your emotions. In fact, in the next lecture, we will be talking about the cognitive reappraisal part in much more detail and how it can play an important role.

For example, if someone is feeling angry about a situation they might reframe the situation in a more positive light by focusing on the potential benefit of learning opportunities. Whatever it is, in some situations you may feel very pessimistic sometimes but then you can reinterpret the situation to see not everything is lost, there are some other options we can do and you just change the option that something is good out of even bad situation also. You may just change your thinking even though the present situation could look very bad you can find something good in it, let us say you just see what is positive in it. So, you are changing your thought processes or focusing on something else or your thought process is changed to change your emotions. The moment you look at some brighter aspect automatically the positive emotions will come.

That is cognitive change. The last one is the response modulation stage that we talked about in the model. It involves the modulation of behavioral and physiological responses to emotional stimuli. This may involve that, once you express the emotion or experience the emotion itself then how can you modulate or change the behavioral or physiological aspects to emotional stimuli. When you feel angry there is already a behavioral part to it there is a physiological expression to it.

Once that is experienced how can you change after that? That is response modulations. This may involve suppressing emotional expressions. You are already experiencing but still you can suppress it, let us say relaxation techniques to reduce physiological arousal or engaging in physical exercise to release tension. Now you are already experiencing that, so what can be done?

That is response modulation. Let us say, you can do relaxation, you can do physical exercises to release the tension, and so on. This will all be called response modulation. For example, if someone is feeling overwhelmed by the stress they might engage in relaxation techniques such as deep breathing or progressive muscle relaxation to reduce the physiological arousal. Alternatively, if someone is feeling angry they might modulate the

response by taking a break or walking away from the situation to prevent the outburst. After the emotion is experienced people can do a lot of things by suppressing the emotion or modulating the response like not expressing the emotion that they are already experiencing by making some changes in the response itself.

It is important to note that this process model of emotion regulation is not a linear model, not necessarily one will have fast situation selection and then situation modification, not necessarily people can parallelly work on different stages. Individuals may use multiple strategies simultaneously and move back and forth depending on the situation and the stage. Depending on the situation they can use parallel ways or they can process or regulate emotion in different stages. The effectiveness of each strategy may depend on individual differences. Sometimes due to the nature of the emotional experiences in a specific context, so many factors may determine whether something is appropriate or not. It cannot be generalized to say something is appropriate in all contexts. According to Gross, the process model of emotion regulation distinguishes between strategies that are antecedent focus as we have said in the model. There are four strategies are antecedent one is response focus, that is the last one is response modulation.

This is response focus regulation and all the other four are antecedent focus regulation. There are five stages, four are antecedent and the last one is response focus regulation. The model suggests that individuals use different techniques at different stages of emotion eliciting. In each stage, people can use different regulation strategies that we will be looking at now a little bit. Antecedent focus regulation strategies involve attempting to modify or control emotion before it is elicited.

Antecedent is before actual emotion is experienced you can do different strategies to regulate your emotion even before experiencing or emotion is expressed. Response focus modulation refers to the modification of subjective expression even the physiological aspect of emotion, while emotion is already experienced. When you experience an emotion there are behavioral aspects to it, there is a physiological aspect to it that can do certain changes even after experiencing that also we have already discussed. Out of the five processes in the model, four of them are antecedent focus and one is response focus which we have already discussed. If you see this model situation selection, situation modification, attention deployment, and cognitive change are all antecedent focus strategies and the last one is response focus strategies.

Out of five stages, four are antecedent focus and one is response focused. It provides a framework to classify various kinds of emotional regulation that is possible for human beings whether there is adaptive or not adaptive is a different question but people can have

emotion regulation in all these strategies, in all the stages of emotional experiences. Within milliseconds and seconds, after a potentially emotion-eliciting situation, there are five distinct points at which individuals can intervene to modify. These are the stages where people can intervene and modify their emotions. It could happen very briefly in a very short span of time. This point represents five different categories of emotion regulation strategies as discussed earlier.

Sometimes this can happen very sequentially at the micro level when things happen in a very short span of time, people can go very linearly at situation selection and situation modification, they can happen very linearly but they can also be used parallel at the micro level when there are minutes, hours and days people are experiencing certain emotion then obviously people can parallelly work on different stages of emotion regulation. This emotion trajectory is not altered or ill-regulated at the micro level, people can still regulate it at the micro level in all these stages. There are various options to regulate emotions, and diverse steps are there. Now, let us talk about the different strategies people can use in each of these stages.

The first stage is situation selection which we have seen in the model. In situation selection what can be done more specifically? Generally, more research has been done on two strategies, one is confrontation and another is avoidance, confrontation, and avoidance. In terms of the selection of a situation to regulate your emotions, you can directly confront the situation, that is one possibility and another is, just avoid the situation. Both can be done in the situation selection itself to regulate your emotions. Confrontation is about a situation selection strategy that involves choosing to confront, you choose to face the situation despite it being a negative emotion. Sometimes we do not want to face a situation because it gives a lot of unpleasant emotions but despite feeling unpleasant you choose to face the situation.

That is the confrontation. This strategy can be very effective in situations that are expected to provide long-term benefits. If it is required to face that situation many times even though you may not feel good about it simply because you need to face and deal with the situation because it is required for your long-term benefit in your life. Let us say, that certain interviews are required and you are feeling very anxious, if you avoid them, one of these interviews could open a gateway for many career options but if you avoid that everything will be lost. Even though you may feel uncomfortable still facing that situation is very important.

In that sense, confrontation could be very important in many contexts. For example, public speaking can induce very negative emotions in the short term but avoiding it may be counterproductive for future career options. You need to face and speak whenever

required. It has lots of benefits especially when it is required for the benefit of your life and career. The confrontation could be very important. Various meta-analyses have confirmed that although confrontation may initially produce negative emotions it is an effective strategy for maximizing long-term happiness and mental health.

The next is avoidance which one can do in the situation selection itself where you simply escape the situation, you do not face them, you run away from the situation because it is uncomfortable. If a situation is not likely to provide any future benefit or it has no detrimental effect, then it is fine. You can avoid the situation if it has no impact on your future, there is no benefit in terms of facing that, then one can avoid but if it has some important implications for your life, future, and career then avoidance could be very harmful in terms of having an adverse impact on your life. However, chronic use of avoidance can be dysfunctional and has been linked to poor long-term well-being and health.

Avoidance is generally not a very good strategy for most of the situations. Face the situation even though, it may be very stressful or uncomfortable many times, is required for the progression of our life itself. In situation selection, one can either confront or avoid experiencing certain emotions or regulate their emotions. These two have received a lot of research attention. Then comes situation modification, what kind of strategies one can use? Three strategies have received lots of research. One is direct situation modification, one is support seeking and the third one is conflict resolution.

These are the three important strategies that one can use to modify the situation to regulate one's emotions. Let's see what are these three. In the case of direct situation modification mostly, it is also called problem-focused coping. Whatever problem is there in the situation you try to solve that.

Directly modifying the situation itself to regulate your emotions, particularly in the stress tradition whenever because of certain problems you are experiencing stress. One best solution is just to solve the problem itself rather than thinking too much about it. Stress will not be reduced unless the source is still there. If you have some issues in a situation that is causing stress try to solve that issue if it is possible.

That is the best solution, that is called the direct modification or situation modification. It refers to the practical actions that have a direct impact on the situation at hand such as fixing a broken printer or rehearsing a presentation. Whatever the source of the issue is there, you directly try to deal with that, so that the situation becomes much more comfortable or negative emotion is reduced, and so on. This strategy is linked to increased

well-being, fewer psychological disorders, and better health outcomes as shown in the meta-analysis by various meta-analyses. One can directly change the situation or modify the situation by working or solving the problem itself.

That could be one strategy. Another is you seek support from others to change the situation itself. It involves seeking assistance from others in modifying the situation. It is also considered a very adaptive strategy. Whenever you yourself are not able to do something, it is better advisable that you take help from other people who are in the support network because, with the help of others, you can do a lot of work that you alone cannot do. Your whole situation, which was very problematic, which was creating a lot of distress, now with the help of others you can solve it and it will change your emotions.

It helps you to reduce certain negative emotions and experience more positive emotions. For example, seeking the help of a counselor to deal with a difficult child or asking a classmate for help to finish homework by the deadline. A certain situation creates certain distressing emotions. You are taking the help of others to reduce that.

That is the emotion regulation part of it. There is a coping aspect to it. You can change or modify the situation by seeking help. Although in some situations seeking help may come with a psychological cost, overall obtaining help from others is generally considered beneficial. Sometimes seeking help could cost you because somebody may also expect something in return. Certain costs may be involved in some situations. Conflict resolution is another strategy where people can modify the situation because, in a lot of situations, it is the conflict that is causing a lot of emotions, particularly negative emotions.

Then the steps taken to resolve those conflicts is modifying the situation, conflict is there but you are trying to reduce the conflict to change your emotions. That is emotion regulation that could be related to the situation modification itself. That is about conflict resolution, it involves taking steps to diffuse a situation of conflict such as, let us say there is a disagreement between husband and wife about sending their daughter or son to a boarding school. Then one needs to find a solution to regulate their emotions. Different techniques can be used to reduce conflict but not all of them are effective in achieving goals and resolution depends on the situation and the context also.

Some methods may only focus on achieving the goal that whatever goal is there, if you focus on that aspect but fail to address the relationship aspect, it may lead to bitterness and resentment. Conflict resolution may have different aspects to it, sometimes if you just focus on the goal of resolution it may hamper and you are not focusing on the relationship part probably some things may be solved and other things may remain. It all depends on a

lot of situational context to get into a proper conflict resolution strategy, but you can modify the situation by resolving the conflict itself. While situation modification strategies can have a significant impact on the emotion generation process, it is not always feasible to modify a situation all the time, in some situations you cannot do anything, it is beyond your control that is also possible. For example, it may not be possible to stop a sick colleague from coughing or you may not be able to remove a very tough boss who is creating all the disturbance in your life because it is not in your control.

In that case, probably the situation modification may not work because you cannot modify the situation because it is not in your control. Not in all cases we can do situation modification. Other strategies may be helpful like attention deployment and so on. The next is attention deployment.

It refers to, as we have already said, redirecting your attention to something else to experience certain emotions. Research shows certain strategies where research has been conducted to understand attention deployment strategies include distraction, people can use distraction, rumination, and mindfulness strategies, these are all connected to attention deployment. Let us see each of them very briefly. What happens in distraction; it is used to shift your focus away from the emotional aspect of the situation. If a situation is causing a lot of emotion, you shift your attention to something else. That is the distraction, you are not focusing on it, you are distracting yourself to something else to regulate your emotions.

Destruction can take the form of either physical withdrawal, you simply do not move away from the situation itself so that you do not see the situation. That could also be physical withdrawal as a distraction such as avoiding or covering the eyes when faced with a distressing situation, when you see something very disturbing you will just cover your eyes. That is a distraction, that is also a kind of distraction, or you simply intentionally redirect your attention such as thinking about something else or focusing on some non-emotional aspects or you just start focusing on something else so that you do not remember these things. It may work in certain situations; distraction may not work in some situations. Empirical evidence has shown that distraction can be effective in reducing negative emotions especially when it is combined with problem-focused coping.

In some situations, distraction can be helpful because you are just changing your attention to regulate your emotions. Some of the meta-analyses conducted found that distraction could be an effective emotion regulation strategy for managing negative emotions particularly. When you are very distressful, you are focusing on something positive, the attention is given on something else that can reduce the negative emotions. When a person feels anxious before a job interview they might use distraction by let us say, listening to

music or watching a funny video or something that can work at least for the temporary sense.

Distraction can change your emotion and it can help you to regulate emotions. Rumination is another strategy, many a time it is more automatic but this is also where people repeatedly focus on thoughts and feelings associated with a negative event that elicits emotion. Sometimes when something negative happens and it elicits certain thought processes, repeatedly you are thinking about it again and again, many times it could be very automatic also because something is very disturbing and you are not able to get rid of it, automatically thoughts are coming again and again. That is called rumination which is kind of dwelling on the distressing thoughts cycle again and again. This has been found to increase the length and intensity of negative emotions. Generally, when you ruminate more, the negative emotions persist for a long time because you are in that loop of negative thoughts and are associated with the general onset and it could be associated with depression episodes and also some anxiety disorders.

As a result, this strategy is widely observed in clinical settings, a lot of psychological disorders could be associated with rumination like anxiety disorders, depression, and so on. That is a strategy in the sense that it could be a very automatic thing that can happen where your whole attention gets caught in the negative loop of thought processes. It may not be helpful but if this persists, it kind of prolongs the negative emotions. Mindfulness is another strategy that one can use to regulate emotion.

We will be talking about mindfulness in detail in the next to next lecture. One of the lectures on this emotion regulation will be focused only on mindfulness. There we will be discussing it in more detail but in short, it means you purposefully pay attention to the present moment without judging including observing one's thoughts, emotions, bodily sensations, and external environment. Here, one opens up without judging the thoughts, one just observes the thought in whatever way it is good or bad thought, we do not cling to the thought or identify with the thought, and then the thought generally cannot create disturbance. The moment we become identified with the thought then whatever the thought says you become that, if the thought says I am not a good person, you feel like you are not a good person because you identify with the thoughts.

In mindfulness, you pay attention but in a more detached way, and whatever comes you do not cling to it. Then slowly- slowly the thoughts can no longer be able to disturb you. In a very broad sense, we will be talking about mindfulness in more detail. Generally, this has been found to increase happiness and reduce negative emotions like stress, anxiety, and depression through various studies that have shown that it could be a very helpful and

healthy strategy to regulate diverse emotions. We will be talking about mindfulness in more detail later.

In the cognitive part, we can also use certain strategies that research has shown. It is the fourth strategy; it involves altering our thought processes to regulate our emotions or change our emotions. You change your thoughts to change your emotions. The next lecture will focus on changing thought processes to regulate emotions, we will be talking in detail about that. This can be achieved by modifying our thoughts about the situation or changing our beliefs about our ability to handle it. You change thoughts about the emotions and automatic thoughts about the situations, then your emotions will change or you can also change your thoughts about your ability to handle them.

That also influences your emotions, we will be talking about this in more detail in the next lecture. Both automatic and effortful cognitive change can occur sometimes, it can automatically happen and sometimes more cognitive efforts are required which will be looking at in the next lecture. Generally, the research has shown in cognitive change, certain strategies have also got a lot of research attention like a self-efficacy appraisal, challenge, or threat appraisal. This is where you can change your interpretation, appraisal means interpretation. Challenge and threat interpretation can also include emotional change, positive reappraisal, and acceptance.

These are strategies that can include changing thought processes to change your emotions, these are some of the important strategies. Self-efficacy means your belief in your ability to handle a situation. Your self-confidence or your belief that whether you will be able to handle a situation or not. That belief is self-efficacy, your ability to handle a situation, your ability to do a task.

That is your self-efficacy. What are your thought processes? How do you interpret your ability? That will influence your emotions also. According to Bandura higher level of self-efficacy can result in decreased stress. If you think I can handle a situation, I can perform a task, you will have less stress in terms of performing that task. On the other hand, if you feel I cannot handle that situation, I will not be able to perform that obviously, your stress will be much higher. This belief can be influenced by so many other things but this belief itself can be very important in terms of your emotional experiences. Challenge and threat appraisal means how do you see a situation? Is it a challenging situation or a threatening situation? That will determine the emotion that you experience.

In the concept of challenge and threat appraisal, it is based on how you perceive a situation. Whether you think a situation will involve losses or danger, or this situation can involve

some gain or some positive output to it. How do you interpret that? That will determine your emotions. If an individual perceives a situation exceeding their resources and focuses on the losses, then it can be threat appraisal. The moment you see this situation, if I face or if I do this certain task in that situation, I may experience losses or there can be a danger to my life or my self-esteem then this is called a threat appraisal.

If you are looking at a situation with danger, then it will lead to negative stressful experiences, anxiety, and so on. However, if you see some potential gains that are also possible you can extend your boundaries, you can put a little bit of effort and gain out of it there is a possibility of it. This could be called a challenging situation. This can lead to positive emotional experiences. How you interpret this situation will determine a lot of your emotional experiences and how you feel that.

Challenge appraisal leads to lower levels of subjective stress and the moment you see something as challenging then it will not be that stressful. It will have a positive impact on you. That is challenging but I can get some positive things out of it. It can also lead to lower physiological stress experience in the body itself. It depends on just the interpretation of how you are looking at it, is it a challenging situation? Is it a positive situation or it is a threatening situation? The emotional experience will be very different depending on how you interpret the situation.

Positive reappraisal is again basically re-evaluating a situation, re-evaluating it, and once reacting to it in a more positive way. Try to find something positive in the situation and see the positive aspects of it. That is the positive reappraisal as looking for the silver lining or putting things into perspective. Even though the situation could be negative or anything, you can find something positive out of it. In your life, many negative things could happen but sometimes even in the negative things, there may be some positive things hidden in it.

There may be many situations. For example, even though maybe a lot of losses have happened to you, you can think still you are surviving, you could have died also. That is how you shift your perspective that you are still alive even though many losses have happened in your life in a situation, you could have died also but still you are alive. At least that is a positive thing. That is an example of how you can do positive reappraisal where you can find out what is positive in a situation.

That is the positive reappraisal and that can change your emotions. The study suggests that using reappraisal strategies generally results in a decrease in negative emotions. The efficacy of positive reappraisal obviously in terms of physiological aspects is questionable. Research is not very clear about it but in terms of the experience of it obviously, it can shift

to positive emotions. Some study shows there could be changes in positive reappraisal, like decreased autonomic response of the body, neuroendocrine and automatic response some find that it increases them, some find that there is no change, and so on.

Research is not clear on the physiological impact of it. Acceptance is another strategy that can also impact your emotions in terms of how you interpret a situation. It is simply about acknowledging and embracing the situation. When you see the situation you cannot do anything about it, you simply accept that this is the fact, and now I have to accept it. Just accept it rather than fight with it.

This simple sense of acceptance changes your emotions from negative to positive or at least negative emotions will be reduced. When you start fighting the negative emotions become higher, and you try to change but it is not possible to change. Embracing the situation for one's inability to deal with it that many times that I cannot do anything about it, let me accept it. Many situations are beyond our control, acceptance is very important and acceptance can change your emotions very positively, and can be especially helpful in circumstances that are difficult to change. Accepting negative events that are beyond our control and accompanying emotions has been shown to be beneficial for mental and physical well-being because there is no point in fighting with them and resisting and suffering from it because you cannot do anything much about it.

Try whatever is best possible then accept if it is beyond your control. This acceptance reduces all negative emotions because many times stress or anxiety happens because of fighting and resisting the situation that you do not want to change. If possible, change it but if not possible it's better to accept it. That is the cognitive shift, a change in the thought processes. Studies have found that acceptance decreases negative emotions, provides immunity, and reduces pain.

However, it is generally not used by people with psychological disorders. Generally, people with depression and other kinds of disorders may find it difficult to accept for some people, if they are not able to accept, that negative emotions will persist. The last one is response modulation, what can be done in the response modulation stage. Here, emotion has already been experienced after that what regulation strategies can be used. Response modulation, as we have already seen, these strategies can target different components of emotional response including how you experience it, what physiological aspects of it, and the behavioral aspects of it.

Because once you experience emotion, it could impact your experience, behavior, and physiological part of it. Response modulation may include things like sharing one's

emotions with others and using substances, some people also use drugs, or alcohol to decrease their emotional experiences or certain anxieties and so on. Some people use aggression to reduce physical tension, some people conceal emotion or suppress emotion, and so on. Among them, we will be just briefly talking about four strategies in the response modulation stage, that is emotion sharing, aggression, substance abuse, and expressive suppression. Emotion sharing is about the social context, mostly you share your emotion or act of communicating one's emotion to others through socially shared language.

You just communicate and express what you are experiencing and that is the emotional sharing. It can help you to regulate emotions or decrease some negative emotions. This involves describing an emotional event that one has experienced or witnessed often with the expectation to achieve emotional recovery through catharsis. Sometimes just expressing emotion can reduce negative emotions. If somebody is feeling very bad, the moment they share it with others, automatically it reduces the intensity of the emotion itself.

If some other supports back, then it will be very helpful. However, research has shown that the act of sharing emotions does not always lead to emotional recovery. Nonetheless, sharing emotions can have a beneficial effect on mental health through the indirect effect of reinforcing social bonds and transferring warmth and affection. That whole mutual transferring to each other, especially if there is a trusting relationship with the other person, that whole sharing itself can be very healing, it could have a healing effect. Once you already experienced an emotion, emotional sharing could also help you regulate emotions.

Sometimes people use aggression, physical or verbal aggression as a strategy just to release the body tension. People become very angry because of certain anger emotions. They will throw things here and there and kick here and there, just to reduce that physical tension. While expressing one's emotions is usually beneficial for mental and physical health, research indicates that aggression especially when it is expressed too much, can have a negative impact on others because then we will get into the loop of others. If you just express it on something like pillows and other things then it is fine. But sometimes expression of emotion could be associated with cardiovascular, high reactivity, heartbeat, and so on, which could have a negative impact also.

It can damage social relationships, like showing too much anger on other people. It has its impact. Many people use substances to regulate their emotions especially when they feel bad in certain situations. They use alcohol, drugs, and some medicines to numb their thoughts, emotions, or physiological arousal so that they do not experience the anxiety of it. Sometimes alcohol and some drugs could reduce those physiological activations and you may feel comfortable and peaceful for some time because of the effect of those things.

Moderate alcohol consumption and all these things could be fine to some extent but habitual use especially of alcohol and drugs could lead to addictions and a lot of other complications. People use it for emotion regulation, but if it becomes habitual it can have a lot of negative impact on your mental and physical health. People also sometimes suppress whatever emotion they are experiencing according to the context of the situation, and inhibit behavioral expression, especially if there are unwanted emotions that they experience like anger and so on, they suppress it also. It could be common in various psychological disorders although it can decrease the observable emotion, it does not change the whole physiological and emotional aspects of it. We just suppress it. You do not express it, but it is there, the undercurrent is there.

It can sometimes be counter-effective in the sense it can increase the physiological activation because the whole emotion is suppressed. Just like too much expression could increase cardiovascular activity, too much of heartbeat can be bad for the heart and cardiovascular system and it can lead to some heart disease and so on. Suppression could also cause a similar thing because the whole thing will go to the physiological system because you are not expressing it, but it can happen mostly when it is done for a longer time. It can reduce well-being and increase vulnerability to cardiovascular diseases.

This strategy is not recommended particularly too frequently for a longer time. Now expression does not mean you have to express to the other person. There are many other ways one can do catharsis, by not expressing it to any particular person, but to some objects or even in thin air also. That is also helpful sometimes. There can be many ways of expression, but too much suppression could have a negative impact. That is one thing.

These are some of the things that are related to emotion regulation that we have discussed, the five stages of emotion regulation, and in each stage, there can be multiple strategies. Some strategies could be adaptive; some could be maladaptive depending on the situation. There are diverse options for emotion regulation strategies. This was an introductory lecture where we understood the different aspects of emotion regulation. In the next two lectures, we will be talking more specifically about adaptive emotion regulation strategies in the coming two lectures. With this, I will stop here. Thank you.