Thriving Under Pressure: Emotional Self-Control
It’s NOT about ignoring or denying emotions.

It’s about managing emotions.
Objectives

- Identify and control YOUR emotional hot buttons
- Stop getting so worked up over little things
- Stay centered in pressure situations
- Stop avoiding conflict
- Graceful “exit lines”
- Safe ways to blow off steam
The Components of your Emotional System

- Your thoughts
- Your physiological changes
- Your behavior
Reactive Cycle

- Thoughts
- Self-Image
- Emotion/Feelings
- Behavior
- Results

The cycle illustrates the interrelation between thoughts, self-image, emotion/feelings, behavior, and results.
The Cause and Effect Equation

PAUSE

EVENT + RESPONSE

= OUTCOME
7 Emotional States of Change

1. Disbelief
2. Anger
3. Yearning to turn back time
4. Depression
5. Acceptance
6. Hope
7. Positive Activity
7 Emotional Patterns that Cause Most of What Troubles Us

1. Guilt
2. Taking Life too Seriously
3. Feeling pressured
4. Worry
5. Lack of confidence
6. Not saying “No”
7. Letting people get you down
1. Getting rid of Guilt

1. Did I truly do something to feel guilty about?
2. If so, admit the guilt.
3. Do something to make up for what you did wrong.
4. LET IT GO!
2. Taking life too seriously

- Live in the present
- Focus on you
- Gain perspective
3. Feeling pressured

- Who’s putting the pressure on you?
- Are you a perfectionist?
  - Don’t strive for perfection, strive for good enough
- Can you do it later?
- YOU are in control of YOU
4. Worrying

- Is *not* about something bad happening to you
- *Is* about not knowing what is going to happen to you, and
- *Is* something you allow yourself to do

The antidote to worry is ACTION.
4. Worrying cont’d

- Write down one thing you worry about
- Write one constructive thing you can do about it - this week!
5. Lack of Confidence

- Focus on what you can control, not on what you can’t

- Stay “in the moment” to focus on what you can control
6. Not saying “NO”

(Negotiating Solutions)

Acknowledge

Circumstance

Transform = solution
7. Letting people get you down

- Take small steps away from the relationship
- Spend less time with them (and more time with positive people)

**Exercise**: Write the names of 3 positive people in your life with whom you WILL spend more time
Is your thinking distorted?

- Don’t overgeneralize
  - “Always”, “never”
- Stay away from Destructive Labeling
  - “She’s a jerk!” “He’s so inconsiderate!”
- Avoid Mind Reading
  - “My boss is going to fire me!”
Is your thinking distorted? Cont’d

- Don’t inflate the significance of an event
  - “I lost the paper now I’m going to lose my job!”
- Don’t have rules about how other people should act
  - “Should”, “ought”, “must”

What are YOUR personal rules a.k.a. hot buttons, triggers?
What if you live/work with someone who has different rules than you?

- Communicate
- Compromise
- Let it go!
Journaling

- Event: What are the facts?
- Thought: What did I say to myself?
- Feel: (Angry, sad, hurt, disappointed)
- Behavior: How did I respond?

What would I do next time?
Signs you’re NOT managing your emotions

1. You talk too much.
2. You don’t listen.
3. You become overly emotional.
4. You become defensive.
5. You become overly sympathetic.
Dealing with physiological symptoms

1. Take a deep breath before you speak
2. Count to 10 silently before you interrupt
3. Imagine this person is a beloved relative having a bad day
4. Hear the person out rather than arguing
5. Count your blessings
6. When all else fails, get help
Behavior choices

1. You are in a one-on-one meeting and YOU are getting angry. What do you say/do?
   - Breathe deeply – silently
   - “I need to take a quick 5 minute break.”
   - “Let me look into that. Let’s meet back tomorrow at 2:00.”
   - “I hadn’t thought about that perspective. Let me look into it and I’ll get back to you tomorrow at 1:00.”
   - “I need to check on a few things…”
2. You are in a one-on-one meeting and THEY are getting angry. What do you say/do?

- “Let’s take a 5 minute break.”
- “I can see that you are passionate about this issue. Let’s meet back tomorrow and we’ll each bring some ideas on how we can move forward.”
Behavior choices

3. You are in a group meeting and YOU are getting angry. What do you say/do?

- Say nothing. Get up and leave.
- Take notes – get it out on paper.
- Take a drink of water.
- Ask a question – “Can you please re-phrase that last statement?”
Emotionally “In Control” People

1. Get the facts
2. Detach, take a step back, observe themselves
3. Keep their values in mind
4. Defend against emotional behavior and combat physiological arousal
5. Refocus their attention
The Components of your Emotional System

- Your thoughts
- Your physiological changes
- Your behavior
1. Pick two items you want to work on first

2. Do it!

3. If you have questions, get help.