

# EMOTION REGULATION QUESTIONNAIRE (ERQ)

## Reference:

Gross, J.J., & John, O.P. (2003). Individual differences in two emotion regulation processes: Implications for affect, relationships, and well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 85, 348-362.

## Description of Measure:

A 10-item scale designed to measure respondents' tendency to regulate their emotions in two ways: (1) Cognitive Reappraisal and (2) Expressive Suppression. Respondents answer each item on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Note: the authors request that researchers do not change the order of the items.

## Abstracts of Selected Related Articles:

Ochsner, K. & Gross, J. J. (2005). The cognitive control of emotion. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 9, 242-249.

The capacity to control emotion is important for human adaptation. Questions about the neural bases of emotion regulation have recently taken on new importance, as functional imaging studies in humans have permitted direct investigation of control strategies that draw upon higher cognitive processes difficult to study in nonhumans. Such studies have examined (1) controlling attention to, and (2) cognitively changing the meaning of, emotionally evocative stimuli. These two forms of emotion regulation depend upon interactions between prefrontal and cingulate control systems and cortical and subcortical emotion-generative systems. Taken together, the results suggest a functional architecture for the cognitive control of emotion that dovetails with findings from other human and nonhuman research on emotion.

Butler, E. A., Egloff, B., Wilhelm, F. H., Smith, N. C., Erikson, E. A., & Gross, J. J. (2003). The social consequences of expressive suppression. *Emotion*, 3, 48-67.

At times, people keep their emotions from showing during social interactions. The authors' analysis suggests that such expressive suppression should disrupt communication and increase stress levels. To test this hypothesis, the authors conducted 2 studies in which unacquainted pairs of women discussed an upsetting topic. In Study 1, one member of each pair was randomly assigned to (a) suppress her emotional behavior, (b) respond naturally, or (c) cognitively reappraise in a way that reduced emotional responding. Suppression alone disrupted communication and magnified blood pressure responses in the suppressors' partners. In Study 2, suppression had a negative impact on the regulators'

emotional experience and increased blood pressure in both regulators and their partners. Suppression also reduced rapport and inhibited relationship formation.

Mauss, I. B., Levenson, R. W. McCarter, L., Wilhelm, F. H., Gross, J. J. (2005). The tie that binds? Coherence among emotion experience, behavior, and physiology. *Emotion, 5*, 175-190.

Emotion theories commonly postulate that emotions impose coherence across multiple response systems. However, empirical support for this coherence postulate is surprisingly limited. In the present study, the authors (a) examined the within-individual associations among experiential, facial behavioral, and peripheral physiological responses during emotional responding and (b) assessed whether emotion intensity moderates these associations. Experiential, behavioral, and physiological responses were measured second-by-second during a film that induced amusement and sadness. Results indicate that experience and behavior were highly associated but that physiological responses were only modestly associated with experience and behavior. Intensity of amusement experience was associated with greater coherence between behavior and physiological responding; intensity of sadness experience was not. These findings provide new evidence about response system coherence in emotions.

**Scale** (take directly from <http://psychology.stanford.edu/~psyphy/resources.html>):

Instructions and Items:

We would like to ask you some questions about your emotional life, in particular, how you control (that is, regulate and manage) your emotions. The questions below involve two distinct aspects of your emotional life. One is your emotional experience, or what you feel like inside. The other is your emotional expression, or how you show your emotions in the way you talk, gesture, or behave. Although some of the following questions may seem similar to one another, they differ in important ways. For each item, please answer using the following scale:

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>strongly disagree</b>			<b>neutral</b>			<b>strongly agree</b>

1. \_\_\_\_ When I want to feel more *positive* emotion (such as joy or amusement), I *change what I'm thinking about*.
2. \_\_\_\_ I keep my emotions to myself.
3. \_\_\_\_ When I want to feel less *negative* emotion (such as sadness or anger), I *change what I'm thinking about*.
4. \_\_\_\_ When I am feeling *positive* emotions, I am careful not to express them.

5. \_\_\_\_ When I'm faced with a stressful situation, I make myself *think about it* in a way that helps me stay calm.
6. \_\_\_\_ I control my emotions by *not expressing them*.
7. \_\_\_\_ When I want to feel more *positive* emotion, I *change the way I'm thinking* about the situation.
8. \_\_\_\_ I control my emotions by *changing the way I think* about the situation I'm in.
9. \_\_\_\_ When I am feeling *negative* emotions, I make sure not to express them.
10. \_\_\_\_ When I want to feel less *negative* emotion, I *change the way I'm thinking* about the situation.

**Scoring:**

Items 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10 make up the Cognitive Reappraisal facet.

Items 2, 4, 6, 9 make up the Expressive Suppression facet.

Scoring is kept continuous.

Each facet's scoring is kept separate.