

90-minute Lesson Plan

Understanding and Managing Emotions

Course: Introduction to Psychology

Lesson Topic: Understanding and Managing Emotions

Instructor: Kaile Smith

Pre-class Assigned Reading:

- Noba Textbook, [Chapter 10: Culture & Emotion](#)
- **Related Quiz:** Complete the associated quiz on the Noba platform.

Broad Learning Objectives

- **Describe Key Psychological Concepts:**
Apply psychological theories, principles, and concepts to real-world situations.
- **Apply Psychology Critically and Reflectively + Promote Positive Change:** Enhance personal development and well-being through the understanding of emotions and mindfulness.

Specific Lesson Learning Goals

- Describe how valence and arousal can be used to interpret **emotion states** using the Circumplex Model of Affect.
- Differentiate **emotion regulation** strategies for managing emotions including the Process Model.
- Gain insights into **mindfulness** and assess its relevance to your **personal mental** and **physical well-being**.

Materials Needed

- [PowerPoint slides \(also attached\)](#)
- Handouts:
 - [Mood Awareness Scale](#)
 - [Affect Grid Exercise](#)
 - [Mindful Walk Activity](#)
- Set of emotion cards & tape/post-its per group (not needed if using Padlet)
- Circumplex Model Affect Grids either drawn on large papers or projected (or digital Padlet)
- PollEverywhere items & prompts
 - Warm-up
 - Emotion Regulation
 - Wrap-up

Lesson Structure (90 minutes)

1. **Introduction** ([PPT Slides 1-3](#); 3 minutes)

- Overview of today's class structure and goals

2. Warm-up Activities ([PPT Slides 4-7](#); 15 minutes)

- **Mood Awareness Scale** ([Handout 1](#)). Activity adapted from Myers (2010)
 - Students assess their ability to monitor and label their emotions.
 - **Mood Monitoring Subscale**: Items 3, 4, 6, 8, 10
 - Scoring details on PPT Slide 6
 - Higher scores reflect greater mood monitoring or the tendency to scrutinize and focus on one's moods.
 - **Mood Labeling Subscale**: Items 1, 2, 5, 7, 9
 - Scoring details on PPT Slide 6
 - Higher scores reflect greater mood labeling, that is, the ability to identify and categorize one's moods.
 - Option to extend the warm-up activity by asking students why mood awareness might be important. What might be the consequences of scrutinizing and focusing on one's mood across situations? Similarly, what might be the consequences of being able to identify and categorize one's moods?
 - Research findings suggest that, compared with low mood monitors, high mood monitors show greater self-consciousness, are more neurotic, have lower self-esteem, and experience greater negative affect. Compared with low mood labelers, high mood labelers tend to be less socially anxious, less neurotic, more extroverted, and more nonverbally expressive, and to experience greater positive affect.
- **Mini-poll** (given via PollEverywhere)
 - Students will anonymously rate their current emotional state on a 1–5 visual scale from very negative to very positive
 - **Open response**: *Reflecting on this week's readings or your results from the Mood Awareness Scale, what is one aspect of your emotional experience that surprised you or sparked curiosity? Share an example or a thought that came up for you.*
 - Instructor will read out some examples from the open-response items that complement the day's lesson plan. Ask if anyone feels comfortable sharing their thoughts with the class.

3. Identifying and Mapping Emotions ([PPT Slides 8-20](#); 30 minutes)

- **Activity Pt. 1: Identifying Emotions**
 - Students identify their current emotional states using the Affect Grid in [Handout 2](#)
 - The instructor will introduce the Affect Grid, explaining its purpose and how to use it to describe feelings, using Affect Grid handout for visual support.
 - Students will individually identify their current emotional states on the Affect Grid provided in the handouts.
- **Introduce the Circumplex Model of Affect** and its relation to [Handout 2](#)

- Having just used the Affect Grid (Russell, 1989), which helps us map our emotions on scales of pleasure and arousal, let's expand on these ideas with the Circumplex Model of Affect (Feldman Barrett & Russell, 1998). This model, similar to the grid, organizes emotions through two key dimensions: valence and arousal.
 - *Valence* refers to how positive or negative an emotion is. Think of it as a scale with pleasure at one end and displeasure at the other. For instance, happiness has a positive valence, while sadness has a negative valence.
 - *Arousal* describes the level of activity or energy associated with an emotion. High arousal is linked to feelings of excitement or agitation, while low arousal is connected to calmness or relaxation.
- Together, these dimensions create a circular space known as the 'circumplex,' where every emotion can be plotted based on how positive or negative, and how calm or excited, it makes us feel. This model allows us to map out and compare different emotions effectively, providing a clear visual representation of how they relate to one another in terms of their valence and arousal.
- **Activity Pt. 2: Mapping Emotions**
 - Students form small groups to locate a set of emotions on an Affect Grid
 - SCRIPT: In a moment, we're going to do a group activity that will help us explore the complexities of mapping our emotions using the Circumplex Affect Grid. You'll work in small groups of 4-8. Each group will receive a set of 16 emotion cards/post-its.

Your task will be to place each emotion the Circumplex Affect Grid that are drawn on the classroom chalkboards. (If you're participating in a larger class or working online, you'll use a digital version of the grid on Padlet.)

As you place each card/post-its, discuss with your group members to decide where on the Grid the emotion fits best in terms of its valence—how positive or negative it is—and its arousal—how calm or exciting it is.

Take turns with each emotion and make sure everyone participates in the discussion. It's important to pay attention to any similarities or differences in how each of you perceives these emotions. This will give us insight into how personal experiences and cultural backgrounds can influence our emotional perceptions.

Once all the cards are placed, we'll regroup to discuss your experiences and observations. Let's begin!

 - Group Mapping Activity
 - Students will form small groups of 4-8 and receive a set of 16 emotion cards or post-its (needs to be able to adhere to the grid on the wall).

1 emotion per card/post-it:

Tense, Alert, Nervous, Stressed, Excited, Elated, Upset, Sad, Happy, Contented, Depressed, Lethargic, Serene, Relaxed, Fatigued, Calm
 - Each group will have access to a large version of the Circumplex Affect Grid pre-drawn or posted on the classroom walls. Alternatively, for larger classes, pairs can work on a digital version using Padlet.

- Students take turns placing an emotion card on the grid, discussing as a group to agree on the placement that best represents the collective view of the emotion's valence and arousal.
- Instructor to walk around the groups while the activity is taking place to check in and ensure students are participating
- Encourage students to note any similarities or differences in perceptions within their groups.
- **Discussion and Wrap-Up**
 - Once all groups are done, instructor will facilitate student-led discussion about their experience with the exercises and tie in cultural influences on emotions from previous readings. (Option to use think:write:pair:share method.)

Sample questions for discussion:

- How did you feel about the process of placing emotions on the Circumplex Model? Was it easier or more challenging than you expected, and why?
- Did you notice any variations in where you and your peers placed specific emotions on the model? What do you think influenced these differences?
- How might cultural background influence the way we categorize or experience these emotions?
- Can you think of an emotion that felt “automatic” or “natural” to you but was placed differently by someone else? Why do you think that is?
- Reflecting on this activity and your readings, how do you think understanding the social construction of emotions can help us in everyday interactions with others?

4. **Emotion Regulation** ([PPT Slides 21-25](#); 15 minutes)

- Watch TED-Ed video on “[How to Manage Your Emotions](#)”
 - [Quick quiz](#) (given via PollEverywhere) following the video to reinforce key points

Sample questions from TED-Ed depending on time allowance and priorities:

- What does the Process Model of emotional regulation do?
 - A) It offers a four-step method for controlling an emotional response.
 - B) It explains the scientific root of our emotions.
 - C) It provides a framework for understanding how we can control our emotional responses.
 - D) It deconstructs our emotions, making them feel less significant.
- Which of the following is NOT a productive long-term strategy of emotional regulation?
 - A) Re-evaluating how you think about a difficult situation
 - B) Altering your emotional response to a difficult situation with drugs
 - C) Shifting your attention within a difficult situation
 - D) Modifying a difficult situation to make it less emotionally taxing
- Which of the following is an example of emotional regulation?

- A) Choosing to skip an event that you know an ex is attending
- B) Reminding yourself that other opportunities will come along after being rejected for a dream job)
- C) Taking deep, calming breaths before delivering an important presentation
- D) All of the above

- What is the purpose of emotional regulation?
 - A) Eliminating all bad feelings
 - B) Dissociating from your emotions
 - C) Crafting a cheerful public personA)
 - D) Managing the intensity of emotional reactions
- What is “reappraisal”?
 - A) Reframing a situation in a way that allows for acceptance
 - B) Modifying the facts of a situation in order to make it more digestible
 - C) Telling yourself that you don't have strong feelings about a situation until that becomes the truth
 - D) Asking for an outsider's opinion on an emotional situation
- *Open response*: What are the four steps in the Process Model of emotional regulation? Pick one of them and describe how one might exercise emotional regulation at that step.
- *Open response*: Imagine you have worked your whole life to get into your dream college, and have just received a rejection letter from that university. What would a reappraisal of that situation look like, and how would it allow for emotional regulation?
- *Open response*: How is regulating emotion different than denying emotion? Provide an example to demonstrate the difference.
- Instructor will facilitate student-led discussion around the responses per PollEverywhere question and clarify any misunderstanding.
 - Focus on TED-Ed questions with low scores from the PollEverywhere quiz
 - Alternatively, discuss first open response question (above) step-by-step of the Process Model and asking for examples the students thought of
- Review the PROCESS Model of emotion regulation.
- THINK:WRITE:PAIR:SHARE: *What strategy do you find most effective for your own emotional regulation?*

5. Introduction to Mindfulness ([PPT Slides 26-30](#); 22 minutes)

- **Watch video** “[How Mindfulness Empowers Us](#)”
- **Instructor will facilitate student-led discussion** about understanding of mindfulness and how its practice can improve emotional awareness, help with self-regulation, and support mental and physical health.

Sample questions for discussion:

- What does the story of the two wolves illustrate about the way we handle our emotions and thoughts?
- How can the practice of mindfulness change our response to negative or challenging emotions like anger or resentment?
- In what ways do you think mindfulness might empower us to change old habits or ways of thinking?
- Can you think of any examples in everyday life where being more aware of your thoughts or feelings in the moment could have changed the outcome of a situation?
- Research has shown that mindfulness can support not only our mental health but also our physical health. Why do you think this link might exist?
- **Mindful Walk Activity** + [Handout 3](#)
 - Students can be directed to walk in the hallways outside the classroom, mindfulness can happen anywhere!
 - If short of time, this activity can be a take-home activity with a minute-reflection paper at the beginning of the following class about their experience
- **THINK:WRITE:PAIR:SHARE:** *Reflect on your walking experience. Was there anything that stood out to you or anything new you noticed? How do you feel after?*

6. **Wrap-Up Activity** ([PPT Slides 29-32](#); 5 minutes)

- **Quick quiz** (given via PollEverywhere)
 - Assess key points covered about emotions and mindfulness.

Sample questions depending on time allowance and priorities:

 - What is the purpose of the Mood Awareness Scale used in today's activity?
 - A) To assess students' abilities to ignore their emotions
 - B) To measure students' abilities to monitor and label their emotions
 - C) To encourage students to suppress their emotional responses
 - Which emotion would be placed on the "high arousal and positive valence" quadrant of the Circumplex Model?
 - A) Excitement
 - B) Sadness
 - D) Calm
 - Reflecting on the group activity using the Affect Grid, why might two people place the same emotion differently on the grid?
 - A) Personal mood swings
 - B) Differences in personal and cultural experiences
 - C) Lack of interest in the activity
 - How can practicing mindfulness help you manage your emotions better?

- A) By helping you become more aware of your feelings in the moment
- B) By eliminating negative emotions completely
- C) By making you less aware of what's happening around you
- What is a benefit of using the PROCESS model of emotion regulation?
 - A) It helps increase spontaneous emotional reactions
 - B) It provides strategies to manage emotions more effectively
 - C) It focuses only on enhancing positive emotions
- *Open response*: Reflecting on your Mood Awareness Scale responses from the beginning of class, what is one thing you learned today that you could implement to help you be more in touch with your emotions or cope with stress better?
- **Looking ahead**: A reminder of upcoming deadlines and a preview of next lesson topics

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