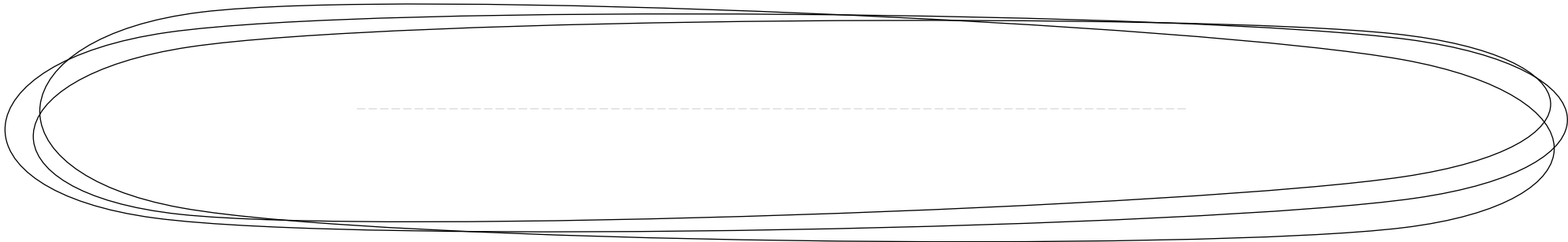


sometimes people focus their attention on things that prolong negative emotions
rumination is focusing on events in the past
worry is focusing on events in the future
 notice when you are ruminating or worrying, and try changing your focus to something in the present moment
 find something to focus on in the present situation that makes you feel curious, peaceful, amused, safe, or grateful

some behaviors can help you change the emotional impact of a difficult situation
 speak up for yourself in an assertive voice
 ask others for what you need to get through the situation
 (you can practice what you want to say beforehand)
 dress yourself in a way that makes you feel more confident or comfortable
 support another person in the same difficult situation

selecting the situation
 most emotions are reactions to **situations**
 before entering a situation or starting an activity, predict how it will make you feel
 be intentional about the situations you enter or avoid
 avoiding situations that cause negative emotions is usually **not** a long-term solution
 avoidance can prevent you from doing things you need to achieve your goals
 but you can choose when to enter difficult situations, and when to withdraw, rest, and prepare

emotion regulation
 emotion regulation skills help you to change the **duration** and **intensity** of strong emotions
 you can't change which emotion you are feeling but you can make negative emotions pass more quickly and gently
 before learning emotion regulation skills, you should practice not reacting to negative emotions immediately
 name the emotion you are having
 don't avoid or resist it
 (avoidance makes negative emotions more intense)



challenge your beliefs about the situation

two beliefs can prolong or intensify negative emotions:

1) believing that unwanted events **must** affect how you see yourself

2) believing that unwanted emotions are **unacceptable**

notice when you ask yourself "what does this situation mean for me?" or when you tell yourself "I shouldn't feel this way!"

challenge these beliefs by saying "maybe this isn't about me" and "it's okay to feel how I feel"

ride the emotional wave

negative emotions are sometimes unavoidable

resisting or avoiding them will only prolong negative emotions

instead of resisting, imagine each negative emotion is a wave

you can ride the wave as it rises and falls

listen to what the emotion is teaching you about your situation

watch as the emotion passes

(every negative emotion will eventually pass)

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things you can do to feel a little better

#4

regulate strong emotions, part I