

*“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power,
and of love, and of a sound mind.”*

2 Timothy 1:7 (KJV)

Tools for regulating emotions and strengthening relationships

1. **You must think about how you are feelings – Eccl. 5:1**

- What are my emotional strengths? What are my weaknesses?
- How does my current mood affect my thoughts and decision making?
- What's going on under the surface that influences what others say or do?

Pondering questions like these yield valuable insights that can be used to your advantage.

2. **You pause – James 1:1**

The pause is as simple as taking a moment to stop and think before you speak or act. In other words, pausing helps you refrain from making a permanent decision based on a temporary emotion.

3. **You strive to control your thoughts – Prov. 25:28/2 Cor. 10:5/
Matt. 12:34**

You don't have much control over the emotion you experience in a given moment. But you can control your reaction to those emotions--by focusing on your thoughts. By striving to control your thoughts, you resist becoming a slave to your emotions, allowing yourself to live in a way that's in harmony with your goals and values.

4. **You benefit from criticism – Prov. 9:8-10**

Nobody *enjoys negative feedback*. But you know that criticism is a chance to learn. Keep your emotions in check and ask yourself: How can this make me better?

5. **You show authenticity – Phil. 1:9-11/Titus 1:15/Rom. 12:9-10**

Authenticity doesn't mean sharing everything about yourself, to everyone, all of the time. It *does* mean saying what you mean, meaning what you say, and sticking to your values and principles above all else.

6. **You demonstrate empathy – 1 John 3:17-18/Col. 3:12-15**

The ability to show empathy, which includes understanding others' thoughts and feelings, helps you connect with others. Instead of judging or labeling others.

7. **You praise others – Phil. 2:3-5**

When you commend others, you satisfy that craving and build trust in the process. This all begins when you focus on the good in others. Then, by sharing specifically what you appreciate, you inspire them to be the best version of themselves.

8. **You give helpful feedback – Prov. 15:2; 25:1**

You re-frame criticism as constructive feedback, so the recipient sees it as helpful instead of harmful.

9. **You apologize – James 5:16**

It takes strength and courage to be able to say you're sorry. But doing so demonstrates humility, a quality that will naturally draw others to you.

10. **You forgive and forget – Eph. 5:29-32**

When you forgive and forget, you prevent others from holding your emotions hostage--allowing you to move forward.

11. **You keep your commitments – Prov. 20:6**

It's common nowadays for people to break an agreement or commitment *when they feel like it*. But when you make a habit of keeping your word--in things big and small--you develop a strong reputation for reliability and trustworthiness.

12. **You help others – Luke 6:38/Acts 20:35**

One of the greatest ways to positively impact the emotions of others is to help them.

13. **You protect yourself from emotional sabotage – Prov. 22:3/
1 Thess. 5:22**

This means no self-injury as well as allowing others to hurt you.