



Validation Study: Emotion Regulation Scale

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INTRODUCTION

- Older adults are better than young adults at regulating into positive moods following induction of a negative mood state (Scheibe & Blanchard-Fields, 2009).
- The ability to utilize both positive and negative emotions is important (Tamir, 2009).
- To test whether older adults' emotion regulation advantage extends to both high arousal positive and negative situations, we created 12 scenarios that varied on arousal level and valence.
- Similar to McCann & Roberts (2008), we validated this emotion regulation scale by asking "experts" to rate the effectiveness of a particular response to a goal.

METHODS

Participants

- "Experts" were defined as counseling psychology students with master's degree or above, based upon their expertise in the domain of emotional problem-solving.
- Surveys were sent to 25 current counseling students by email; 12 responded (ages 24-59 years; 75% Female).
 - Forced Choice Group $n = 6$
 - Effectiveness Rating Group $n = 6$

Procedure

Following McCann & Roberts (2008), we created two forms for the 12 scenarios. We randomly decided which format would be sent to each counseling student.

Half of the participants received the multiple-choice form (i.e., Forced Choice Group) in which the expert was asked to choose the best option among four choices to reach the stated goal. The other half received a 6-Point Likert-type scale form (i.e., Effectiveness Rating Group). The experts rated the effectiveness of each possible solution.

An intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) was calculated for the forced choice data to ascertain within-group consistency and agreement between raters. For the effectiveness rating data, a Pearson r was calculated to determine the association among raters.

Example Effectiveness Rating Scenario

You are working on a particularly engaging hobby. You want to get into a particular "flow" with this activity to get the most out of the experience. Rate the effectiveness of each of the four courses of action below for achieving your goal from 1 (extremely ineffective) to 6 (extremely effective).

Relax and let your mind wander while you enjoy what you are doing.

1 2 3 4 5 6

Attack the task directly by creating a to-do list and remaining as focused as possible.

1 2 3 4 5 6

Think about all the times you failed to complete one of your hobby projects to motivate you to finish this one.

1 2 3 4 5 6

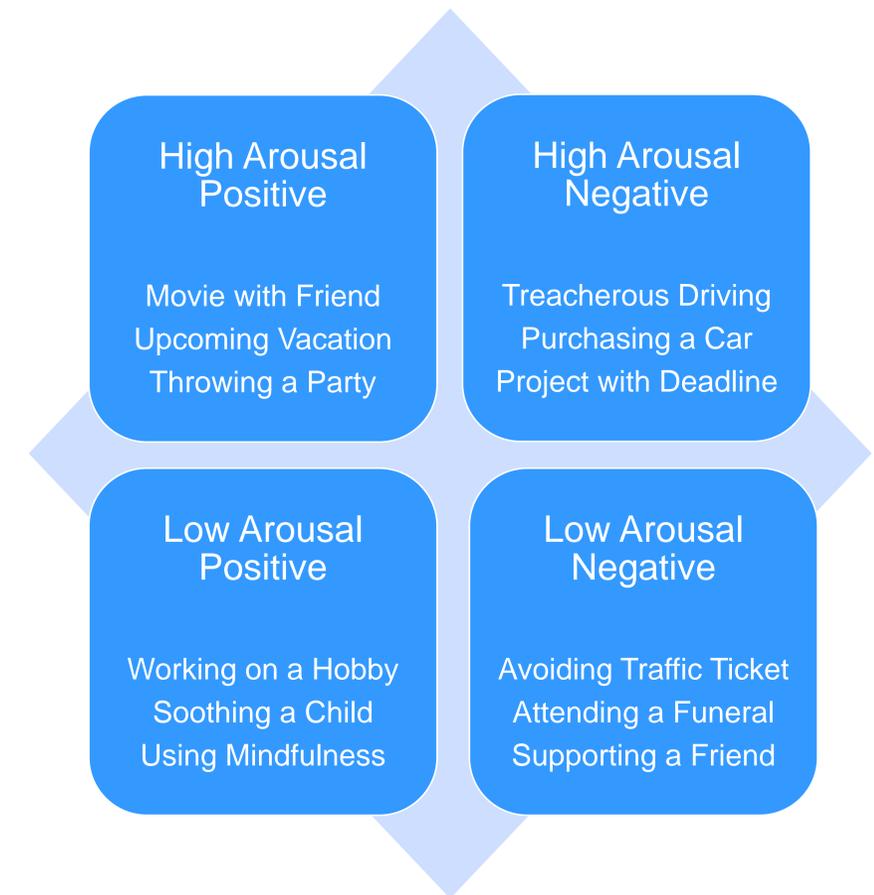
Imagine the fame and recognition you might receive once this incredible project is complete.

1 2 3 4 5 6

RESULTS

- Absolute agreement between experts was calculated for both formats.
- For the Forced Choice Group, raw agreement average was calculated at .73 (chance = .25; ICC (2,5) = .561, $p = .03$), and the mean Pearson correlation between ratings was .62 (all significant, $p < .01$) for the Effectiveness Rating Group.

Scenario Quadrants



DISCUSSION

- Overall, it appears that experts in emotion regulation agreed with our *a priori* most effective solutions.
- The low arousal positive scenarios were the most likely to reach 100% agreement.
- The high arousal negative scenarios had the lowest agreement among experts.
- These results suggest adequate content validity for the scenarios and solutions.