

AFFECT  
REGULATION  
TOOLBOX

# AFFECT REGULATION TOOLBOX

Practical and Effective  
Hypnotic Interventions  
*for the Over-reactive Client*

CAROLYN DAITCH

*Forewords by Daniel Brown, Ph.D.  
and Claire Frederick, M.D.*

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To Russ and Dan with love.

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One final acknowledgment and note: This book is meant to be a compilation of useful techniques for the effective practice of hypnosis in therapy. The techniques discussed are ones that I have used and adapted since 1982. Many have been part of

hypnosis literature and practice for a very long time, and I have done my utmost to ensure that these contributions are appropriately acknowledged. Others I have developed to deal with specific conditions or circumstances. While I consider some of these techniques to be original contributions, it is possible that I have been influenced “unconsciously” by talented and creative colleagues whose work has shaped my own. I’ve had the privilege of working with a great many fine practitioners who have had an impact on my practice. Therefore, I make no claims to ownership about any technique, except to say that I have successfully used all the methodologies discussed. Ultimately, the practice of hypnotherapy owes as much to artistry as it does to methodology.

## Foreword by Daniel Brown, Ph.D.

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Ever since the origins of psychotherapy, most clinicians have readily assumed that emotion plays a central role in psychotherapy. Yet, scientific research on emotion is relatively recent in the history of psychotherapy. The earliest modern studies on emotion consisted primarily of the descriptions and functions of specific emotions, such as interest, anger, fear, shame, etc. The main contribution of differential emotions theory was essentially a detailed catalogue of discrete emotions and their functions (Izard, 1977; Socarides, 1977; Tomkins, 1962, 1963).

Systematic child observational studies led to the earliest accounts of affective development. These studies detailed the central role affect played in perceptual maturation, the regulation of internal state (Sroufe, 1979), and the development of the self (Emde, 1983; Lewis & Brooks, 1978). Other important works emphasized the dyadic regulation of affective states through the infant-caregiver attachment bond (Greenspan & Greenspan, 1985; Stern, 1985). Psychoanalytic studies of the same period emphasized the neutralization of intense affective states through cognitive maturation—that is, learning to discharge impulses through fantasy and verbalization rather than through somatic discharge (Krystal, 1974). Most of these studies of the 1970s and early 1980s were primarily restricted to affective development in infancy and early childhood.

Stage models for affective development across the lifespan from infancy through adulthood appeared nearly a decade later (Brown, 1993; Schore, 1994). These works described a normal developmental line for affect and for the sense of self, and depicted psychopathology emerging in later childhood or adulthood as a failure to master normal developmental tasks along the line of affective and/or self development. The resulting affect dysregulation and/or failure of self development eventually led to the psychopathology seen in psychotic and personality disorders, and psychosomatic illness in adults.

The 1990s are best characterized as the age of neuroscience. Affective neuroscience integrates research on affective development with attachment research and research on the developing brain throughout infancy, childhood, and adolescence. As a result of such integration, contemporary stage models for affect include a



description of (1) the developing brain; (2) how the infant-caregiver attachment bond fosters brain development; (3) how various neurobiological systems develop in the service of affect regulation and self regulation; and (4) how early infant-caregiver attachment disruption and/or trauma in later childhood leads to significant dysregulation of affective and self development and, eventually, to specific forms of psychopathology in adulthood, like personality and dissociative disorders (Fonagy, Gergely, Jurist, & Target, 2002; Ogawa, Sroufe, Weinfield, Carlson, & Egeland, 1997; Schore, 1994; Sroufe, Egeland, Carlson, & Collins, 2005).

Despite the rapidly proliferating and increasingly sophisticated models of affective development, studies specifically on its clinical implications, or better, its applications, are still relatively rare. Within the psychoanalytic tradition, Krystal's (1988) and McDougall's (1985) pioneering works stand out for their detailed descriptions of the clinical manifestations of affect dysregulation in adult psychotherapy patients. Ablon et al. (1993) present a detailed model of the theory of affect development followed by a discussion of a number of areas of its clinical application, including the differential clinical manifestations of affect in patients across the lifespan, from trauma, addiction, psychosomatics, and in everyday life. Fosha (2000) has directly applied attachment research to sitting with adult psychotherapy patients. As the therapist, she provides her mainly adult personality disordered patients with the full presence and careful moment-by-moment attunement of an attachment bond targeted to the patient's immediate emotional state, through which the patient is able to transform negative affective states into the core, positive affects that become apparent when the attachment bond is properly regulated.

A largely underdeveloped area of clinical application pertains to helping the patient learn specific affect regulatory skills. Some of the early works on hypnotherapy contain descriptions of specific affect skills, such as Watkins's affect bridge technique (1971). Brown and Fromm (1986) describe a number of hypnotherapy techniques to enhance affect experience and its expression, and to attenuate intense affect states. Phillips and Frederick (1995) describe a variety of hypnotherapy techniques for mobilizing inner resources, managing affects, and resolving dissociation in traumatized patients. From a cognitive-behavioral perspective, Linehan (1993) developed a workbook that contains a number of practical skills for managing affects in borderline patients, including the core skill of being mindful of and accurately recognizing emotional states; distress tolerance training; self-soothing skills; and skills for decreasing negative emotions and increasing positive emotions.

Carolyn Daitch's new book, *Affect Regulation Toolbox: Practical and Effective Hypnotic Interventions for the Over-reactive Client*, fills a void by making great advances in the skill-based approach to affect regulation. In a single volume she has amassed the most comprehensive collection of affect regulatory skills now available. She describes over 30 specific skills in her affect "toolbox." She gives rich descriptions of each affect "tool" with a carefully worded and detailed script, followed by case examples to illustrate the use of each affect regulatory skill. Rather than a loose collection of affect skills, the book is tightly organized into four different levels or "tiers" of affect skills.

The focus of the book is on the application of these skills to the emotionally over-reactive patient. Dr. Daitch's expertise as a clinician comes forth in her detailed and

very clear illustrations of the application of skills from the affect toolbox to patients with anxiety disorders in individual therapy and also to emotionally over-reactive partners in couples therapy. In her case illustrations she is careful to match specific affect tools to the given patient's presenting complaints and personality style.

While Dr. Daitch presents these affect skills as part of hypnotherapy, they stand in their own right and could be used readily in nonhypnotic therapies. For hypnotherapists, Dr. Daitch's book is the *only* book on clinical hypnosis specifically devoted to affect regulatory skills. More important, Dr. Daitch makes it clear that these affect tools are not intended for the treatment session alone. Rather, they are designed as practical tools that the patient can take with him or her to utilize as needed in everyday life. There is a great deal in this book that any clinician, and most patients, will find immediately useful.

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Harvard Medical School

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## Foreword by Claire Frederick, M.D.

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Although I have a library of hundreds of books in the fields of psychotherapy, hypnosis, trauma, and dissociation, I could fit on one shelf those 10 or 12 books that are of constant help to me in my clinical practice and to which I always return. These are well-thumbed books to which I always come back for theory, for techniques and scripts, and for greater understanding of how to integrate technique into clinical practice. Fortunately, there is room on that hypothetical shelf of invaluable books for one more: Carolyn Daitch's *Affect Regulation Toolbox: Practical and Effective Hypnotic Interventions for the Over-reactive Client*.

*Affect Regulation Toolbox* helps us deal with a large population of patients who share the problem of over-reactivity. This is a constellation of characteristics that appears across a number of Axis I and Axis II diagnostic categories and that often presents clinicians with enormous clinical challenges. Most of the patients I see who live on the edge of their anxieties and super-sensitivities are usually able to experience the calmness and soothing of the hypnotic experience in my consultation room. However, they often report that they cannot re-create this experience in their everyday lives. To be sure, they are able to experience the beneficial effects of self-hypnosis when they are not facing immediate stress, but they feel naked, raw, and exposed in ordinary life situations. Many of them become severely stressed by events and interactions that do not even appear to be particularly stressful. They are living illustrations of Carolyn Daitch's insight that "... talk therapy alone simply does not provide the immediate relief or the long-term results necessary for these clients."

*Affect Regulation Toolbox* is a clinical classic. In it we are shown why the man who cannot take an ordinary joke because his feelings are so easily hurt, the woman who carries a chip on her shoulder, and, perhaps someone we know who avoids social situations whenever possible, have something in common. A number of treatment modalities ranging from psychopharmacology to Dialectical Behavioral Therapy have attempted to address the needs of this patient population. What is needed in any therapeutic program with the over-reactive patient is a retraining of the perceptions and reaction patterns that will lead to a restructuralization of these new reactions within the central nervous system, a rewiring into better perceptions and responses, a

true developmental repair. With *Affect Regulation Toolbox*, Carolyn Daitch shows us exactly how to go about helping patients do this.

*Affect Regulation Toolbox* offers a tiered and step-by-step program for achieving the necessary therapeutic goals. Because it is firmly rooted in the utilization principle, psychoeducation, and self-hypnosis, it leads the patient into self-care, mastery, and self-efficacy as no extant self-care program of this type does. With elegant eclecticism it shows us how to teach patients to meet their most distressing feelings and develop new ways of thinking, feeling, and responding, which, when learned and incorporated into daily life, will have profound and permanent effects.

Scientifically based, integrative, and comprehensive, this book fills an aching void in the field of hypnotically facilitated psychotherapy. It is a treasure to which I will return again and again.

*Claire Frederick, M.D.*  
Tufts University School of Medicine

# Table of Tools



<b>Issue/Disorder</b>	<b>Relevant Tools</b>
<b><i>Generalized Anxiety Disorder</i></b>	Tool 11: Mindfulness with Detached Observation Tool 14: Sensory Alteration—Breathing in the Light Tool 16: Thought Stopping Tool 18: Tight Fist Tool 19: Self-statements Tool 20: Postponement Tool 21: Dialing Down Reactivity Tool 22: Juxtaposition of Two Feelings Tool 23: Switching Channels Tool 32: Gratitude
<b><i>Obsessive Compulsive Disorder</i></b>	Tool 11: Mindfulness with Detached Observation Tool 12: Mindfulness and Releasing Tool 13: Sensory Alteration—Anesthesia Tool 16: Thought Stopping Tool 17: Quick Impulse Control Tool 18: Tight Fist Tool 19: Self-statements Tool 20: Postponement Tool 26: Computer Screen Tool 29: Watchman
<b><i>Panic Disorder</i></b>	Tool 11: Mindfulness with Detached Observation Tool 12: Mindfulness and Releasing Tool 13: Sensory Alteration—Anesthesia Tool 14: Sensory Alteration—Breathing in the Light Tool 15: Sensory Cue/Anchor Tool 18: Tight Fist Tool 20: Postponement Tool 22: Juxtaposition of Two Feelings Tool 23: Switching Channels Tool 27: Imaginary Support Circle Tool 31: Age Progression

**Posttraumatic Stress Disorder** Tool 11: Mindfulness with Detached Observation  
Tool 12: Mindfulness and Releasing  
Tool 13: Sensory Alteration—Anesthesia  
Tool 14: Sensory Alteration—Breathing in the Light  
Tool 15: Sensory Cue/Anchor  
Tool 19: Self-statements  
Tool 21: Dialing Down Reactivity  
Tool 25: Alternating Hands  
Tool 27: Imaginary Support Circle  
Tool 28: Parts of Self  
Tool 29: Watchman  
Tool 30: Age Regression

**Social Phobia** Tool 11: Mindfulness with Detached Observation  
Tool 12: Mindfulness and Releasing  
Tool 15: Sensory Cue/Anchor  
Tool 16: Thought Stopping  
Tool 18: Tight Fist  
Tool 19: Self-statements  
Tool 23: Switching Channels  
Tool 26: Computer Screen  
Tool 27: Imaginary Support Circle  
Tool 31: Age Progression

**Specific Phobias** Tool 11: Mindfulness with Detached Observation  
Tool 12: Mindfulness and Releasing  
Tool 15: Sensory Cue/Anchor  
Tool 18: Tight Fist  
Tool 19: Self-statements  
Tool 23: Switching Channels  
Tool 24: Sandwich Technique  
Tool 27: Imaginary Support Circle  
Tool 28: Parts of Self  
Tool 29: Watchman  
Tool 31: Age Progression

**(DIMINISHMENT OF)  
Counterproductive Thoughts** Tool 16: Thought Stopping  
Tool 19: Self-statements  
Tool 20: Postponement  
Tool 26: Computer Screen

**Worry and Rumination** Tool 12: Mindfulness and Releasing  
Tool 13: Sensory Alteration—Anesthesia  
Tool 14: Sensory Alteration—Breathing in the Light  
Tool 15: Sensory Cue/Anchor  
Tool 16: Thought Stopping  
Tool 18: Tight Fist  
Tool 21: Dialing Down Reactivity  
Tool 22: Juxtaposition of Two Feelings  
Tool 23: Switching Channels  
Tool 28: Parts of Self

	<p>Tool 31: Age Progression  Tool 32: Gratitude</p>
<b><i>Self-criticism</i></b>	<p>Tool 11: Mindfulness with Detached Observation  Tool 16: Thought Stopping  Tool 19: Self-statements  Tool 22: Juxtaposition of Two Feelings  Tool 25: Alternating Hands  Tool 26: Computer Screen  Tool 28: Parts of Self</p>
<b><i>Hopelessness</i></b>	<p>Tool 12: Mindfulness and Releasing  Tool 18: Tight Fist  Tool 22: Juxtaposition of Two Feelings  Tool 27: Imaginary Support Circle  Tool 28: Parts of Self  Tool 30: Age Regression  Tool 31: Age Progression  Tool 32: Gratitude</p>
<b><i>Fear of the Future</i></b>	<p>Tool 19: Self-statements  Tool 21: Dialing Down Reactivity  Tool 23: Switching Channels  Tool 27: Imaginary Support Circle  Tool 30: Age Regression  Tool 31: Age Progression</p>
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<b><i>Irritability</i></b>	<p>Tool 12: Mindfulness and Releasing  Tool 13: Sensory Alteration—Anesthesia  Tool 14: Sensory Alteration—Breathing in the Light  Tool 21: Dialing Down Reactivity  Tool 22: Juxtaposition of Two Feelings  Tool 28: Parts of Self  Tool 32: Gratitude</p>
<b><i>Insomnia</i></b>	<p>Tool 13: Sensory Alteration—Anesthesia  Tool 14: Sensory Alteration—Breathing in the Light  Tool 15: Sensory Cue/Anchor  Tool 16: Thought Stopping  Tool 18: Tight Fist  Tool 21: Dialing Down Reactivity  Tool 32: Gratitude</p>
<b><i>Somatic Distress</i></b>	<p>Tool 11: Mindfulness with Detached Observation  Tool 12: Mindfulness and Releasing  Tool 13: Sensory Alteration—Anesthesia  Tool 14: Sensory Alteration—Breathing in the Light  Tool 15: Sensory Cue/Anchor</p>



	Tool 17: Quick Impulse Control
<b><i>Flooding</i></b>	<p>Tool 11: Mindfulness with Detached Observation</p> <p>Tool 13: Sensory Alteration—Anesthesia</p> <p>Tool 14: Sensory Alteration—Breathing in the Light</p> <p>Tool 15: Sensory Cue/Anchor</p> <p>Tool 21: Dialing Down Reactivity</p> <p>Tool 27: Imaginary Support Circle</p> <p>Tool 28: Parts of Self</p> <p>Tool 29: Watchman</p>
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<b><i>Avoidance Behaviors</i></b>	<p>Tool 12: Mindfulness and Releasing</p> <p>Tool 19: Self-statements</p> <p>Tool 22: Juxtaposition of Two Feelings</p> <p>Tool 23: Switching Channels</p> <p>Tool 24: Sandwich Technique</p> <p>Tool 26: Computer Screen</p> <p>Tool 27: Imaginary Support Circle</p> <p>Tool 28: Parts of Self</p> <p>Tool 30: Age Regression</p> <p>Tool 31: Age Progression</p>
<b><i>Destructive Communication</i></b>	<p>Tool 11: Mindfulness with Detached Observation</p> <p>Tool 12: Mindfulness and Releasing</p> <p>Tool 16: Thought Stopping</p> <p>Tool 17: Quick Impulse Control</p> <p>Tool 18: Tight Fist</p> <p>Tool 19: Self-statements</p> <p>Tool 20: Postponement</p> <p>Tool 21: Dialing Down Reactivity</p> <p>Tool 22: Juxtaposition of Two Feelings</p> <p>Tool 25: Alternating Hands</p> <p>Tool 28: Parts of Self</p> <p>Tool 32: Gratitude</p>
<b><i>Defensiveness</i></b>	<p>Tool 11: Mindfulness with Detached Observation</p> <p>Tool 17: Quick Impulse Control</p> <p>Tool 21: Dialing Down Reactivity</p> <p>Tool 22: Juxtaposition of Two Feelings</p> <p>Tool 28: Parts of Self</p> <p>Tool 32: Gratitude</p>
<b><i>Withdrawal</i></b>	<p>Tool 11: Mindfulness with Detached Observation</p> <p>Tool 19: Self-statements</p> <p>Tool 22: Juxtaposition of Two Feelings</p> <p>Tool 25: Alternating Hands</p> <p>Tool 28: Parts of Self</p>

	<p>Tool 29: Watchman</p> <p>Tool 30: Age Regression</p> <p>Tool 32: Gratitude</p>
<b><i>Feelings of Abandonment</i></b>	<p>Tool 11: Mindfulness with Detached Observation</p> <p>Tool 19: Self-statements</p> <p>Tool 27: Imaginary Support Circle</p> <p>Tool 28: Parts of Self</p>
<b><i>Codependency</i></b>	<p>Tool 11: Mindfulness with Detached Observation</p> <p>Tool 12: Mindfulness and Releasing</p> <p>Tool 14: Sensory Alteration—Breathing in the Light</p> <p>Tool 25: Alternating Hands</p> <p>Tool 27: Imaginary Support Circle</p>
<b><i>Narcissism/Overentitlement</i></b>	<p>Tool 17: Quick Impulse Control</p> <p>Tool 23: Switching Channels</p> <p>Tool 28: Parts of Self</p> <p>Tool 30: Age Regression</p>
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<b><i>Self-esteem</i></b>	<p>Tool 15: Sensory Cue/Anchor</p> <p>Tool 16: Thought Stopping</p> <p>Tool 19: Self-statements</p> <p>Tool 23: Switching Channels</p> <p>Tool 25: Alternating Hands</p> <p>Tool 26: Computer Screen</p> <p>Tool 28: Parts of Self</p> <p>Tool 30: Age Regression</p>
<b><i>Self-soothing</i></b>	<p>Tool 12: Mindfulness and Releasing</p> <p>Tool 14: Sensory Alteration—Breathing in the Light</p> <p>Tool 15: Sensory Cue/Anchor</p> <p>Tool 24: Sandwich Technique</p>
<b><i>Self-awareness</i></b>	<p>Tool 11: Mindfulness with Detached Observation</p> <p>Tool 12: Mindfulness and Releasing</p> <p>Tool 22: Juxtaposition of Two Feelings</p>

	Tool 28: Parts of Self
<b><i>Skill Rehearsal</i></b>	Tool 23: Switching Channels Tool 26: Computer Screen Tool 31: Age Progression
<b><i>Impulse Control</i></b>	Tool 16: Thought Stopping Tool 17: Quick Impulse Control Tool 18: Tight Fist Tool 19: Self-statements Tool 21: Dialing Down Reactivity Tool 22: Juxtaposition of Two Feelings
<b><i>Positive Affect</i></b>	Tool 22: Juxtaposition of Two Feelings Tool 25: Alternating Hands Tool 30: Age Regression Tool 31: Age Progression Tool 32: Gratitude
<b><i>Mental Flexibility</i></b>	Tool 19: Self-statements Tool 22: Juxtaposition of Two Feelings Tool 23: Switching Channels Tool 24: Sandwich Technique Tool 25: Alternating Hands Tool 26: Computer Screen Tool 28: Parts of Self
<b><i>Positive Expectancy</i></b>	Tool 19: Self-statements Tool 23: Switching Channels Tool 31: Age Progression
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<b><i>Healthier Parts of Self</i></b>	Tool 22: Juxtaposition of Two Feelings Tool 23: Switching Channels Tool 25: Alternating Hands Tool 28: Parts of Self

The tool Behavioral and Practice Session Rehearsal (explained on pages 107–115) is applicable to any and all of the common issues or disorders listed above.

The following tools are also applicable to any and all of the common issues or disorders listed:

Recognizing Somatic, Cognitive, and Emotional Cues

Eye Out

Breathing: Attending and Deepening Breath

Roll

Ear Drop

Ear and Leg Heaviness

Head Warming

Relaxation-soothing Imagery, Safe Place—Nature Scene and Safe Room

Tray

Stimulator

Note: Although this table provides suggestions for a variety of clinical applications of the tools, the tools can be used to meet many clinical challenges that are not listed.