# Specialist Module with Workshop: Emotional Expression and Regulation

## Prof. Stefania Balzarotti

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to provide students with theoretical knowledge and operational skills in the main components of the emotional process, focusing in particular on the expression of emotions and their control through the different emotional regulation strategies.

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

*Knowledge and understanding:*

* Know the main theoretical emotional process models present in the literature, distinguishing emotions from other affective phenomena;
* Know the main models of emotional regulation;
* Know the main strategies for regulating emotions and their implications for subjective and interpersonal well-being;
* Know the basics for decoding emotional expression.

*Applying knowledge and understanding:*

* Use emotional induction tools and techniques;
* Apply emotional expression decoding systems to the analysis of images and recording of behaviours;
* Achieve greater self-awareness of their own modes of emotional expression and regulation, through the self-administration of tools and techniques presented in the course;
* Use techniques and tools for *assessing* emotional regulation ability;
* Lay the foundations for designing empowerment training for emotional regulation.

*Autonomous judging skills:*

* Approach the theoretical models of emotional generation and regulation processes with critical and autonomous thinking;
* Manage the complexity of the emotional process;
* Formulate interpretations and judgments regarding a given individual's ability to regulate and/or express emotion on the basis of data acquired from administering the tools and techniques presented in the course (eg. tests and questionnaires, observation and decoding).

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course is divided into three modules.

Unit 1 - Introduction to the emotional process

* Affective phenomena: emotions, stress, mood
* Theoretical models: basic emotions, *appraisal*, *core affect*
* Emotional impact: Inducing/generating an emotion
* Measuring the emotional response: *arousal*, expressive behaviour, subjective experience

Unit 2 - The regulation of emotions

* What is emotional regulation: models and strategies
* Implications for subjective and interpersonal well-being
* *Savouring*: regulating positive emotions
* Approaches to the *assessment*
* How to structure an empowerment project

Unit 3 - The expression of emotions

* Non-verbal behaviour and facial expressions
* The Facial Action Coding System (FACS)
* Recognising emotions: the analysis of images and video recordings

Units 2 and 3 will require students to develop both a path of self-reflection regarding their own modes of expression and emotional control, as well as the ability to observe, *assess* and *empower* these skills in others.

***READING LIST***

*Reading list for the path based on the lecture contents*: students will prepare by studying the lecture notes and supplementary materials published on the Blackboard platform.

*Reading list for the text-based path*: students will prepare by studying the following texts and reading materials:

O. Matarazzo-V.L. Zammuner ( Eds.), *La regolazione delle emozioni*, Il Mulino. Chapters 1, 3, 4.

Two articles to be chosen from:

K. Scherer, (2005). What are emotions and how can they be measured? *Social Science Information*, 44(4), 695-729.

S. Balzarotti - M.R. Ciceri (2014). News reports of catastrophes and viewers' fear: Threat appraisal of positively versus negatively framed events. *Media Psychology, 17*(4), 357-377.

J.B. Nezlek - Kuppens, *Regulating positive and negative emotions in daily life*, Journal of Personality, *76*(3), 561-580.

Quoidbach, J., Berry, E.V., Hansenne, M., & Mikolajczak, M. (2010). Positive emotion regulation and well-being: Comparing the impact of eight savoring and dampening strategies. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 49(5), 368-373.

Van Kleef, G.A. ( 2009). How emotions regulate social life: The emotions as social information (EASI) model. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 18(3), 184-188.

Keltner, D., Sauter, D., Tracy, J., & Cowen, A. (2019). Emotional expression: Advances in basic emotion theory. *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior*, 43(2), 1-28.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Each lecture alternates between theoretical explanations by the lecturer and workshop tutorials (for example: self-administration of tests/questionnaires, analysis of video recordings, discussion forums) in which students will be asked to apply one or more tools and/or techniques related to the lecture content. The lecturer will also assign a number of activities (*assignments*) to be completed independently by students between one lecture and the next (for example: a diary of emotions), which will then be discussed in class and during the exam.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

For the path based on the lecture contents, the assessment will take the form of an oral interview in which students will be assessed on a) their knowledge and understanding of the course contents; b) their personal reworking abilities (e.g. their critical judgments on the contents, the techniques tried out in the tutorials conducted during lectures, the comments on the *assignments* carried out independently by students during the course); and c) their ability to identify contexts for applying the course contents. By way of the oral interview, students will have to demonstrate their ability to orient themselves around the basic topics and issues discussed in lectures, with particular attention to the workshop tutorials.

For the text-based path, the assessment will take the form of an oral interview in which students will be assessed on a) their knowledge and understanding of the contents; b) their personal reworking abilities; and c) their ability to identify application contexts.

The final mark consists of a Passed. The relevance of the student's answers, the accuracy and completeness of the related contents, the appropriate use of terminology, and the ability to identify practical application contexts will all contribute to the assessment.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

*Prerequisites*

There are no specific prerequisites for taking the module. However, it will be necessary for students to revise their basic knowledge of the emotional process from the General Psychology course.

Should the current Covid-19 health emergency not allow face-to-face teaching, remote teaching in synchronous or asynchronous mode will be guaranteed; this will be communicated in good time to students.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.