

Emotional Distractions

Introduction

Being in a bad mood can increase your crash risk. Studies have shown that when angry or sad, the odds of crash involvement increase and can be similar to the odds of crash involvement when distracted or drowsy.

The Issue

Driving when emotional (i.e., angry or sad) increases odds of crash ten-fold.

10 x

Your mood can lead to distraction through rumination, or shifting your focus to secondary activities in order to improve your mood. Examples of this include:

- o Focussing on a driver who annoyed you
- o Reaching for your phone to call someone
- o Making a post about the event



Strategies for handling emotion distractions

If you're not already driving, pull over!



Take deep breaths to calm yourself.



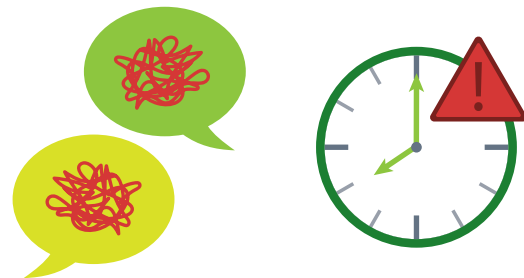
If possible, let someone else take the wheel or catch public transport.



Negative emotional distractions

Emotions that may distract you can occur before you get in the car, including:

- o An argument with your significant other
- o A stressful day at work.
- o A pending meeting
- o Running late to an important meeting
- o Receiving sad/distressing news



Or may occur while driving, including:

- o Another driver on the road cuts you off
- o Hearing sad news on the radio



Remember that how you feel will influence how you drive: if you're feeling angry or sad, you may be less tolerant to other road users.

Distractions may also occur due to happy news; or being excited about a pending celebration or meeting.



Remember to remain focussed while driving and get there safely.