



CrowdCounsel: Crowd-Powered Emotion Regulation

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Efforts to build emotionally responsive forms of artificial intelligence have been hampered by many difficulties, not least of which include the challenges of natural language processing. Although there have been many gains in this domain, it is still difficult to build technologies that offer nuanced forms of emotional support. To address these challenges, researchers might look towards human computation – an approach that harnesses the power of large, distributed online communities to solve artificial intelligence problems that might otherwise be intractable. We present a new technological approach that uses human computation algorithms, in conjunction with on-demand online workforces, to provide expedient emotional support.

In a prototypical example of our system, a user submits a brief description of an emotion-eliciting event or thought. This description is distributed to online workers, all of whom work to reappraise the submission in positive, yet realistic ways. Another group judges these submissions and filters out all but the best responses. The top results undergo further iteration, and the most objective and tactful responses are sent to the user. Our research explores how this technology can be embedded into mobile devices and how the basic framework might be applied to a variety of psychological interventions.

