

# DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOR THERAPY

Mindfulness

Distress Tolerance

Emotional Regulation

Interpersonal Effectiveness

## DIALECTICAL THINKING

OPPOSITES CAN CO-EXIST

I'm doing my best AND I can try harder

I am capable AND I need support

I am angry AND I can be respectful

I disagree with you AND I understand your perspective

I hate what they did AND I still love them

I don't want to do this AND I'm going to do it anyway

I want to change AND I'm afraid to change

# THINKING DIALECTICALLY

Follow the middle path, consider all sides to a situation and remember that opposites can both be true at the same time. Move away from "either-or" thinking to "both-and" thinking. Avoid words like "always" or "never." Use "I feel" statements instead of "you" statements.

"I am doing the **best** I can and I can do **better**, try **harder**, and be more motivated to **change**."

## MINDFULNESS GOALS

- 1 Reduce suffering and increase happiness
- 2 Increase control of your mind
- 3 Experience reality as it is

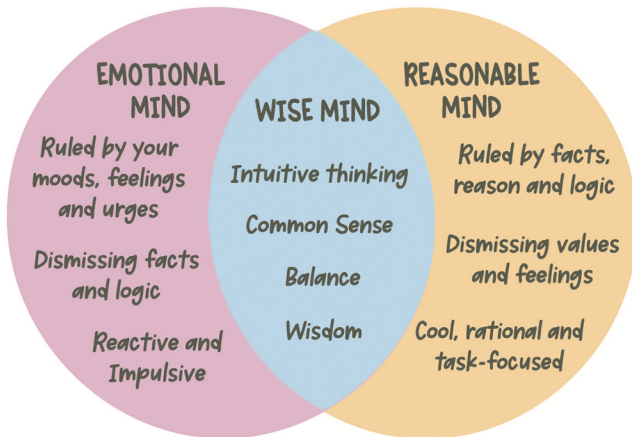
"Mindfulness is a way of **befriending ourselves** and our **experience**."

-Jon Kabat-Zinn

# MINDFULNESS SKILL

## WISE MIND

We each have innate wisdom that can guide us in our actions and pursuits. It is a balanced, aware perspective that helps us move toward our goals, using knowledge and experience. Wise mind is a synthesis of reasonable mind and emotional mind.



# WISE MIND MEDITATION

Sit quietly and relax while breathing deeply. Place your hand on the center of your abdomen just below your rib cage. Focus on a question or decision you have to make. Then, ask your inner intuitive-self for guidance and answers without judging the responses you receive. Remember to consider your emotions as well as reason.

# MINDFULNESS "WHAT" SKILL

## OBSERVE

- »» Notice your body sensations (through your eyes, ears, nose, skin and tongue).
- »» Pay attention on purpose, to the present moment.
- »» Practice wordless watching: Watch thoughts come into your mind and let them slip right by like clouds in the sky. Notice each feeling, coming and going, like waves in the ocean.
- »» Observe both inside and outside yourself.

# MINDFULNESS "WHAT" SKILL

## DESCRIBE

- »» Put words on the experience. When a feeling or thought arises, or you do something, acknowledge it.
- »» Label what you observe. Put a name on your feelings. Label a thought as just a thought, a feeling as just a feeling, an action as just an action.
- »» Unglue your interpretations and opinions from the facts. Describe the "who, what, when, and where" that you observe. Just the facts.
- »» Remember, if you can't observe it through your senses, you can't describe it.

## MINDFULNESS "WHAT" SKILL

# PARTICIPATE

- »»» Throw yourself completely into activities of the current moment. Do not separate yourself from what is going on in the moment (dancing, cleaning, talking to a friend, feeling happy or feeling sad).
- »»» Become one with whatever you are doing, completely forgetting yourself. Throw your attention to the moment.
- »»» Act intuitively from Wise Mind. Do just what is needed in each situation - neither willful (unwilling) nor sitting on your hands.
- »»» Go with the flow. Respond with spontaneity.

## MINDFULNESS "HOW" SKILL

# ONE-MINDFULLY

- »»» Pay attention to yourself now. Be completely present to this one moment. Try a body scan meditation.
- »»» Do one thing at a time. Notice the desire to be half-present, to be somewhere else, to go somewhere else in your mind, to multi-task -- and then come back to one thing at a time.
- »»» Let go of distractions. If other actions, thoughts, or strong feelings distract you, go back to what you are doing -- again, and again, and again.
- »»» Concentrate your mind. If you find you are doing two things at once, stop -- go back to one thing at a time.

## MINDFULNESS "HOW" SKILL

# NON-JUDGMENTALLY

- »»» See, but don't evaluate as good or bad. Just the facts.
- »»» Accept each moment like a blanket spread out on the lawn, accepting both the rain and the sun and each leaf that falls upon it.
- »»» Acknowledge the difference between the helpful and the harmful, the safe and the dangerous, but don't judge them.
- »»» Acknowledge your values, your wishes, your emotional reactions, but don't judge them.
- »»» When you find yourself judging, don't judge your judging.

## MINDFULNESS "HOW" SKILL

# EFFECTIVELY

- »»» Be mindful of your goals in the situation, and do what is necessary to achieve them.
- »»» Focus on what works. (Don't let emotion mind get in the way of being effective.)
- »»» Act as skillfully as you can. Do what is needed for the situation you are in -- not the situation you wish you were in; not the one that is fair; not the one that is more comfortable.
- »»» Let go of willfulness and sitting on your hands.



## BAND-OF-LIGHT MEDITATION

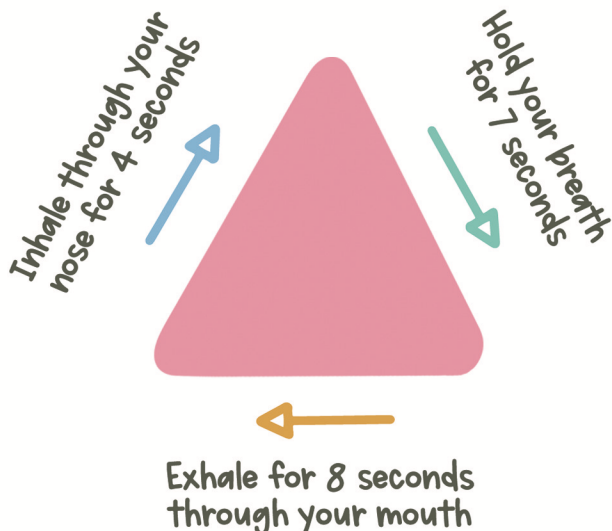
Sit quietly and relax using breathing deeply. Now imagine a narrow band of white light moving down your entire body. As it moves, notice sensations on those parts of your body that pass below the band. Do your best to observe those sensations without judging. Relax further with each breath.

## GROUNDING TECHNIQUE

- 5 things you can see
- 4 things you can touch
- 3 things you can hear
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste

## 4-7-8 BREATHING TECHNIQUE

Repeat 3 times



## THOUGHT DEFUSION

Sit quietly and relax while breathing deeply. Notice your thoughts and then observe them coming and going - one by one - without getting attached to them. Imagine them drifting away like clouds or drifting down a stream. Observe your thoughts without judging them or holding onto them. Just watch them come and go.

# TRACING

Trace the swirl below with your finger. Breathe in slowly through your nose and out through your mouth as you trace.



# COLORS

Name each of the colors below:

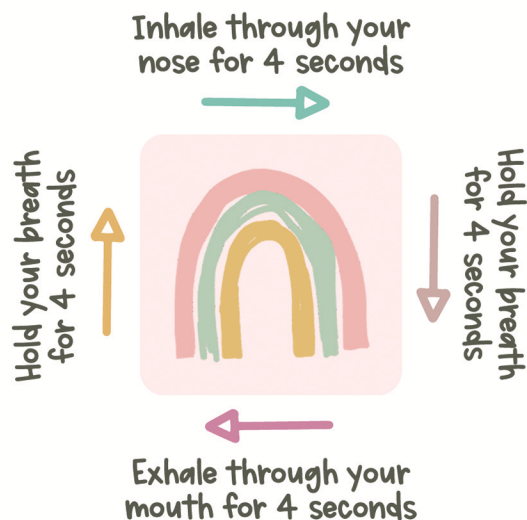


For each of the colors above, look for items in the room that are the same color.

Alternatively, look around and name the colors of 5 items.

# BOX BREATHING TECHNIQUE

Repeat 3 times



# LOVING KINDNESS MEDITATION

Sit quietly and relax while breathing deeply. Keeping your eyes closed, think of a person close to you who loves you very much. It could be someone from the past or the present; someone still in life or who has passed; it could be a spiritual teacher or guide. Imagine that person standing on your right side, sending you their love. Feel the warm wishes and love coming from that person towards you. Then send warm wishes to all living beings on the globe, who, like you, want to be happy.



## WALKING THE MIDDLE PATH

When we walk the middle path, we make room for compromise. When that compromise validates our own feelings and those of another, we are on the path to a more harmonious outcome. Consider the results of extreme thinking. Often times, it leads to extreme feelings – either too emotionally invested or “checking out” completely due to frustration. In other words, we make too much of a situation or too little of it. When we walk the middle path, we gain flexibility and it’s a powerful mindset for creating peace and contentment.

### INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS SKILL

## DEAR MAN

Ask for what you want and get it more often.

- D** **Describe** the current situation (if necessary). Stick to the facts (not feelings or thoughts).
- E** **Express** your feelings and opinions about the situation. Don't make assumptions.
- A** **Assert** yourself by asking for what you want or saying no clearly. Be specific.
- R** **Reinforce** (reward) the person ahead of time by explaining the pros of getting what you want.
- M** **Mindful**. Keep your focus on your goals. Maintain your position. Don't be distracted or get off topic.
- A** **Appear** confident, effective and competent. Use a confident voice and body language. Make eye contact.
- N** **Negotiate**, be willing to give to get. Offer and ask for other solutions to the problem.

### INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS SKILL

## GIVE

Get and keep relationships.

- G** **Gentle**. Be nice and respectful. No attacks, threats, judging or sneering.
- I** **Interested**. Listen and appear interested in the other person. Listen to the other person's perspective.
- V** **Validate** with words and actions, show that you understand the other person's feelings and thoughts.
- E** **Easy manner**. Use a little humor. Smile. Ease the person along. Be light-hearted. Sweet-talk. Be “political.”

### INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS SKILL

## FAST

Keep your self-respect.

- F** Be **Fair** to yourself and to the other person. Remember to validate yourself.
- A** **Apologies**. Don't overapologize. No apologizing for making requests or having an opinion.
- S** **Stick to your values**. Don't change your values to be liked. Stand up for what you believe in.
- T** **Truthful**. Don't lie. Don't act helpless, exaggerate or make up excuses.

# YOUR LEGITIMATE RIGHTS

- » You have a right to need things from others
- » You have a right to put yourself first sometimes
- » You have a right to make mistakes
- » You have a right to be the final judge of your feelings
- » You have a right to have your own opinions and convictions
- » You have a right to change your mind
- » You have a right to protest any treatment or criticism that feels bad
- » You have a right to interrupt in order to ask for clarification
- » You have a right to negotiate for change
- » You have a right to ask for help or emotional support
- » You have a right to feel and express pain
- » You have a right to ignore the advice of others
- » You have a right to receive recognition for your work and achievements
- » You have a right to say "no"
- » You have a right to be alone, even if others would prefer your company
- » You have a right not to have to justify yourself to others
- » You have a right to not take responsibility for someone else's problem
- » You have a right not to have to anticipate others' needs and wishes
- » You have a right not to always worry about the goodwill of others
- » You have a right to choose not to respond to a situation

# BOUNDARIES

Boundaries are about establishing what behavior you will accept from others and what others can expect from you.

## TYPES OF BOUNDARIES

- » Physical, sexual, intellectual, emotional, material and time spent

## WHAT TO SAY WHEN SETTING THEM

- » "I'm not comfortable with this"
- » "I'd love to, but I can't"
- » "Please don't do that"
- » "Not at this time"
- » "I can't do that for you"
- » "This doesn't work for me"
- » "I've decided not to"
- » "Another time might work"
- » "This is not acceptable"
- » "I'm drawing the line at \_"
- » "I don't want to do that"
- » "Not right now"

## HOW TO

# VALIDATE YOURSELF

- 1 Identify your emotions
- 2 Acknowledge your emotions
- 3 Try to understand why you feel this way
- 4 Completely accept your emotions & the situation
- 5 Practice self-love and self-compassion

# CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Conflict resolution is a way for two or more people or parties to find a solution that both are happy with.

- » **Understand the Conflict:** Why does this really matter to you? What do you want and need? What matters to them and what do they want and need?
- » **Use Reflective Listening:** Listen to what they're saying and then repeat that back to them.
- » **Use "I" Statements:** "I feel \_\_\_ when you \_\_\_" instead of "You make me feel \_\_\_."
- » **Focus on the Present:** Focus on what you can do here and now. We can't change the past.
- » **Take a Break:** When a conversation results in arguing or yelling, take a break until both parties cool down.
- » **Negotiate:** Try to find a resolution that will benefit both parties. Don't worry about winning or being right.

# WHAT DO EMOTIONS DO FOR US?

- »» Emotions motivate our behavior. Emotions prepare us for action. The action urge of specific emotions is often "hard-wired" in biology.
- »» Emotions save time in getting us to act in important situations. When we don't have time to think things through.
- »» We communicate our emotions through body language, facial expressions and voice tone.
- »» Emotional reactions can give us important information about a situation. Emotions can be signals or alarms that something is happening.

## EMOTIONAL REGULATION SKILL CHECK THE FACTS

EVENT → THOUGHTS → EMOTIONS  
EVENT → EMOTIONS → THOUGHTS

Check the Facts encourages you to think before you react on your emotions. It allows you to step back, assess the situation, and determine if what you're feeling is appropriate given the context.

- »» What is the emotion you want to change?
- »» What is the event prompting the emotion?
- »» What are your interpretations, thoughts and assumptions about the event?
- »» Are you assuming a threat?
- »» What's the catastrophe?
- »» Does your emotion and intensity fit the facts?

## EMOTIONAL REGULATION SKILL OPPOSITE ACTION

Use opposite action when your emotions do not fit the facts, and/or when acting on that emotion is no longer effective.

For example, if you are feeling lethargic and don't want to do anything, practice opposite action by doing a small task like tidying up a small space, washing dishes, or doing laundry.

EMOTION	ACTION	OPPOSITE ACTION
Anxiety/Fear →	Avoid →	Take action
Sadness →	Withdrawal →	Joyful activities
Anger →	Attack →	Avoid/distract
Envy →	Sabotaging →	Gratitude
Jealousy →	Spying →	Let go of control
Shame →	Hiding →	Be open/share
Guilt →	Hiding →	Be open/repair

## PROBLEM SOLVING

4 ways to solve a problem in DBT

- 1 Tolerate the problem
- 2 Feel better about the problem
- 3 Solve the problem
- 4 Make things worse



## IMAGINE YOUR EMOTIONS AS A WAVE



Say to yourself "I am feeling anxious" or "I am feeling \_\_\_\_." Imagine those feelings like waves in the ocean. You can't stop a strong wave from coming towards you. Don't try to get rid of the emotion or push it away. Don't block or suppress it. Alternatively, don't hold onto it or amplify it. Instead, ride the wave of emotion.

## EMOTIONAL REGULATION SKILL

# PLEASE

Take care of your mind by taking care of your body.

- P** Treat **Physical Illness**. Take care of your body. See a doctor when necessary. Take prescribed medication.
- E** Balanced **Eating**. Don't eat too much or too little. Eat regularly and mindfully throughout the day.
- A** Avoid **mood-Altering** substances. Stay off illicit drugs, and use alcohol in moderation (if at all).
- S** Balanced **Sleeping**. Try to get 7-9 hours of sleep a night, or at least the amount of sleep that helps you feel good.
- E** Get **Exercise**. Do some sort of exercise every day. Try to build up to 20 minutes of daily exercise.

## EMOTIONAL REGULATION SKILL

# THE ABC'S OF DBT

Improve your emotional health  
and reduce vulnerability.

- A** **Accumulate positive emotions**. Do pleasant things that are possible now. Make changes in your life so that positive events will happen more often in the future.
- B** **Build Mastery**. Do things that make you feel competent and effective to combat helplessness and hopelessness.
- C** **Cope ahead of time**. Rehearse a plan ahead of time so that you are prepared to cope skillfully with emotional situations.

## THE

# VITALS

## TO SUCCESS

Use this skill to set yourself up for success.

- V** **Validate** your feelings, the "I don't want to...", there is a real reason for how you feel.
- I** **Imagine** yourself doing it, peacefully and productively.
- T** **Take small steps**- break down the project into bite-size pieces.
- A** **Applaud yourself**. Encourage your efforts, cheerlead, and coach.
- L** **Lighten the load**- remember what you are getting out of this (reducing guilt, shame, or anxiety).
- S** **Sweeten the pot**- add something during or after that you like, reward your efforts.

# ACCUMULATE POSITIVES

Increase happiness by adding positive experiences to your life.

- »» Have a cup of tea or coffee
- »» Find a new hobby
- »» Plan a new career
- »» Go to or watch a movie
- »» Lay in the sun
- »» Listen to music
- »» Laugh (watch a comedy)
- »» Go for a walk/jog
- »» Touch something comforting
- »» Think about past good times
- »» Start a collection
- »» Spend time with friends
- »» Do nothing all day
- »» Take a nap
- »» Make a gift for someone
- »» Cooking/Baking
- »» Go hiking
- »» Write a poem
- »» Daydream
- »» Go for a drive
- »» Watch a TV show
- »» Make a To-Do list
- »» Exercise
- »» Listen to an audio book
- »» Meet new people
- »» Do something new
- »» Color in a coloring book
- »» Do your nails
- »» Join a book club
- »» Origami
- »» Camp in the backyard
- »» Connect on social media
- »» Plan a vacation
- »» Read a book/magazine
- »» Give yourself a spa day
- »» Craft something

# BEHAVIOR CHAIN ANALYSIS

- 1 Prompting Event
- 2 Problem Thought
- 3 Problem Emotion
- 4 Problem Behavior
- 5 Short-Term Relief
- 6 Long-Term Consequences

# THOUGHT MODIFICATION

»» **Radical Acceptance:** radical means all the way, complete and total. It's when you stop fighting reality and let go of bitterness. It is not approval, compassion, love, passivity, or against change. *Pain + non-acceptance = suffering.*

»» **Turning the mind** is like facing a fork in the road. You have to turn your mind toward the acceptance road, and away from the road of rejecting reality.

»» **Willingness** is readiness to enter and participate fully in life and living.

»» **Half-smiling and willing hands:** Relax every muscle in your face, let the corners of your lips go slightly up, and try to adopt a serene facial expression. Put your arms down by your side and turn your hands outward.

## DISTRESS TOLERANCE SKILL

# STOP

So you can respond instead of react.

- S** **Stop.** Do not just react. Stop! Freeze! Do not move a muscle! Your emotions may try to make you act without thinking. Stay in control!
- T** **Take a step back** from the situation, physically or mentally. Take a break. Let go. Take a deep breath. Do not let your feelings take over.
- O** **Observe.** Notice what is going on inside and outside you. What is the situation? What are your thoughts and feelings? What are others saying or doing?
- P** **Proceed mindfully.** Act with awareness. In deciding what to do, consider your thoughts and feelings, the situation, and other people's thoughts and feelings. Think about your goals. Ask your Wise Mind: Which actions will make it better or worse?

## DISTRESS TOLERANCE SKILL

# PROS & CONS

Use DBT pros and cons any time you have to decide between two or more options.

» In DBT, you consider the pros and cons of one option, as well as the pros and cons of another option. Or the pros and cons of acting on a behavior, and the pros and cons of not acting on that behavior. For example, a DBT pros and cons on procrastinating:

	PROS	CONS
NOT TAKING ACTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Don't have to work/study</li> <li>-Instant gratification</li> <li>-Can do whatever I want right now</li> <li>-Can ignore my problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Will regret it later</li> <li>-Guilt and self-criticism</li> <li>-Not making progress</li> <li>-Won't feel good</li> <li>-Future Stress</li> </ul>
TAKING ACTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-I'll be proud of myself</li> <li>-I'll be able to really relax after</li> <li>-I'll meet my goals</li> <li>-No future panic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-It's not fun</li> <li>-I'll feel anxious/stressed while doing it</li> <li>-It's hard</li> </ul>

## DISTRESS TOLERANCE SKILL

# TIPP

Change your body chemistry to calm down when in extreme distress.

- T** **Tip the Temperature.** Holding your breath, put your face in a bowl of cold water, or hold a cold pack (or zip-lock bag of cold water) on your eyes and cheeks. Hold for 30 seconds. Keep water above 50°F.
- I** **Intense Exercise.** Engage in intense exercise, if only for a short while.
- P** **Paced Breathing.** Breathe deeply into your belly. Slow your pace of inhaling and exhaling way down. Breathe out more slowly than you breathe in.
- P** **Paired Muscle Relaxation.** While breathing into your belly, deeply tense your body muscles (not so much as to cause a cramp). Notice the tension in your body. While breathing out, let go of the tension. Notice the difference in your body.

## DISTRESS TOLERANCE SKILL

# ACCEPTS

Ways to tolerate and accept distress.

- A** **Activities:** Focus on a task, clean up a room, play a game, go for a walk, listen to music, surf the internet.
- C** **Contributions:** Volunteer, help a friend, donate to those in need, call a friend, do something thoughtful.
- C** **Comparisons:** Compare the situation now to a time when things were worse to gain gratitude.
- E** **Emotions:** Act opposite to your emotion. Watch a funny video when sad, find a calm place when anxious.
- P** **Pushing Away:** Take total control of thoughts. Push away what doesn't serve you.
- T** **Thoughts:** Count to 10, count colors, watch tv or read. Anything that distracts the mind.
- S** **Sensations:** Use physical sensations to snap you out of the stress. Light a candle, take a warm bath.

## DISTRESS TOLERANCE SKILL

# IMPROVE

Ways to tolerate and accept distress.

- I** **Imagery:** Imagine a relaxing scene, imagine everything going well, remember a happy time.
- M** **Meaning:** Find purpose or meaning in a painful situation. How can you grow from this?
- P** **Prayer/Meditation:** Prayer can be to the universe, a higher being or your higher self. Ask for guidance.
- R** **Relax:** Find a way to release the stress. Relax your muscles, practice deep breathing, take a hot shower.
- O** **One thing in the moment:** Stay present, find one thing to do and focus entirely on it.
- V** **Vacation:** Take a break or do something you enjoy. Go for a walk or take a vacation in your mind.
- E** **Encouragement:** Activate your inner cheerleader. Say to yourself "I've got this" or "This too shall pass."

# SELF-SOOTHE WITH THE 5 SENSES

»» **VISION:** Look at the stars at night, look at soothing pictures, light a candle and watch the flame. Take a walk or scenic hike.

»» **HEARING:** Listen to soothing music, listen to sounds of nature, sing your favorite songs.

»» **SMELL:** Use your favorite soap, shampoo, perfume or lotion, light a scented candle, make cookies, smell flowers or nature.

»» **TASTE:** Have a cup of tea or coffee, eat some of your favorite foods, suck on hard candy, chew gum, have a smoothie.

»» **TOUCH:** Take a long hot shower or bath, pet your dog or cat, put lotion on, wrap up in a blanket, hug someone, massage yourself.

# ACCEPTANCE MINDSET

"It shouldn't be this way"

"It is what it is"

"What if I fail?"

"I can't predict the future"

"Ugh, I hate the rain."

"It's raining."

"I can't handle this."

"I am strong, I will survive this."

"I wish things had gone differently."

"Thinking of the past just robs me of the present."



# RADICAL ACCEPTANCE COPING STATEMENTS

"This is difficult, but it is temporary."

"I have dealt with problems before and I can deal with this."

"This feeling will pass and I will be okay."

"I can't change the situation, but I can control how I respond to it."

"It's okay to feel anxious/upset/mad. I can still deal with this effectively."

"I can't change what has already happened."

## I CANNOT CONTROL

(So I can LET GO of these things)

