

DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOR THERAPY — WORKBOOK —

Mindfulness

Distress Tolerance

Emotional Regulation

Interpersonal Effectiveness

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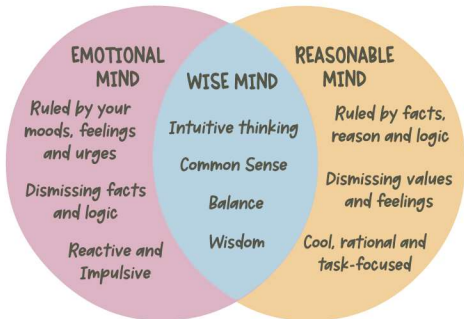
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DBT CHEAT SHEET



Mindfulness

Wise Mind

The synthesis of emotional mind & reasonable mind. The wisdom within.

"What" Skills

Observe: Just notice
Describe: Put words on
Participate: Enter into the experience

"How" Skills

One-Mindfully
Non-Judgmentally
Effectively

Interpersonal Effectiveness

- Ask for what you want & get it more often
- Say "no" & set boundaries
- Resolve conflict effectively

DEAR MAN

- D** Describe the situation
- E** Express your feelings
- A** Assert yourself
- R** Reinforce the person
- M** Mindful, focus on goals
- A** Appear confident
- N** Negotiate, give to get

GIVE

- G** Gentle, be nice
- I** Interested, listen
- V** Validate, be understanding
- E** Easy manner, use humor

FAST

- F** Fair, to yourself and others
- A** Apologies, only if necessary
- S** Stick to your values
- T** Truthful

Emotional Regulation

VITALS to Success

- V** Validate yourself
- I** Imagine success
- T** Take small steps
- A** Applaud yourself
- L** Lighten the load
- S** Sweeten the pot

The ABC's of DBT

- A** Accumulate positive experiences
- B** Build mastery
- C** Cope ahead of time

PLEASE

- P** Treat Physical illness, see doctor, take meds
- L** Eating (balanced)
- A** Avoid mood altering drugs
- S** Sleep (balanced)
- E** Exercise (get)

Check the Facts

Experience Emotions & Urges as Waves

Act Opposite to Emotion

Loving emotions: experience, don't judge, accept

Thoughts, feelings & emotions are not facts

Distress Tolerance

TIPP

- T** Tip the temperature
- I** Intense exercise
- P** Paced breathing
- P** Progressive muscle relaxation

STOP

- S** Stop what you're doing
- T** Take a step back
- O** Observe
- P** Proceed mindfully

ACCEPTS

- A** Activities
- C** Contributions
- C** Comparison
- E** Emotion opposites
- P** Pushing away
- T** Thoughts
- S** Sensations

IMPROVE

- I** Imagery
- M** Meaning
- P** Prayer
- R** Relax
- O** One thing at a time
- V** Vacation
- E** Encouragement

Thought Modification

- Radical acceptance
- Turn the mind to acceptance
- Pain + non-acceptance = suffering

Self-soothe with the 5 senses

→ vision, touch, hearing, smell, taste

Pros/Cons

Half smile/willing hands

Observe the breath



Dialectical Behavior Therapy

DATE: _____
TB: _____

TARGET BEHAVIOR			EMOTIONS								
Rx	Urge	Action	Pain	Sad	Shame	Anger	Fear	Joy	Anxious	Loving	
M											
T											
W											
T											
F											
S											
S											

Rx = prescribed meds/vitamins

A **target behavior (TB)** is a behavior that is hindering your life that you would like to change. In the **urge** column, rate your desire to do that behavior on a scale of 0-5 where 0 is the least intense and 5 is the most intense. For the **action** column, use y/n to signify if you did that behavior.

Use the same 0-5 scale for the intensity of your **emotions**.

How to use these skills: Awareness, Acceptance, Action

			M	T	W	T	F	S	S
Mindfulness	WHAT SKILLS	Wise Mind = Emotional Mind + Reasonable Mind							
		Observe: just notice (thoughts, feelings, body sensations & surroundings)							
		Describe: put words on, labeling, just the facts							
	HOW SKILLS	Participate: enter into the experience, go with the flow							
		One-Mindfully: in the moment, one thing at a time							
		Non-Judgmentally: not good or bad, just the facts, accept							
Interpersonal Effectiveness	GOALS	Ask for what you want & get it more often							
		Say "no" & set boundaries							
		Resolve conflict effectively & skillfully							
		DEAR MAN: describe, express, assert, reinforce, mindful, appear confident, negotiate							
		GIVE: gentle, interested, validate, easy manner							
		FAST: fair, apologies, stick to your values, truthful							
Emotional Regulation	ABC'S	VITALS: validate, imagine, take small steps, applaud yourself, lighten the load, sweeten the pot							
		Accumulate positive experiences							
		Build mastery							
	PLEASE <i>Take care of your mind by taking care of your body</i>	Cope ahead of time							
		P & L: Treat Physical illness , see doctor if necessary, take meds							
		Eating: balanced eating, eat regularly & mindfully							
		Avoid mood Altering drugs							
		Sleep: balanced sleeping, aim for 7-9 hours a night							
		Exercise: get consistently, aim for daily exercise							
		Check the facts: thoughts, feelings, interpretations & assumptions are not facts							
		Act Opposite to Emotion							
		Experience your emotion/urge as a wave							
Loving emotions: experience, don't judge, accept									
Distress Tolerance	"THIS TOO, SHALL PASS."	TIPP: tip the temperature, intense exercise, paced breathing, progressive muscle relaxation							
		STOP: stop what you're doing, take a step back, observe, proceed mindfully							
		ACCEPTS: activities, contributions, comparison, emotions, pushing away, thoughts, sensations							
		IMPROVE: imagery, meaning, prayer, relax, one thing at a time, vacation, encouragement							
		Self-soothe with the 5 senses: vision, touch, hearing, smell, taste							
		Pros/Cons: of doing a behavior & not doing a behavior or two options							
		Radical acceptance, willingness, turn the mind to acceptance							
		Half-smile, willing hands							
	Observe the breath: breathe in for 4, hold for 7, breathe out for 8								

SUNDAY

Date: _____

Today's SUDS score (0-100): _____

To Do's

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Target Behavior

(The behavior I want to change)

What I can do instead
of doing this behavior:

I did this behavior: YES NO

Self Care

- Balanced sleep / hours: _____
- Drank enough water / cups: _____
- Ate balanced meals
- Avoided alcohol / recreational drugs
- Exercise / joyful movement
- Took prescribed meds / vitamins
- Showered & brushed teeth
- Went outside / got some sunshine
- Focused on doing what works

Mindfulness

Distress Tolerance

Emotional Regulation

Interpersonal Effectiveness

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Today's strongest emotions:

What happened that caused these emotions?

Thoughts I had that were related to these emotions:

Did this emotion make sense for the situation?

1 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>

What are these emotions telling me?

How can I cope?

Daily Gratitude

_____	_____	1 _____
_____	_____	2 _____
_____	_____	3 _____
_____	_____	4 _____
_____	_____	5 _____

MONDAY

Date: _____

Today's SUDS score (0-100): _____

To Do's

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Target Behavior

(The behavior I want to change)

What I can do instead of doing this behavior:

I did this behavior: YES NO

Self Care

- Balanced sleep / hours: _____
- Drank enough water / cups: _____
- Ate balanced meals
- Avoided alcohol / recreational drugs
- Exercise / joyful movement
- Took prescribed meds / vitamins
- Showered & brushed teeth
- Went outside / got some sunshine
- Focused on doing what works

Mindfulness

Distress Tolerance

Emotional Regulation

Interpersonal Effectiveness

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Today's strongest emotions:

What happened that caused these emotions?

Thoughts I had that were related to these emotions:

Did this emotion make sense for the situation?

1 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>

What are these emotions telling me?

How can I cope?

Daily Gratitude

_____	_____	1 _____
_____	_____	2 _____
_____	_____	3 _____
_____	_____	4 _____
_____	_____	5 _____

TUESDAY

Date: _____

Today's SUDS score (0-100): _____

To Do's

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Target Behavior

(The behavior I want to change)

What I can do instead
of doing this behavior:

I did this behavior: YES NO

Self Care

- Balanced sleep / hours: _____
- Drank enough water / cups: _____
- Ate balanced meals
- Avoided alcohol / recreational drugs
- Exercise / joyful movement
- Took prescribed meds / vitamins
- Showered & brushed teeth
- Went outside / got some sunshine
- Focused on doing what works

Mindfulness

Distress Tolerance

Emotional Regulation

Interpersonal Effectiveness

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Today's strongest emotions:

What happened that caused these emotions?

Thoughts I had that were related to these emotions:

Did this emotion make sense for the situation?

1 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>

What are these emotions telling me?

How can I cope?

Daily Gratitude

_____	_____	1 _____
_____	_____	2 _____
_____	_____	3 _____
_____	_____	4 _____
_____	_____	5 _____

WEDNESDAY

Date: _____

Today's SUDS score (0-100): _____

To Do's

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Target Behavior

(The behavior I want to change)

What I can do instead
of doing this behavior:

I did this behavior: YES NO

Self Care

- Balanced sleep / hours: _____
- Drank enough water / cups: _____
- Ate balanced meals
- Avoided alcohol / recreational drugs
- Exercise / joyful movement
- Took prescribed meds / vitamins
- Showered & brushed teeth
- Went outside / got some sunshine
- Focused on doing what works

Mindfulness

Distress Tolerance

Emotional Regulation

Interpersonal Effectiveness

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Today's strongest emotions:

What happened that caused these emotions?

Thoughts I had that were related to these emotions:

Did this emotion make sense for the situation?

1 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>

What are these emotions telling me?

How can I cope?

Daily Gratitude

_____	_____	1 _____
_____	_____	2 _____
_____	_____	3 _____
_____	_____	4 _____
_____	_____	5 _____

THURSDAY

Date: _____

Today's SUDS score (0-100): _____

To Do's

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Target Behavior

(The behavior I want to change)

What I can do instead of doing this behavior:

I did this behavior: YES NO

Self Care

- Balanced sleep / hours: _____
- Drank enough water / cups: _____
- Ate balanced meals
- Avoided alcohol / recreational drugs
- Exercise / joyful movement
- Took prescribed meds / vitamins
- Showered & brushed teeth
- Went outside / got some sunshine
- Focused on doing what works

Mindfulness

Distress Tolerance

Emotional Regulation

Interpersonal Effectiveness

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Today's strongest emotions:

What happened that caused these emotions?

Thoughts I had that were related to these emotions:

Did this emotion make sense for the situation?

1 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>

What are these emotions telling me?

How can I cope?

Daily Gratitude

_____	_____	1 _____
_____	_____	2 _____
_____	_____	3 _____
_____	_____	4 _____
_____	_____	5 _____

FRIDAY

Date: _____

Today's SUDS score (0-100): _____

To Do's

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Target Behavior

(The behavior I want to change)

What I can do instead
of doing this behavior:

I did this behavior: YES NO

Self Care

- Balanced sleep / hours: _____
- Drank enough water / cups: _____
- Ate balanced meals
- Avoided alcohol / recreational drugs
- Exercise / joyful movement
- Took prescribed meds / vitamins
- Showered & brushed teeth
- Went outside / got some sunshine
- Focused on doing what works

Mindfulness

Distress Tolerance

Emotional Regulation

Interpersonal Effectiveness

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Today's strongest emotions:

What happened that caused these emotions?

Thoughts I had that were related to these emotions:

Did this emotion make sense for the situation?

1 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>

What are these emotions telling me?

How can I cope?

Daily Gratitude

_____	_____	1 _____
_____	_____	2 _____
_____	_____	3 _____
_____	_____	4 _____
_____	_____	5 _____

SATURDAY

Date: _____

Today's SUDS score (0-100): _____

To Do's

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Target Behavior

(The behavior I want to change)

What I can do instead
of doing this behavior:

I did this behavior: YES NO

Self Care

- Balanced sleep / hours: _____
- Drank enough water / cups: _____
- Ate balanced meals
- Avoided alcohol / recreational drugs
- Exercise / joyful movement
- Took prescribed meds / vitamins
- Showered & brushed teeth
- Went outside / got some sunshine
- Focused on doing what works

Mindfulness

Distress Tolerance

Emotional Regulation

Interpersonal Effectiveness

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Today's strongest emotions:

What happened that caused these emotions?

Thoughts I had that were related to these emotions:

Did this emotion make sense for the situation?

1 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>

What are these emotions telling me?

How can I cope?

Daily Gratitude

_____	_____	1 _____
_____	_____	2 _____
_____	_____	3 _____
_____	_____	4 _____
_____	_____	5 _____

MINDFULNESS

Awareness of our emotions, feelings, thoughts and body sensations. Being fully immersed in the present moment with acceptance and without judgment.

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

-Jon Kabat-Zinn

MINDFULNESS GOALS

Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing. Not trapped in the painful past or worrying about the future. To just be, in the moment.

In DBT, our goals are to:

- 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 "WHAT" SKILLS

OBSERVE

Notice your environment and what is around you. What thoughts, feelings, and sensations are you experiencing? Simply observe without having any reaction. Do not attach a label or judgment to your observations. Notice your emotions and your thought processes. Do not push anything away - open yourself to all thoughts, feelings, and observations as they arise. Use your five senses (sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch) to improve your observation skills.

- »» Lie on the ground and watch the clouds in the sky
- »» Stop for a moment and just listen
- »» Breathing in, notice any smells around you
- »» Eat some candy, pay attention to the taste
- »» Notice any urge to avoid someone or something
- »» Focus your attention on the space between your eyes
- »» Focus on the pauses in your breathing
- »» Notice thoughts as they come into your mind

DESCRIBE

Use words to describe your experience. It can be helpful to say this out loud. "I am observing that I feel anxious. I had the thought that I am in danger. I notice that my heart rate is speeding up." Once again, be careful not to attach any labels or judgments to what you are describing.

- »» Describe your feelings as they arise within you
- »» Describe your thoughts when you feel an emotion
- »» Describe what a person has done or is doing now
- »» Find things in nature and describe them
- »» Describe the clouds you see when cloud watching
- »» Hold a penny and describe how it looks and feels
- »» Drink a beverage and describe how it tastes
- »» Look at a picture or art and describe it

PARTICIPATE

Practice throwing yourself into each experience—stay in the "NOW." Integrate your observe and describe skills into what you are doing. Open yourself up to every experience, once again without judgment, expectations, or labels. Practice having a "Teflon Mind" and let go of any negative or self-critical thoughts. Don't let your judging thoughts stick in your mind.

- »» Dance or sing along to music
- »» Throw yourself into what another person is saying
- »» Go for a walk, focusing only on walking
- »» Focus on your feet touching the ground
- »» Take a shower and be fully in that moment
- »» Watch a tv show without multi-tasking
- »» Become a word as you repeat it over and over
- »» Immerse yourself completely while washing the dishes

MINDFULNESS "HOW" SKILLS

NON-JUDGMENTALLY

When you practice mindfulness, you let go of judgments. You notice and release judgments you may have about yourself (e.g. "I'm not doing this right!"), others (e.g. "She's not doing it right"), your experience or anything else. If you find yourself judging (which you probably will) *don't judge your judging*. Most of us judge automatically, habitually and continuously. Judging becomes such a part of our internal dialogue that we don't notice how.

- » Practice observing judgmental thoughts, saying in your mind, "A judgmental thought arose in my mind."
- » Observe your judgmental expressions, postures, and voice tones.
- » Replace judgmental thoughts and statements with nonjudgmental thoughts and statements.
- » Write out a nonjudgmental description of an event that prompted an emotion.

ONE-MINDFULLY

One-Mindfully is being fully present in the moment, not lost in the past or thinking about the future. It's doing *one thing at a time, with full awareness* (rather than splitting your attention between things – like having a conversation on the phone while checking your email).

- » Awareness while making tea or coffee
- » Awareness while washing the dishes
- » Awareness while studying
- » Awareness while cleaning the house
- » Awareness while taking a shower
- » Awareness when meditating
- » Awareness when having a conversation
- » Awareness while taking a walk

EFFECTIVELY

This skill is about acting effectively, which means doing what works vs. sitting on your hands and wishing reality were different. Effectively in DBT is about shifting the focus away from concepts of fair and unfair, or who is right and who is wrong, in order to do what works. When you're not focused on doing what's effective, you may act in ways that are more about being right or proving a point. Trying to be right can get in the way of getting what you want or need.

- » Observe when you begin to get angry or hostile with someone. Ask yourself, "Is this effective?"
- » Instead of thinking about how a situation is unfair, accept it for what it is.
- » Observe yourself when you start wanting to be "right" instead of effective. Give up being "right" and switch to trying to be effective.
- » Identify what you really want out of a situation.

MINDFULNESS MEDITATIONS

IMAGERY MEDITATION

Sit quietly and relax using mindful breathing. Think of a place that's calming for you. This could be at the beach, in a forest, or at home. Imagine being in this calming place. What do you see? What can you touch? What can you hear? For example, if you are on a mountain, imagine that you can feel the sun on your face and the cool breeze. Lean into the experience, breathe and relax.

BAND-OF-LIGHT MEDITATION

Sit quietly and relax using mindful breathing. 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.

MUSCLE RELAXATION

To do this you will be purposely tensing each muscle and releasing the tension. This will help you relax every muscle in your body. Start by tensing the muscles in your toes by curling them into your foot. Hold the tension for 5 seconds and then release. Notice how your muscles relax. Repeat this process in your legs, pelvis, torso, shoulders arms, hands, neck and jaw.

WALKING MEDITATION

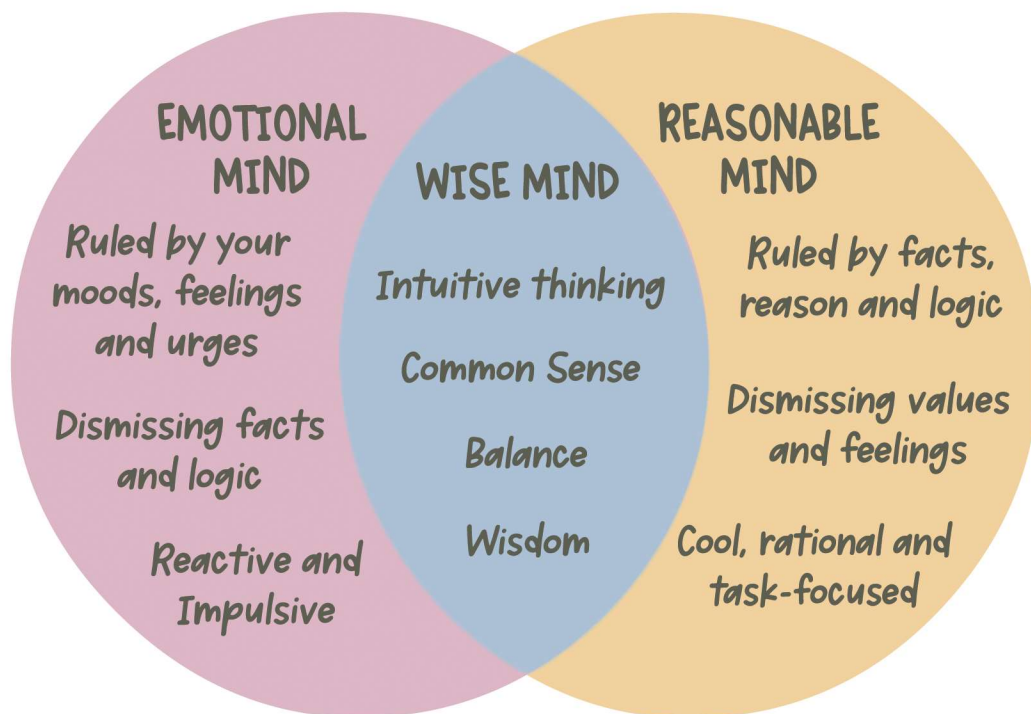
Stand up STRAIGHT with your back upright but not stiff. Feel your feet touching the ground and let your weight distribute evenly. Step out with your left FOOT. Feel it swing, feel the heel hit the ground, now the ball, now the toes. FEEL the same as the right foot comes forward. Walk at a STEADY pace, slightly slower than in daily life but not funereal. When your attention wanders, bring it back to the sensations of your feet touching the ground.

BEDTIME MEDITATION

Avoid looking at anything with a screen. Stow away your tablet, phone, computer, and TV for the night - the light can keep you awake and alert. Ten minutes before bedtime, begin a focused mindfulness exercise. Sit in a comfortable chair in the same dimly lit room. Imagine the outline of your body and slowly trace it in your head. Keep in mind the amount of pressure you're feeling against the chair or the ground and be mindful of where there's more pressure and where there's less. Spend around five minutes breathing mindfully. If your mind begins to wander, notice that it wandered and get back on track. Try to avoid judging yourself. Get in bed and focus on your breath. If you are unable to fall asleep, get up, sit in the comfortable chair again and repeat the exercise. Don't get back into bed until you're sleepy - and don't sleep in the chair!

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.



The next time you have an urge to act or need to make an important decision, ask yourself, "Am I acting from wise mind?" Find the balance between emotion and reason.

WISE MIND MEDITATIONS

FOCUS ON YOUR BREATH

Take a moment to settle yourself into a comfortable meditative position. Breathe in and out, drawing your conscious attention to your breath as it fills and leaves your lungs. Allow your attention to shift towards your center, settling yourself into the bottom of each breath. Now focus your mindful awareness towards the center of your forehead (your third eye) as you settle into the top of each breath. Notice how you can consciously control your attention as you focus on the top and bottom of each breath.

DROP INTO THE PAUSES

As you engage in mindful breathing, allowing yourself to notice the "pause" after each inhalation and each exhalation. This pause is much like the still space that exists when leaping between trapeze bars. Notice the stillness within each pause. Allow yourself to find awareness in the pauses at the top and bottom of each breath. Settle in to each pause and find stillness within.

STONE FLAKE ON A LAKE

To engage in this visualization exercise, imagine that you are seated next to a crystal clear lake on a beautiful sunny day. Imagine that you are a small flake of stone, chipped from a much larger rock, that someone has gently thrown out into the center of the lake. You are gently floating there on the placid surface of the still water. Now you begin to gently and slowly float downward in the cool water toward the smooth, sandy bottom of the lake. Notice the look and feel of the water as you gently float to the bottom. Notice the feel of the smooth sand as you lightly rest upon it. Become aware of the peace and serenity at the bottom of the lake. This deep stillness and serenity is the calm center of yourself. Allow your attention to settle into this calm centered place within.

BREATHE "WISE" IN, BREATHE "MIND" OUT

This exercise is particularly helpful if you feel stuck in emotion mind and are feeling overwhelmed. In these moments, it may be difficult to focus your attention on a longer visualization exercise. At times like this, simply notice that you are feeling intense emotions and begin to direct your focus toward your breath. As you pull the air into your lungs, say the word "wise" in your mind. As the air leaves your lungs, say the word "mind" to yourself. The idea is to focus your attention entirely on these words as you breathe in and out to begin to settle yourself back into a place of calmness and wisdom.

MINDFULNESS OF CURRENT THOUGHTS

Mindfulness of current thoughts involves stepping back and seeing your thoughts for what they really are- just thoughts. Even though thoughts feel extremely powerful, sometimes painful, and sometimes joyous, thoughts are not facts. When we get stuck to our thoughts or take them as literal truth, we can end up walking down a very dangerous path. So, the idea here is to unglue yourself from your thoughts. If they are effective, go with them, but when they are ineffective, let them go.

How to be mindful of thoughts:

- 1 **Observe your thoughts:** As waves, coming and going, acknowledge their presence, don't suppress, judge or analyze them, let them go in and out of your mind.
- 2 **Adopt a curious mind:** Think about where your thoughts are coming from, notice that thoughts come and go, accept them and let go of judgments.
- 3 **You are not your thoughts:** Do not act on your thoughts. remember times when you have had different thoughts, identify thoughts that are coming from "emotion mind", remember how you think when you are not stressed or in pain.
- 4 **Don't suppress your thoughts:** Identify the emotions or physical feelings these thoughts are trying to avoid, allow thoughts to come and go, repeat them out loud over and over to desensitize yourself to them, try loving them.

Ways to practice:

- »» Imagine your thoughts coming down a conveyor belt and being dropped into a box
- »» Imagine your thoughts as clouds in the sky being swept away by the wind
- »» Imagine a white room with two doors, watch your thoughts come in one door and out the other. Observe them as they're in the room and watch with curiosity
- »» Imagine your thoughts as captions scrolling down on a movie screen
- »» Imagine a railroad track with your thoughts passing by as train cars
- »» Imagine it's raining and your thoughts are rain drops falling in and being carried down a beautiful creek

THOUGHT DEFUSION

Automatic negative thoughts are a natural part of the human experience. For the most part, we don't conjure them up or think them on purpose. They happen instinctively. Thoughts Defusion creates distance from those pesky negative thoughts that you need some space from.

For example, sit quietly and relax using mindful breathing. Then, observe your thoughts coming and going - one by one - without getting attached to them. Imagine your thoughts drifting away like clouds or past in a stream. Observe your thoughts without judging them or holding onto them. Just watch them come and go.

LOVING KINDNESS

Close your eyes. Sit comfortably with your feet flat on the floor and your spine straight. Relax your whole body. Keep your eyes closed throughout the whole visualization and bring your awareness inward. Without straining or concentrating, just relax and gently follow the instructions. Take a deep breath in. And breathe out.

When you feel comfortable resting with the flow of your breathing, picture someone in your life who loves you, or who loved you unconditionally. Evoking and giving yourself over to feeling the qualities of the selfless love and kindness they grant you, or granted you, and the whole aura or field of their love for you - right here, right now, breathing with these feelings, bathing in them, resting in the warmth and radiance of their heartfelt embracing of you just as you are. Or drinking in the experience that you are unequivocally and unconditionally loved and accepted as you are - without having to be different, without having to be worthy of their love, without having to be particularly deserving.

WALKING THE MIDDLE PATH

To Walk the Middle Path means replacing "either-or" thinking with collaborative "both-and" thinking. Too often, we make up our minds about how we feel about something using a black and white, all or nothing, decision-making construct. When we do this, we run the risk of being out of balance – not giving deserved validation to another way of thinking. When we disagree with someone, it may be natural to believe that they are wrong and we are right. But is this necessarily how it is? Not if we take a dialectical approach to our thinking, appreciating that there's always more than one way to view something. When we replace "either I'm right or they are right," with "I'm right and they are right," then we can see each perspective as an opinion rather than an absolute truth.

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

- »» *There's more than one side to each situation. There's more than one way to look at a situation or solve a problem. Two things that seem like opposites can both be true. People who disagree with you can still have correct opinions.*
- »» *The only thing that doesn't change is change. Nothing is constant. Every time it seems like you've gotten things settled, they change again. Your moods, relationships, even the cells of your body are constantly changing.*
- »» *Change is transactional. What we do influences our environment and other people; what the environment and other people do influences us. Pay attention both to your effect on others and their effect on you. Let go of blame by thinking about how both your actions and other people's are caused a life of learning—for better or worse. People do things for reasons.*

WILLINGNESS

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

- »» Do just what is needed in each situation
- »» Do it wholeheartedly, without dragging your feet
- »» Listen to and act with your Wise Mind
- »» Act with awareness that you are connected to everyone and everything

WILLFULNESS

Willfulness is refusal to participate and intentional disobedience.

- »» Refusing to tolerate the moment or change it
- »» Giving up and not focusing on what's effective
- »» Wanting to always be in control and trying to fix what you can't control
- »» All about you and wanting everything right now

HOW TO TURN WILLFULNESS INTO WILLINGNESS

- 1 **Observe** the willfulness. Label it. Experience it.
- 2 **Radically accept** that in this moment you feel (and may be acting) willful. You cannot fight willfulness with willfulness.
- 3 **Turn your mind** toward acceptance and willingness.
- 4 Try **half-smiling** and **willing hands**.
- 5 When willfulness is immovable, ask, "**What's the threat?**"

DISTRESS TOLERANCE

Learn to tolerate emotional pain and distress by using coping skills that work. Accepting our reality ensures pain doesn't turn into suffering.

"Pain is not wrong. Reacting to pain as wrong initiates the trance of unworthiness. The moment we believe something is wrong, our world shrinks and we lose ourselves in the effort to combat the pain."

- Tara Brach

SYMPTOMS OF STRESS

Symptoms that occur before or during a stressful situation:

PHYSICAL

- »» Asthma
- »» Headaches
- »» Migraines
- »» Back pain
- »» Sweating
- »» Nausea
- »» Indigestion
- »» Chest pain
- »» Fatigue

EMOTIONAL/COGNITIVE

- »» Worry
- »» Irritability
- »» Anger
- »» Loss of motivation
- »» Difficulty concentrating
- »» Mood instability
- »» Decreased sex drive
- »» Memory problems

BEHAVIORAL

- »» Nail biting
- »» Constant thoughts about stressors
- »» Restlessness
- »» Teeth grinding
- »» Disrupted sleep, diet, and exercise
- »» Interpersonal conflict
- »» Social withdrawal
- »» Substance use
- »» Procrastination

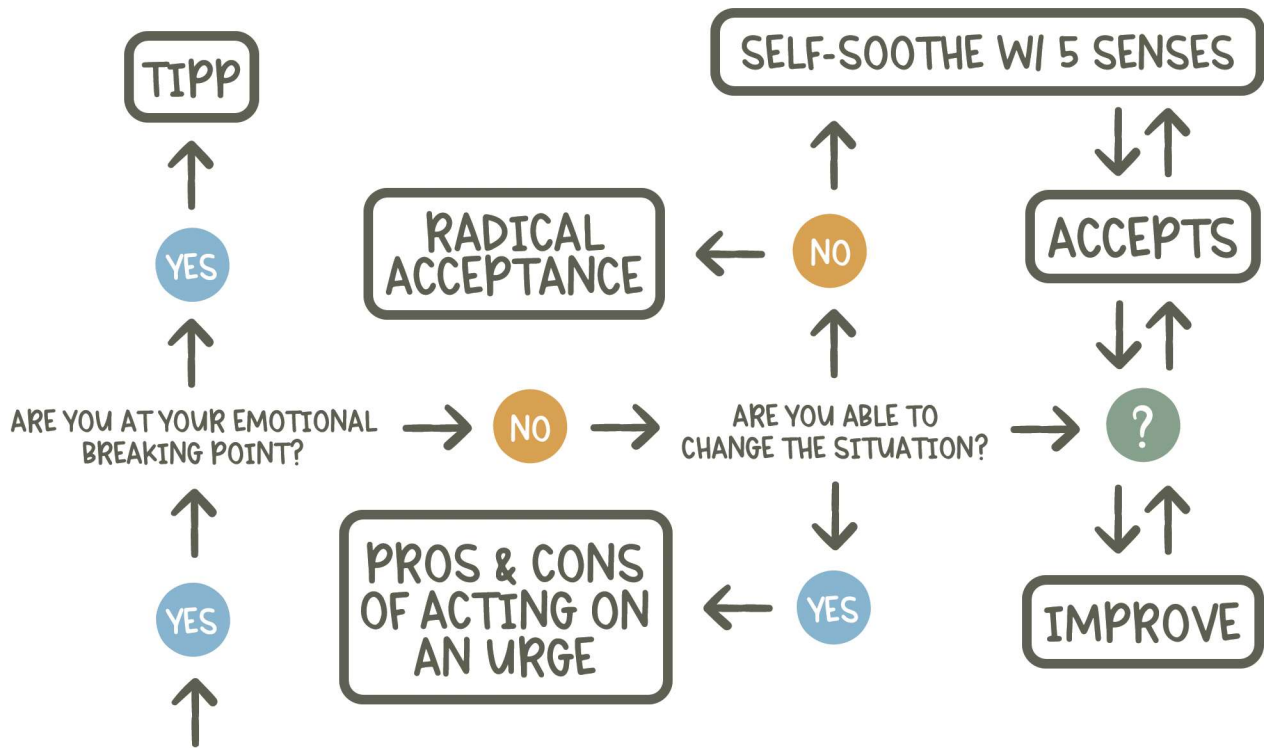
SYMPTOMS AND CONSEQUENCES OF LONG-TERM STRESS:

- »» Heart disease
- »» Anxiety disorders
- »» Skin diseases
- »» Depression
- »» Memory impairment
- »» Substance use
- »» Sleep disorders
- »» Weakened immune system
- »» Poor diet and exercise habits

UNHEALTHY COPING BEHAVIORS:

- »» Criticizing yourself (negative self-talk)
- »» Driving fast in a car
- »» Chewing your fingernails
- »» Becoming aggressive or violent
- »» Eating too much or too little
- »» Too much caffeine
- »» Smoking or chewing tobacco
- »» Drinking alcohol
- »» Yelling at your spouse, children, or friends
- »» Taking a recreational drug, or misusing prescription medicine
- »» Avoiding friends and family

DISTRESS TOLERANCE SKILLS GUIDE



ARE YOU IN CRISIS?

(SUDS LEVEL OF 70 OR HIGHER)



TIPP

SELF-SOOTHE W/ 5 SENSES

RADICAL ACCEPTANCE

ACCEPTS

ARE YOU AT YOUR EMOTIONAL BREAKING POINT?

NO

ARE YOU ABLE TO CHANGE THE SITUATION?

?

YES

PROS & CONS OF ACTING ON AN URGE

YES

IMPROVE

ARE YOU IN CRISIS?

(SUDS LEVEL OF 70 OR HIGHER)

ACCEPTS

YES

NO

IMPROVE

DO YOU FEEL ANXIOUS OR STRESSED?

NO

DO YOU THINK YOU'LL BE IN CRISIS SOON?

SELF-SOOTHE W/ 5 SENSES

NO

PROS & CONS + RADICAL ACCEPTANCE

YES

PRACTICE OTHER DBT SKILLS

HALT SKILL



Before engaging in any self destructive behavior, ask yourself, are you:



Hungry. Hunger can put the body in an imbalanced state that can lead to mood swings, affect our ability to make decisions, and lower our impulse control. Get something nutritious to eat and make sure to stay hydrated.



Angry. When we are angry or experiencing negative emotions, we may not be able to think rationally. If you feel angry, take some time to calm down first. Try using DBT skills like Radical Acceptance, TIPP, Half-Smile Willing Hands or Opposite Action.



Lonely. We all experience loneliness at times in our lives. Even when people surround us, we may not be actively interacting with them. Reach out to someone who you have positive experiences with. Even brief encounters can help reduce feelings of loneliness.



Tired. When we are physically and emotionally tired, we are often more likely to engage in more negative thinking patterns and interactions. Try to get 7-9 hours of sleep a night, avoid electronic devices before bed and keep a consistent sleep schedule.

STOP SKILL



The STOP skill helps us respond instead of immediately reacting.

S Stop

Freeze in your tracks. Don't move. Try visualizing a red STOP sign in front of you. Don't react when your emotions are hot and filled with energy. Don't let your emotions control you.

T Take a step back

You can do this in your mind or you can physically take a step back. This helps you unglue yourself from the intensity of the urge to react. Once you've taken a step back, notice how you're breathing.

O Observe

If there are other people around you, notice what they're doing or saying. Notice what you're thinking and feeling. What is the situation? Think about the bigger picture.

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 what to do.

TIPP SKILLS FOR EXTREME DISTRESS

When emotions are out of control, you can use TIPP skills to bring down the intensity. There are four TIPP skills described in dialectical behavior therapy (DBT). Using them in a crisis can calm things to the point that we can then use other coping skills. These skills are meant to be used when you are in extreme distress- when at your max.



Tip the Temperature - by changing our body temperature, we can quickly decrease the intensity of an emotion. Dip your face in cold water (not less than 50 degrees) and hold your breath. Try to hold it there for 30 to 60 seconds. You can also try an ice pack on your face around your eyes and cheeks.



Intense Exercise - by engaging in intense cardio/aerobic exercise, you engage your body in a way that de-escalates intense emotions. Ideally, try to exercise for 20 minutes or more, but if that's not possible, do what you can.



Paced Breathing - try to slow your breathing down to 5 or 6 breaths per minute. Try to aim for a full breath lasting 10 to 12 seconds. You can also use 4-7-8 breathing; breath in while slowing counting to 4, hold your breath while quickly counting to 7 and breath out while very slowly counting to 8.



Paired Muscle Relaxation - practice tensing your muscles as you breathe in for 5-6 seconds. Notice that feeling. Then relax them as you breathe out, paying attention to how that feels as you do it. Notice the difference between the feeling of tension and the feeling of relaxation. Do this for every muscle in your body, scanning from the top of your head to your toes.

DISTRESS TOLERANCE SKILL

ACCEPTS

In the moment, distressing emotions may seem impossible to overcome. However, over time, these emotions will lessen in intensity, and eventually fade away. The DBT skill ACCEPTS outlines seven techniques for distracting yourself from distressing emotions until they pass.



Activities:

Do an activity that requires thought and concentration. Clean up a room, play a game, go for a walk, eat your favorite food, listen to music, or surf the internet.



Contributions:

Do something that allows you to focus on another person. Volunteer, help a friend, donate to those in need, make a gift for a loved one, or send a thoughtful card.



Comparisons:

Put your situation in perspective by comparing it to something more painful or distressing. Realize how resilient you are by thinking of someone who isn't coping as well.



Emotions:

Do something to create a new emotion that will compete with your distressing emotion. Sad? Watch a happy movie. Anxious? Practice deep breathing. Angry? Go for a walk.



Pushing Away:

Avoid a painful situation or block it from your mind using a technique such as imagery. Imagine putting your negative thoughts in a box, taping it shut, and putting it away.



Thoughts:

Use a mental strategy or an activity to shift your thoughts to something neutral. Starting with "A," name objects around you that start with each letter of the alphabet.



Sensations:

Find safe, physical sensations to distract you from distressing emotions. Hold ice in your hand, take a shower or bath, or eat something sour or spicy.

DISTRESS TOLERANCE SKILL

ACCEPTS

DISTRACTION PLAN

For each letter of ACCEPTS, list several activities to create your own distraction plan for tolerating distress. List activities that you are likely to use.

The emotion(s) you would like to distract yourself from: _____



Activities:



Contributions:



Comparisons:



Emotions:



Pushing Away:



Thoughts:



Sensations:

IMPROVE THE MOMENT

The DBT IMPROVE the Moment skills include many activities that can help you through emotionally difficult situations. Use the "IMPROVE Activities" sheet to find the activities that are the most effective for you.



Imagery

Use your imagination to create a better situation than the one that you're currently in. Transport yourself to a safe space in which everything will turn out okay. Visualize a soothing situation.



Meaning

Look for ways you can focus on the things that are important to you. Consider what your values are, and find a purpose or reason for what you are going through.



Prayer

Connect to something greater and open yourself up to the moment. Prayer does not have to have a religious connotation. You can use a mantra, a quote or even a song lyric to ground you.



Relaxation

When your body is calm, your mind will likely feel calm as well. You could take a warm bath or shower. Practice yoga or do some deep breathing. Go for a walk somewhere safe and soothing.



One thing in the moment

Bring a mindful focus to what you're doing. Tune in to the present and focus on your breath in this moment, your sensations in this moment, your thoughts in this moment, etc.



Vacation

We all need a break now and then. A vacation does not need to be an actual trip. It can be as simple as putting down our work and watching TV for a few hours.



Encouragement

Sometimes we need to be our own cheerleader. Tell yourself "I can get through this", "I'm doing my best", "This is hard, but it's temporary", or "This too, shall pass."

IMPROVE ACTIVITIES

Fill in the circles below for activities you are likely to use.

Imagery

- Visualize a safe place
- Remember a happy time
- Imagine yourself coping
- Imagine painful emotions flowing out of you
- Imagine a secret room in your mind, close and lock the door
- Make up a calming, fantasy world

Meaning

- Identify your values
- Read spiritual sources
- Find the positives
- Think of your values, match your thoughts to them
- Find a purpose or reason for what you are going through
- Focus on the things that are important to you

Prayer

- Turn things over to a higher power
- Connect with your wise mind
- Ask for strength to bear the pain
- Repeat a mantra, over and over
- Listen to a soothing song, sing the lyrics
- Open yourself up to the moment

Relaxation

- Practice yoga
- Breathe deeply
- Take a hot bath
- Massage your neck and scalp
- Change your facial expression
- Go for a walk somewhere safe and soothing

One thing in the moment

- Focus on one task at a time
- Focus on your senses
- Focus on your breath
- Let go of the past and worrying about the future
- Notice when your mind starts to get chaotic
- Bring your attention back to the present moment

Vacation

- Take a walk outside
- Watch TV for a few hours
- Turn off your phone for a day
- Get in bed; pull the covers up over your head
- Take a long, hot shower
- Take a 1-hour breather from hard work

Encouragement

- "This too, shall pass"
- "I will make it out of this"
- "I'm doing the best I can"
- Cheerlead yourself: "I'm amazing!" "I'm rocking this!"
- Repeat over and over: "I can stand this"
- "This is hard, but it's temporary"

HALF-SMILING & WILLING HANDS

Half-smiling and willing hands is a way to use our bodies to communicate to our brains that we are ok. It helps us regulate our systems, accept situations, and feel better in the moment.

Half-Smiling

- 1 Relax the muscles in your face, from your forehead down to your jaw and chin
- 2 Allow the corners of your mouth to turn up ever so slightly
- 3 Adopt a peaceful facial expression

Willing Hands

- 1 Seated: Place your hands on your lap, palms up and fingers relaxed and slightly curved, as if you are receiving peaceful energy
- 2 Standing: Drop your shoulders down. Unclench your hands and turn the palms out, relaxing your fingers
- 3 Lying down: Unclench your hands, turn your palms up, and relax your fingers

When to Practice

- »» When you first wake up in the morning
- »» During free moments throughout the day
- »» While listening to music
- »» While lying down/resting
- »» While thinking about a person you dislike or are angry with
- »» When feeling frustrated or angry

RADICAL ACCEPTANCE

Radical Acceptance is when you accept things the way they are without resistance. Instead of wishing things were different or focusing on how they "should" be. Radical means *all the way, completely and totally*. It is accepting in your mind, your heart, and your body. It's when you stop fighting reality and let go of bitterness.

"Radical Acceptance rests on letting go of the *illusion of control* and a *willingness* to *notice* and *accept* things as they are *right now, without judging*." – Marsha M. Linehan

What needs to be accepted?

- »» The facts of reality as it is - the past and the present
- »» Everyone encounters obstacles, focus on what you can control
- »» Everything has a cause, even situations that cause pain
- »» Life can be worth living even with painful moments

Why accept reality?

- »» To change our reality, we have to accept it first
- »» Pain can't be avoided but we can avoid suffering by accepting the pain. *Pain + Non-Acceptance = Suffering*
- »» Refusing to accept reality can keep you stuck in unhappiness, bitterness, anger, sadness, shame, or other painful emotions
- »» Acceptance may lead to sadness, but peace usually follows

Remember that Radical Acceptance is not:

- »» Approval, compassion, love, passivity, or resistance to change

Radically accepting painful realities and past events can be difficult. It is common to feel unbearable sadness, anger at the person or group that caused a painful event, rage at the injustice of the world, overwhelming shame about who you are or guilt about your own behavior. Do your best to accept the pain, don't hold onto it or push it away. Remember that you are not approving it or approving the events or behaviors that are causing the pain. Make sure to use other distress tolerance skills if needed (riding the emotion as a wave, mindful breathing, TIPP, STOP, ACCEPTS, IMPROVE).

RADICAL ACCEPTANCE WORKSHEET

Complete this worksheet to practice radically accepting a difficult situation.

What's bothering you?

What didn't you have control over?

What past events happened that led up to this situation?

How did your behavior contribute?

Practice radically accepting:

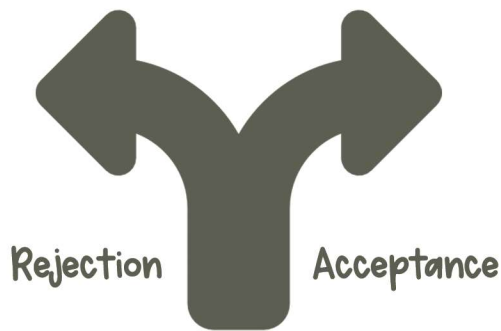
Accept the situation, your feelings, thoughts, behavior and what you can't control. We can't control how others think, feel and behave. Remember to avoid judgment and that acceptance is not approval. Turn your mind to acceptance over and over. Accept the pain that comes with radical acceptance and breathe through it.

How did those around you contribute?

Imagine how you'd change your behaviors by accepting this reality:

What did you have control over?

TURNING THE MIND



Turning the mind is choosing to accept. It's 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.

STEP BY STEP

- 1 **Observe** that you are not accepting. (Look for anger, bitterness, annoyance; avoiding emotions; saying "Why me?", "I can't stand this," "It shouldn't be this way.")
- 2 **Make an inner commitment** to accept reality as it is.
- 3 **Do it again**, over and over. Keep turning your mind to acceptance each time you come to the fork in the road where you can reject reality or accept it.
- 4 **Develop a plan** for catching yourself in the future when you drift out of acceptance. Look for the emotions from step 1 and using "shoulds."

EVERY DAY RADICAL ACCEPTANCE

Before radically accepting more distressing situations and events, practice accepting smaller, everyday situations. Try the examples below:

- » Accepting that it's raining on the day you planned to visit the beach
- » Accepting that you're halfway to your destination and forgot something
- » Accepting that you're speaking to someone who talks over you
- » Accepting when someone cuts in line at the grocery store
- » Accepting that someone next to you is chewing loudly
- » Accepting that someone cut you off while driving
- » Accepting when someone is talking during a movie
- » Accepting when you drop important items

ACCEPTANCE MINDSET

"It shouldn't be this way"

"It is what it is"

"What if I fail?"

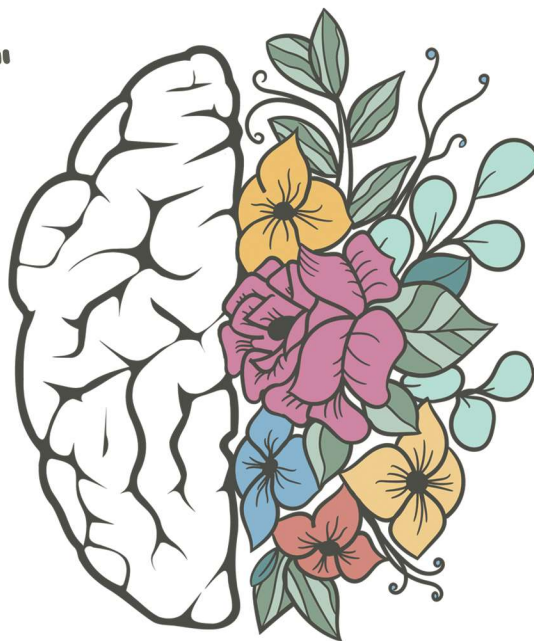
"I can't predict
the future"

"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."

WHAT A CRISIS LOOKS LIKE

In DBT, you're considered to be in crisis when you have a SUDS score of 70 or higher. You're also likely in a crisis when you have strong urges to engage in self-destructive behaviors.

SIGNS OF A CRISIS:

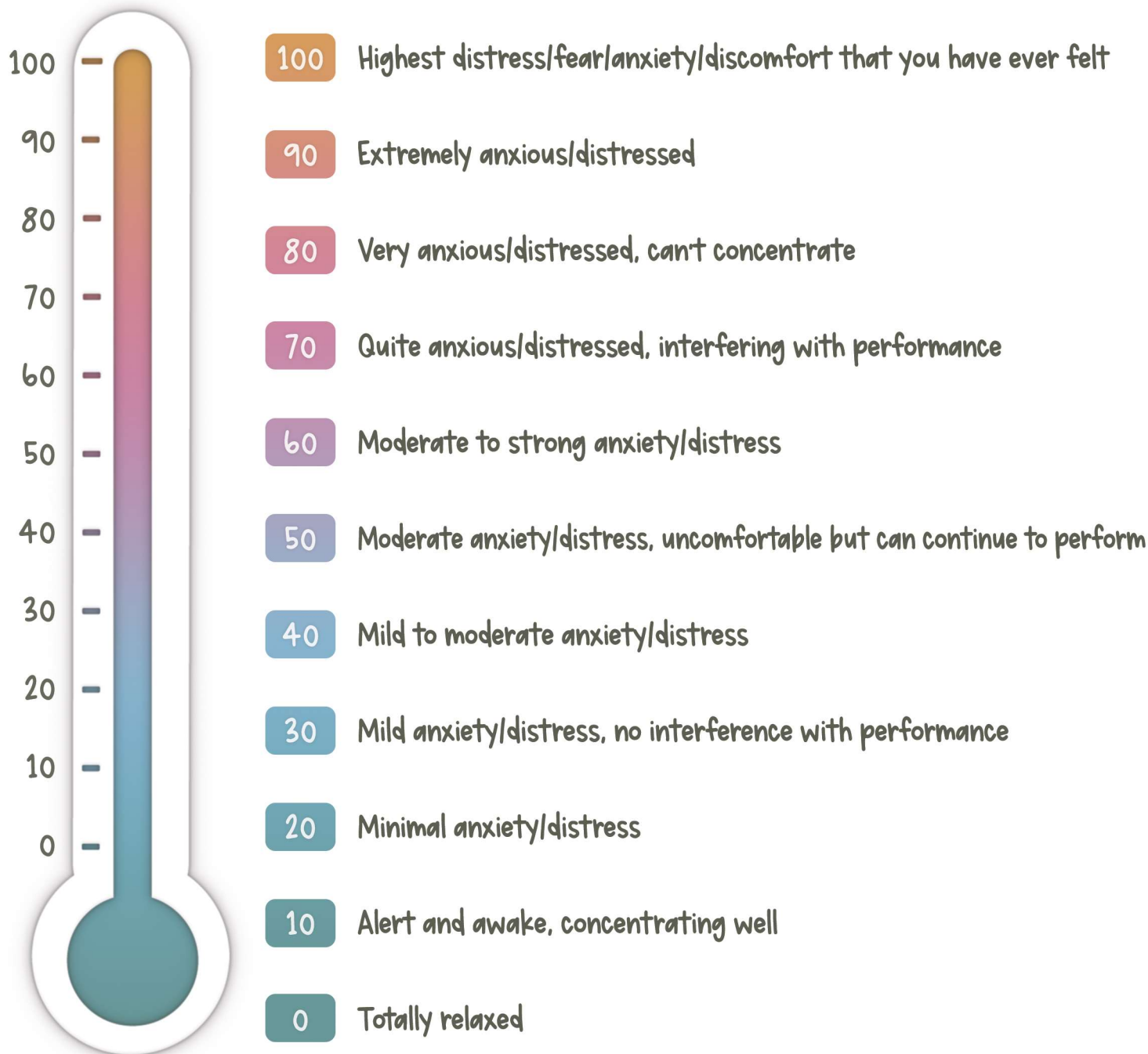
- »» Unable to complete daily tasks like getting dressed, brushing teeth, bathing, etc
- »» Intrusive thoughts or actions of self-harm/suicide
- »» Isolation from school, work, family, and friends
- »» Increased agitation, risk-taking/out of control behavior
- »» Abusive behavior to yourself or someone else
- »» Having dramatic shifts in mood, sleeping or eating patterns
- »» Loss of touch with reality, paranoia

WHAT TO DO IN A CRISIS

- »» Use TIPP to bring your level of distress down
- »» After using TIPP, use other distress tolerance skills
- »» Reach out to someone supportive and let them know you're not doing well
- »» Follow your plan on the Crisis Plan worksheet

SUDS THERMOMETER

The Subjective Units of Distress Scale (or SUDS) in the form of a thermometer is a useful way to rate and notice variations in the levels of distress you may experience.



Physical symptoms of distress may include body pain including headaches and joint pain, stomach aches, nausea, vomiting, fatigue, dizziness, memory problems, weakness, numbness, shortness of breath, changes in vision or hearing, or a "stuck" feeling.

BEHAVIOR CHAIN ANALYSIS

A chain analysis is a technique used to figure out why we behave the way we do.

Prompting Event

A prompting event is an event outside the person that triggers the chain of events leading to the problem behavior. What was going on the moment the problem started? What were you doing at the time? Why did the problem behavior happen on that day instead of the day before?

Trigger Thoughts & Trigger Emotions

What were your exact thoughts? Which emotions were you feeling?

Target Behavior

Our target behavior is behavior that is no longer effective and we want to change. This can be overeating, overdrinking, yelling at your kids, throwing a chair, having an overwhelming emotional outburst, dissociating, not going to or being late to therapy/group, putting off or refusing to do skills practice, etc.

Short-Term Relief & Long-Term Consequences

How did this behavior provide relief? How did it help you feel better in the moment? How did other people react immediately and later? How did you feel immediately following the behavior? Later? What effect did the behavior have on you and your environment?

Vulnerability Factors

What factors or events made you more vulnerable to reacting to the prompting event? This could be physical illness; unbalanced eating or sleeping; injury, use of drugs or alcohol; misuse of prescription drugs, stressful events in the environment (either positive or negative), intense emotions, such as sadness, anger, fear, loneliness, previous behaviors of your own that you found stressful coming into your mind.

Preventative Strategy

How can you prevent this behavior? How can you reduce vulnerabilities and what skills can you use?

Solutions/Repairs

Look at the harm or distress you actually caused others, and the harm or distress you caused yourself. Repair what you damaged. (Don't bring flowers to repair a window you broke: fix the window! Repair a betrayal of trust by being very trustworthy long enough to fit the betrayal, rather than trying to fix it with love letters and constant apologies. Repair failure by succeeding, not by berating yourself).

BEHAVIOR CHAIN ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

Prompting Event:

Trigger Thought:

Trigger Emotion:



Target Behavior (what I want to change):

Short-Term Relief:

Long-Term Consequences:



Vulnerability Factors:

Preventative Strategy:

Solutions/Repairs: