

DBT Strategies for Dealing with Strong Emotions

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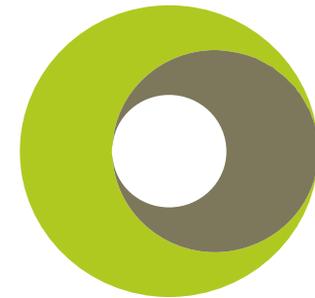
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Distress Tolerance 101



Why do YOU need to learn these skills?



You are not the one with the eating disorder....

And you need to be tougher, smarter and more skillful than the ED

In order to help your loved one



Can I use these skills ON my loved one?



No!

You can use these skills yourself WITH your loved one.

You can be a role model!

You can teach by example.

Goal of Distress Tolerance: Surviving a Crisis



Crisis survival skills are **short term solutions** to painful situations

Purpose = make a painful situation more tolerable

- While refraining from impulsive actions that can make the situation worse

Accept reality when we can't change it and it's not what we want it to be



Survive crisis situations without making them worse

- Keep one problem to one problem
- E.g., You are upset with your child for throwing food on the floor or yelling at you (one problem)
 - If you scream, yell, hit, throw food...you likely now have **more than one problem**



When to use crisis survival skills



1. You are feeling overwhelmed but needing to meet current demands

- E.g., You have walked into your house after a long day at work, expecting that your partner had made dinner and fed your child: it didn't happen. Your partner has to leave the house...
 - Now you need to do it

2. You are having extreme arousal and problems can't be solved immediately

- You found evidence of vomit in the bathroom after everyone went to sleep....



Overview of DBTs crisis survival skills



STOP: stop yourself from an impulsive behavior

Pros and Cons: should I or shouldn't I?

TIP: change body chemistry

Distract with ACCEPTS

Self-Soothe

IMPROVE the moment

The Stop Skill



Stop

Take a step back

Observe

Proceed mindfully



Pros and Cons



Wake her up and confront her now

Pros

Cons

Not wake her up and confront her now

Pros

Cons

What are TIPP skills?



Tipping the Temperature of your face
with cold water

Intense aerobic exercise

Paced breathing

Paired muscle relaxation



NB: the effect of cold water on the face is to reduce heart rate

Intense exercise will increase heart rate

NEITHER OF THESE SKILLS SHOULD BE USED BY ED CLIENTS IF THEY ARE MEDICALLY UNSTABLE! And if they are medically stable, should be Okd by their physician before using.

Why use TIP skills?



TIP skills change your body chemistry

- Will reduce high emotional arousal and feelings of being overwhelmed

TIP skills work very quickly (seconds)

TIP skills are **as effective** as dysfunctional behaviors in reducing painful emotions, but **without the long term negatives**.

TIP skills are easy to use

Some TIP skills can be used without others knowing (paired muscle/paced breathing)



You are caught in emotion mind and cant get out

You are in a crisis and cant use distraction

You are not processing info effectively

You are emotionally overwhelmed

You are at your skills breakdown point



Wise Mind ACCEPTS

- **Activities** – hobbies or chores
- **Contributing** – think of others (rather than yourself)
- Comparisons – compare your self to people coping with worse; watch soap operas
- Emotions – CREATE A DIFFERENT EMOTION by watching movies; reading funny greeting cards
- Pushing Away – leave the situation for a while, mentally or physically
- Thoughts – count to 10, count colors in a painting, work puzzles
- Sensations – hold ice in hand, stand under cold shower



- Main point: SS is doing things that feel pleasant, comforting and provide relief from stress or pain.
- It makes it much easier to pass the time without making things worse.

DISTRESS TOLERANCE HANDOUT 8

(Distress Tolerance Worksheet 6–6b)



Self-Soothing

A way to remember these skills is to think of soothing each of your **FIVE SENSES**.

With Vision:

- Look at the stars at night.
- Look at pictures you like in a book.
- Buy one beautiful flower.
- Make one space in a room pleasing to look at.
- Light a candle and watch the flame.
- Set a pretty place at the table using your best things.
- Go people-watching or window-shopping.
- Go to a museum or poster shop with beautiful art.
- Sit in the lobby of a beautiful old hotel.
- Look at nature around you.
- Walk in a pretty part of town.
- Watch a sunrise or a sunset.
- Go to a dance performance, or watch it on TV.
- Be mindful of each sight that passes in front of you.
- Take a walk in a park or a scenic hike.
- Browse through stores looking at things.
- Other: _____

With Hearing:

- Listen to soothing or invigorating music.
- Pay attention to sounds of nature (waves, birds, rainfall, leaves rustling).
- Pay attention to the sounds of the city (traffic, horns, city music).
- Sing to your favorite songs.
- Hum a soothing tune.
- Learn to play an instrument.
- Burn a CD or make an iPod mix with music that will get you through tough times. Turn it on.
- Be mindful of any sounds that come your way, letting them go in one ear and out the other.
- Turn on the radio.
- Other: _____

With Smell:

- Use your favorite soap, shampoo, aftershave, cologne, or lotions, or try them on in the store.
- Burn incense or light a scented candle.
- Open a package of coffee and inhale the aroma.
- Put lemon oil on your furniture.
- Put potpourri or eucalyptus oil in a bowl in your room.
- Sit in a new car and breathe the aroma.
- Boil cinnamon. Make cookies, bread, or popcorn.
- Smell the roses.
- Walk in a wooded area and mindfully breathe in the fresh smells of nature.
- Open the window and smell the air.
- Other: _____

With Taste:

- Eat some of your favorite foods.
- Drink your favorite soothing drink, such as herbal tea, hot chocolate, a latté, or a smoothie.
- Treat yourself to a dessert.
- Eat macaroni and cheese or another favorite childhood food.
- Sample flavors in an ice cream store.
- Suck on a piece of peppermint candy.
- Chew your favorite gum.
- Get a little bit of a special food you don't usually spend the money on, such as fresh-squeezed orange juice or your favorite candy.
- Really taste the food you eat. Eat one thing mindfully.
- Other: _____

With Touch:

- Take a long hot bath or shower.
- Pet your dog or cat.
- Have a massage. Soak your feet.
- Put creamy lotion on your whole body.
- Put a cold compress on your forehead.
- Sink into a comfortable chair in your home.
- Put on a blouse or shirt that has a pleasant feel.
- Take a drive with the car windows rolled down.
- Run your hand along smooth wood or leather.
- Hug someone.
- Put clean sheets on the bed.
- Wrap up in a blanket.
- Notice touch that is soothing.
- Other: _____

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Improving the Moment

- **IMPROVE:**

Imagery: Imagine relaxing scenes, things going well, or other things that please you

Meaning: Find some purpose or meaning in what you are feeling

Prayer: Either pray to whomever you worship, or, if not religious, chant a personal mantra, LET GO

Relaxation: practice deep breathing, use self soothing

One thing in the moment: stay present

Vacation: take a brief break, allow yourself to be taken care of

Encouragement: cheerlead yourself

How do you know that the skills are working?



Time has passed and you haven't done anything to make it worse!

- **True even if you dont feel better**

When you start to feel more able to tolerate the problem while using other skills

Thank You for Your Attention

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