

Skills Training Handouts for *DBT® Skills Manual for Adolescents*,  
by Jill H. Rathus and Alec L. Miller  
Guilford Publications, Inc.

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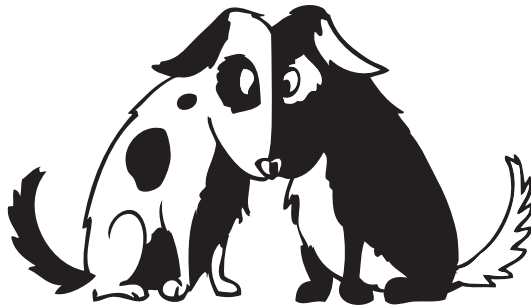
# **ORIENTATION HANDOUTS**

## What Is Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)?

- DBT is an effective treatment for people who have difficulty controlling their emotions and behaviors.
- DBT aims to replace problem behaviors with skillful behaviors.
- DBT skills help people experience a range of emotions without necessarily acting on those emotions.
- DBT skills help teens navigate relationships in their environment (family/school/peers).
- DBT helps people create a life worth living.

### What Does “Dialectical” Mean?

Dialectical = two opposite ideas can be true at the same time, and when considered together, can create a new truth and a new way of viewing the situation. There is always more than one way to think about a situation.



# Goals of Skills Training

## Problems to Decrease

- 1. REDUCED AWARENESS AND FOCUS;  
CONFUSION ABOUT SELF**  
(Not always aware of what you are feeling, why you get upset, or what your goals are, and/or have trouble staying focused)
- 2. EMOTIONAL DYSREGULATION**  
(Fast, intense mood changes with little control and/or steady negative emotional state; mood-dependent behaviors)
- 3. IMPULSIVITY**  
(Acting without thinking it all through; escaping or avoiding emotional experiences)
- 4. INTERPERSONAL PROBLEMS**  
(Pattern of difficulty keeping relationships steady, getting what you want, keeping self-respect; loneliness)
- 5. TEENAGER AND FAMILY CHALLENGES**  
(Extreme thinking, feeling, and acting; absence of flexibility; difficulty navigating family conflict or effectively influencing others' behaviors)

## Behaviors to Increase

- 1. CORE MINDFULNESS SKILLS**
- 2. EMOTION REGULATION SKILLS**
- 3. DISTRESS TOLERANCE SKILLS**
- 4. INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS**
- 5. WALKING THE MIDDLE PATH SKILLS**

### PERSONAL GOALS:

#### Behaviors to Decrease

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

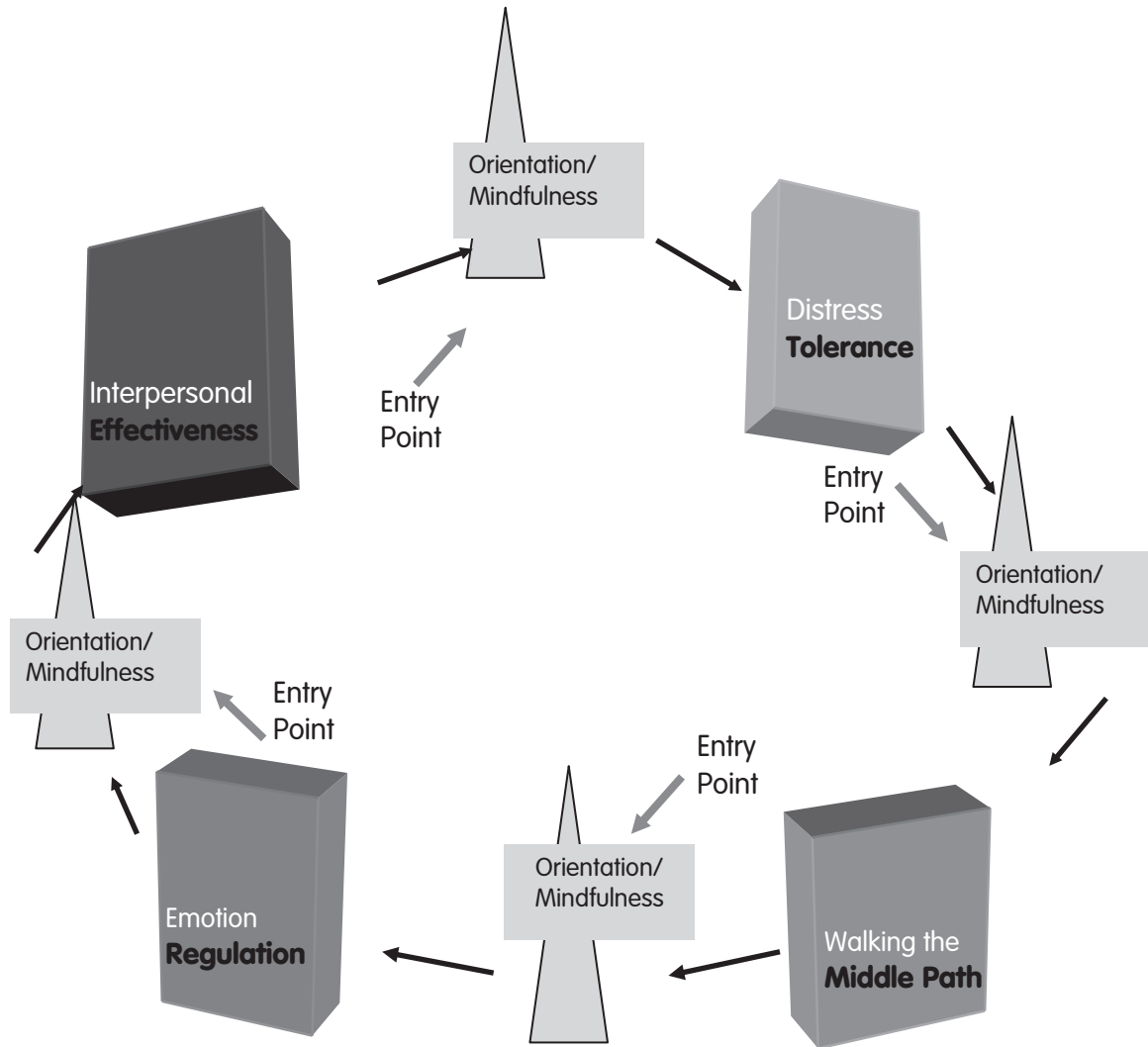
#### Behaviors to Increase

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

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# DBT Skills Training Group Format



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ORIENTATION HANDOUT 4

# Biosocial Theory


**BIO:**

A. There is a biological vulnerability to emotions

1. high sensitivity
2. high reactivity
3. slow return to baseline

plus


B. An inability to effectively regulate emotions.



TRANSACTIONING    ↓    ↑    WITH . . .

**SOCIAL:**

An invalidating environment communicates that what you are feeling, thinking, or doing doesn't make sense or is considered inaccurate or an overreaction. Environments include parents, teachers, peers, therapists, coaches, and others. Sometimes there is a "poor fit" (e.g., temperament) between the person and the environment.



The invalidating environment punishes or sometimes reinforces emotional displays and contributes to the person's suppression or escalation of emotions, and sometimes leaves the person feeling confused and unable to trust one's own emotional experiences (**self-invalidation**).

OVER TIME LEADS TO . . .

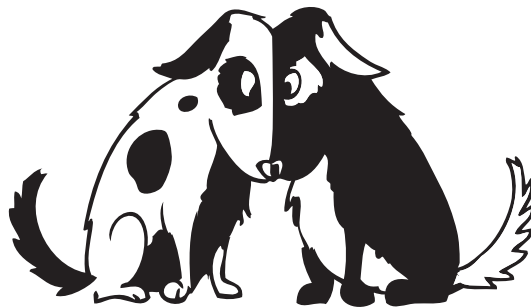


**Multiple Problems  
(Chronic Emotional Dysregulation)**

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## DBT Assumptions

1. People are doing the best they can.
2. People want to improve.
3. People need to do better, try harder, and be more motivated to change.
4. People may not have caused all of their own problems and they have to solve them anyway.
5. The lives of emotionally distressed teenagers and their families are painful as they are currently being lived.
6. Teens and families must learn and practice new behaviors in all the different situations in their lives (e.g., home, school, work, neighborhood).
7. There is no absolute truth.
8. Teens and their families cannot fail in DBT.



## Guidelines for the Adolescent Skills Training Group

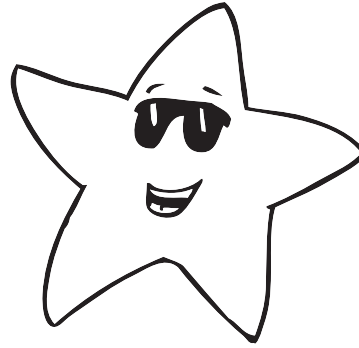
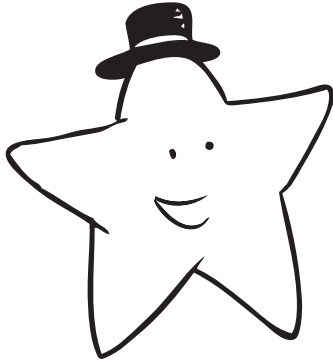
1. Information obtained during sessions (including the names of other group members) must remain confidential.
2. People are not to come to sessions under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
3. If you miss more than five group sessions (absences) in a 24-week program, you have dropped out of treatment. You can reapply one complete module after being out of the group. Attendance is kept on each family member individually.
4. If you are more than 15 minutes late, you will be allowed in but will be considered absent.
5. People are not to discuss any risk behaviors with other group members outside of sessions. Participants do not tempt others to engage in problem behaviors.
6. Group members may not contact one another when in crisis and instead should contact their skills coach or therapist.
7. People may not form private (cliques, dating) relationships with one another while they are in skills training together.
8. People may not act in a mean or disrespectful manner toward other group members or leaders.
9. *For teens in a comprehensive DBT program*, each adolescent must be in ongoing individual DBT therapy.

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## DBT Contract



I am familiar with the theory, assumptions, and format of DBT Skills Training.

I agree to participate in DBT Skills Training and complete all of the modules.

I will come to group on time with my materials and practice exercises. If I don't do the practice, I agree to do a behavioral analysis (so we understand what got in the way and can problem-solve for next time).

I am fully aware of the attendance policy, and if I exceed the allotted amount of absences, I understand that I will have dropped out of DBT Skills Training. (As a caregiver, I am aware that the attendance policy applies to me as well.)

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**(Your signature)**

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**(date)**

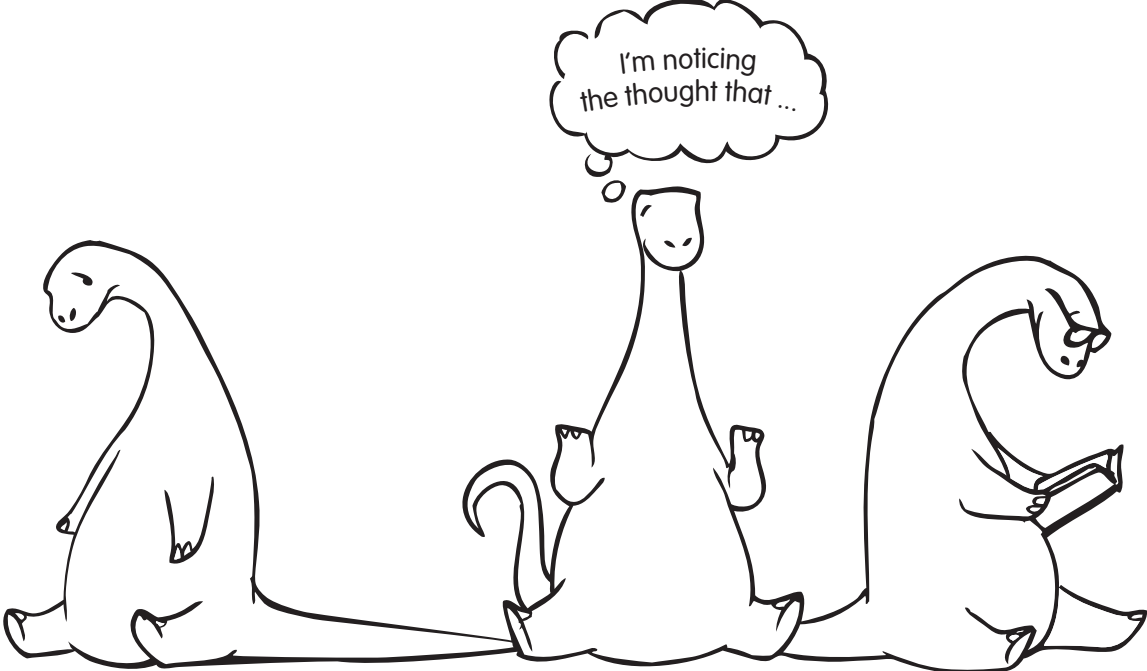
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**(Skills trainer signature)**

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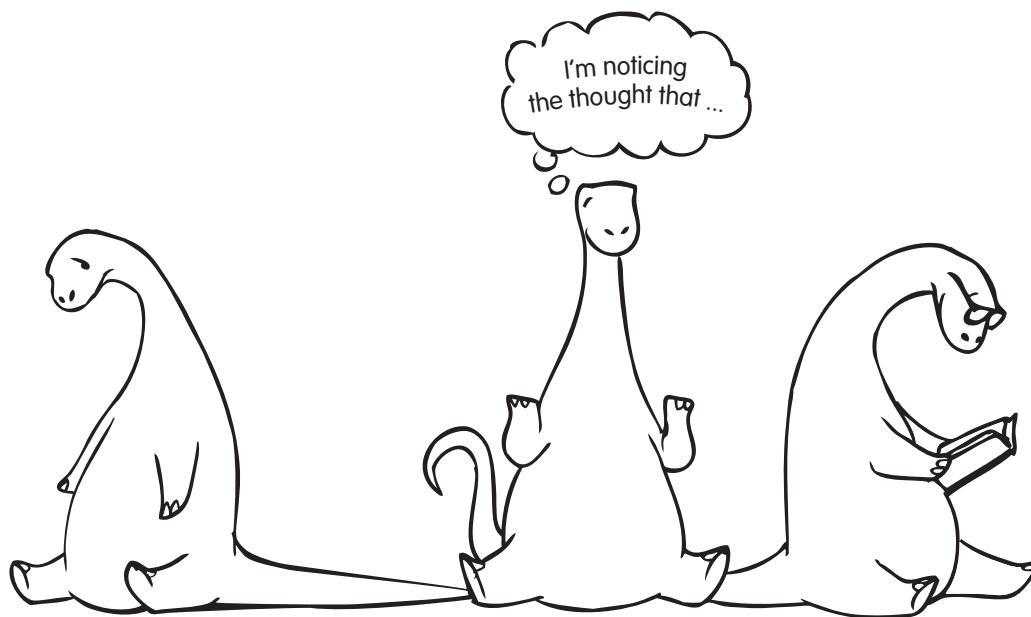
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# MINDFULNESS HANDOUTS



## Mindfulness: Taking Hold of Your Mind

**Being in control of your mind rather than letting your mind be in control of you.**



1. **FULL AWARENESS (Opened Mind):** Being aware of the present moment (e.g., thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations) without judgment and without trying to change it.
2. **ATTENTIONAL CONTROL (Focused Mind):** Staying focused on one thing at a time.

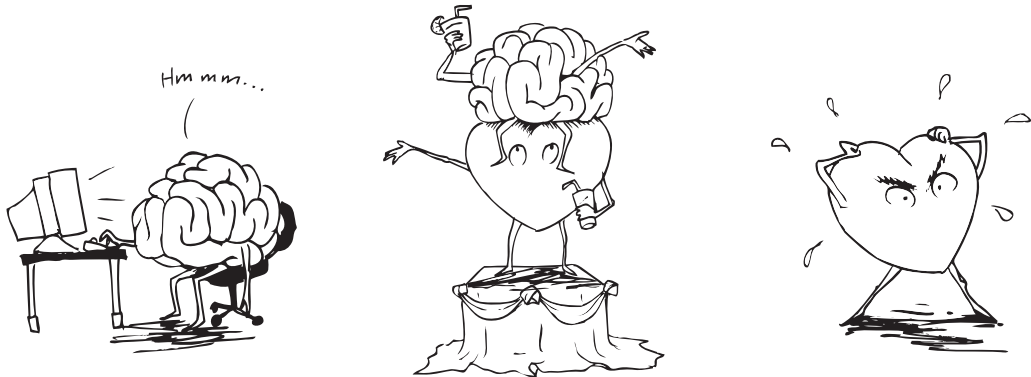
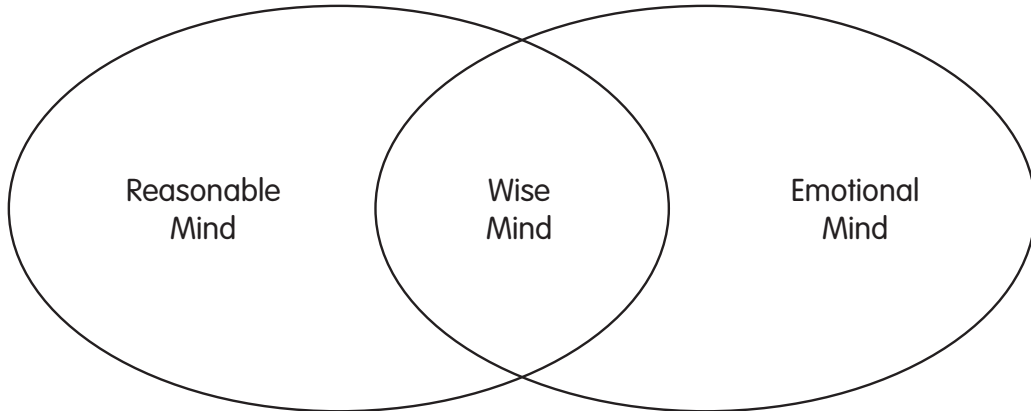
## **Mindfulness: Why Bother?**

### **Being mindful can . . .**

- 1.** Give you more choices and more control over your behavior. It helps you slow down and notice emotions, thoughts, and urges (i.e., increases self-awareness), and helps you choose a behavior more thoughtfully, rather than act impulsively and make situations worse.
- 2.** Reduce your emotional suffering and increase your pleasure and sense of well-being.
- 3.** Help you make important decisions (and balance overly emotional or overly logical decisions).
- 4.** Help focus your attention (i.e., be in control of your mind rather than letting your mind be in control of you) and therefore make you more effective and productive.
- 5.** Increase compassion for self and others.
- 6.** Lessen your pain, tension, and stress, and in turn can even improve your health.

### **Practice, practice, practice**

# Three States of Mind



***Emotional Mind is "hot," ruled by your feelings and urges.***

When I am in Emotional Mind, I tend to: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(continued)

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**Three States of Mind** (page 2 of 2)

***Reasonable Mind is "cool," ruled by thinking, facts, and logic.***

When I am in Reasonable Mind, I tend to: \_\_\_\_\_

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***Wise Mind includes both reason and emotion; it is the wisdom within each person and the state of mind to access to avoid acting impulsively and when you need to make an important decision. (Wise mind helps us think more clearly in the presence of strong emotions.)***

When I am in Wise Mind, I tend to: \_\_\_\_\_

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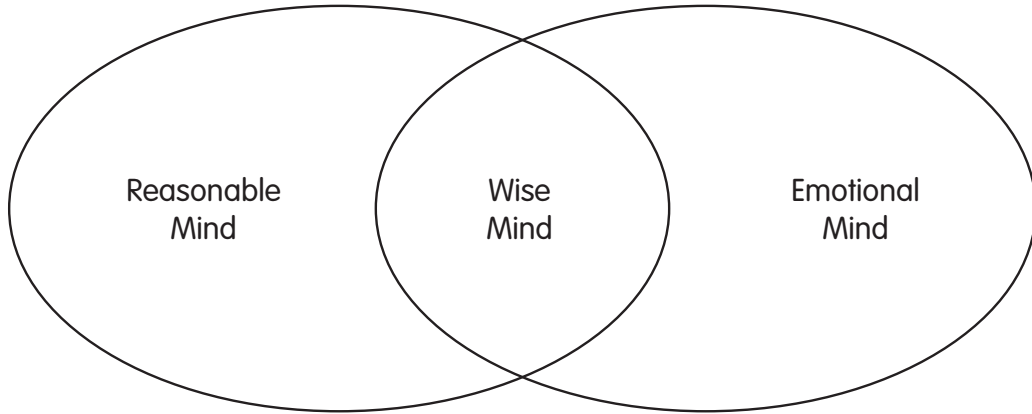
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# Practice Exercise: Observing Yourself in Each State of Mind

Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## ***Emotional Mind***

One example of Emotional Mind this week was (please describe your emotions, thoughts, behaviors): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*(continued)*

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**Practice Exercise: Observing Yourself in Each State of Mind** (page 2 of 2)

***Reasonable Mind***

One example of Reasonable Mind this week was (please describe your emotions, thoughts, behaviors): \_\_\_\_\_

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***Wise Mind***

One example of Wise Mind this week was (please describe your emotions, thoughts, behaviors): \_\_\_\_\_

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## Mindfulness “What” Skills

### Observe

- *Wordless watching*: Just notice the experience in the present moment.
- Observe both inside and outside yourself, using all of your five senses.
- Watch your thoughts and feelings come and go, as if they were on a conveyer belt.
- Have a “Teflon mind,” letting experiences come into your mind and slip right out (not holding on).
- Don’t push away your thoughts and feelings. Just let them happen, even when they’re painful.
- Note: we cannot observe another’s inner experience (“He’s upset.”)—only external features (e.g., a tear rolling down a cheek) or our thoughts about another’s experience (“I observed the thought ‘He’s upset.’”).

### Describe

- Put words on the experience: Label what you observe with words.
- For example: “I feel sad,” “My face feels hot,” “I feel my heart racing,” “I’m having the thought that . . .,” “I’m having an urge to. . . .”
- Describe only what you observe *without* interpretations. Stick to the facts! Instead of “that person has an attitude,” you could describe that person as “rolling her eyes, speaking with a loud voice.”

### Participate

- Throw yourself into the present moment fully (e.g., dancing, cleaning, taking a test, feeling sad in the moment). Try not to worry about tomorrow or focus on yesterday.
- Become one with whatever you’re doing: *Get into the zone*.
- Fully experience the moment without being self-conscious.
- Experience even negative emotions fully to help your Wise Mind make a decision about what to do (instead of acting impulsively).

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## Mindfulness “How” Skills

### Don't Judge

- Notice but don't evaluate as good or bad. Stick to the observable facts of the situation, using only what is observed with your senses.
- Acknowledge the harmful and the helpful, but don't judge it. For example, replace “He's a jerk” with “He walked away while we were talking.”
- You can't go through life without making judgments; your goal is to catch and replace them with descriptions so you have more control over your emotions.
- When you find yourself judging, *don't judge your judging*.

### Stay Focused

- One-mindfully: Focus your attention on *only* one thing in this moment. Slow yourself down to accomplish this.
- Stop doing two things at once (the opposite of multitasking).
- Concentrate your mind: Let go of distractions and refocus your attention when it drifts, again and again.
- Stay focused so that past, future, and current distractions don't get in your way.

### Do What Works

- Be effective: Focus on what works to achieve your goal.
- Don't let emotions control your behavior; cut the cord between feeling and doing.
- Play by the rules (which may vary at home, school, work).
- Act as skillfully as you can to achieve your goals.
- Let go of negative feelings (e.g., vengeance and useless anger) and “shoulds” (e.g., “My teacher should have. . .”) that can hurt you and make things worse.

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## Mindfulness Cheat Sheet

1. Identify what you will focus on:

Examples: Your breath

An object (a picture, burning candle)

An activity (brushing your hair, cleaning your room, reading)

2. Bring your attention to the object of focus.

3. When your attention wanders away from the object of focus (and sometimes it will, so don't judge yourself for it!) . . .

- Notice that this has happened.
- Gently bring your attention back to the object of focus.



### To Get Started

Begin practicing mindfulness by noticing your attention and how it wanders. Gradually work on doing this practice for 30 seconds, 1 minute and 2 minutes at a time. Practice *a lot*. No one will know you are doing it!

Your attention may wander to noises around you, worry thoughts, judgmental thoughts such as “this is stupid,” body sensations, urges to talk, and so on). Notice them, let them go, and return your attention to the object of focus.

# Practice Exercise: Mindfulness “What” and “How” Skills

Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

Check off one “what” skill and one “how” skill to practice during the week.

**“What” Skills**

- \_\_\_ Observe
- \_\_\_ Describe
- \_\_\_ Participate

**“How” Skills**

- \_\_\_ Don’t Judge
- \_\_\_ Stay Focused
- \_\_\_ Do What Works

Briefly describe how you used each skill during the week (include what, when, and where):

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Briefly describe how the skills affected your thoughts, feelings, or behaviors:

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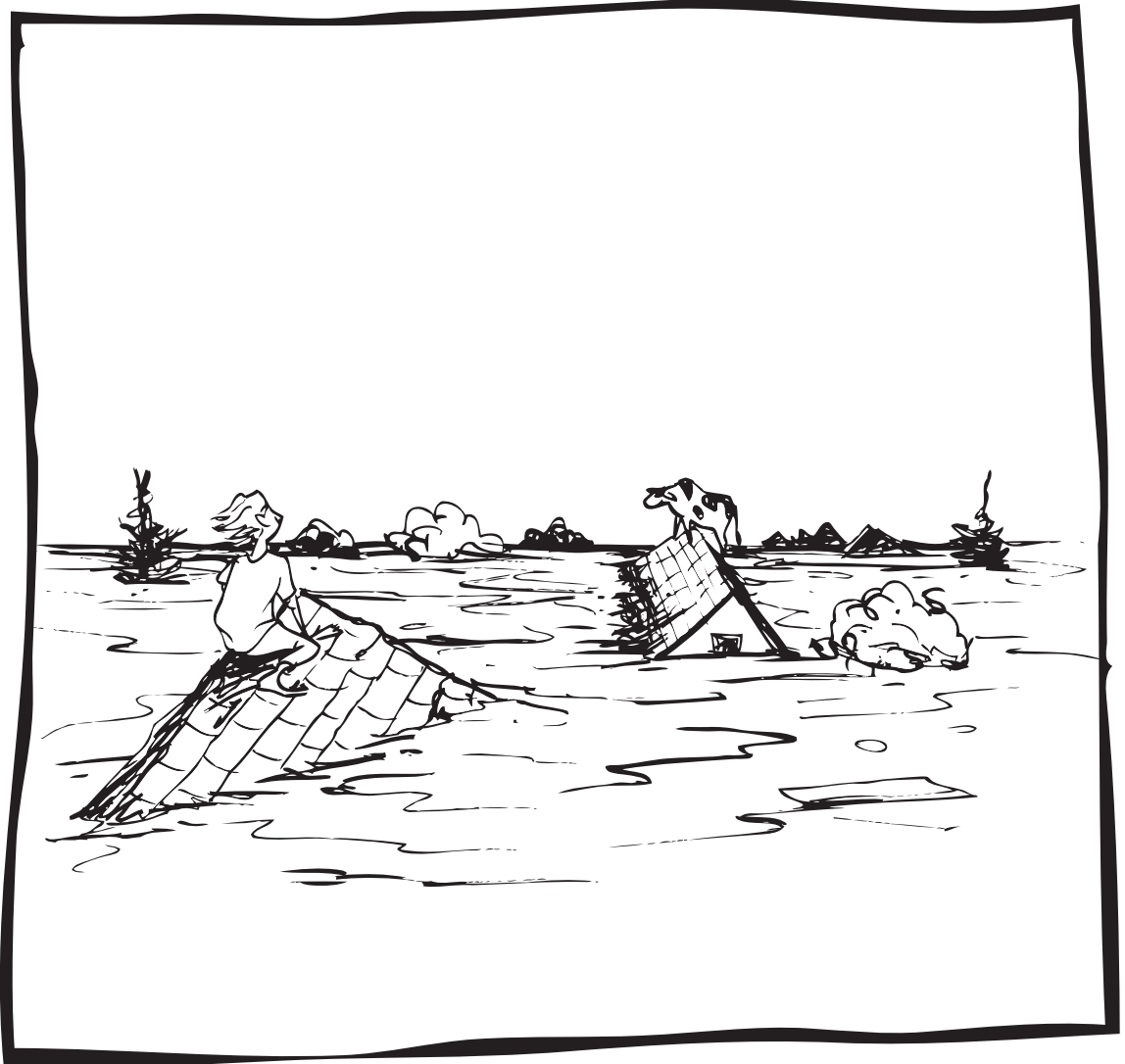
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- \_\_\_ Were you able to get into Wise Mind?
- \_\_\_ Were you able to better notice the present moment?
- \_\_\_ Were you able to better focus your attention on just one thing at a time?
- \_\_\_ Any other effects on thoughts, feelings, or behaviors? \_\_\_\_\_

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# DISTRESS TOLERANCE HANDOUTS





## Why Bother Tolerating Painful Feelings and Urges?

Because . . .

**1. Pain is part of life and can't always be avoided.**

**2. If you can't deal with your pain, you may act impulsively.**

**3. When you act impulsively, you may end up hurting yourself, hurting someone else, or not getting what you want.**

DISTRESS TOLERANCE HANDOUT 2

# Crisis Survival Skills Overview

Skills for tolerating painful events and emotions when you can't make things better right away and you don't want to make things worse!

**Distract with "Wise Mind ACCEPTS"**

Activities  
Contributing  
Comparisons  
Emotions  
Pushing Away  
Thoughts  
Sensations

**SELF-SOOTHE with Six Senses**

Vision  
Hearing  
Smell  
Taste  
Touch  
Movement

**IMPROVE the Moment**

Imagery  
Meaning  
Prayer  
Relaxation  
One thing in the moment  
Vacation  
Encouragement

**PROS AND CONS**

**TIPP**

Temperature  
Intense exercise  
Paced breathing  
Progressively relaxing your muscles

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## Crisis Survival Skills: Distract with “Wise Mind ACCEPTS”

- Activities**      ***Do something.*** Call, e-mail, text, or visit a friend; watch a favorite movie or TV show; play your instrument or sing; play videogames; draw, cook, or bake; write in a journal; clean your room; go for a walk or exercise; read a book; listen to your iPod, go online and download music, apps; play a game with yourself or others.
- Contributing**      ***Contribute to (do something nice for) someone.*** Help a friend or sibling with homework; make something nice for someone else; donate things you don't need; surprise someone with a hug, a note, or a favor; volunteer.
- Comparisons**      ***Compare yourself*** to those less fortunate. Compare how you are feeling now to a time when you were doing worse. Think about others who are coping the same or less well than you.
- Emotions**      ***Create different emotions.*** Watch a funny TV show or emotional movie; listen to soothing or upbeat music; get active when you are sad; go to a store and read funny greeting cards or joke books.
- Pushing away**      ***Push the painful situation out of your mind temporarily.*** Leave the situation mentally by moving your attention and thoughts away; build an imaginary wall between you and the situation. Put the pain in a box and on a shelf for a while.
- Thoughts**      ***Replace your thoughts.*** Read; do word or number puzzles; count numbers, colors in a poster, tiles on a wall, anything; repeat the words to a song in your mind.
- Sensations**      ***Intensify other sensations.*** Hold or chew ice; listen to loud music; take a warm or cold shower; squeeze a stress ball; do sit-ups and push-ups; pet your dog or cat.

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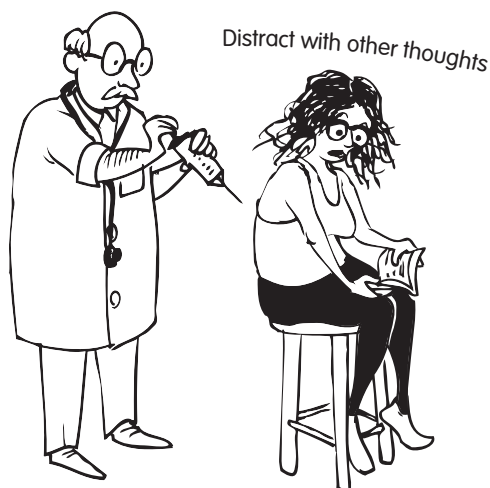
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**DISTRESS TOLERANCE HANDOUT 4**

**Practice Exercise:  
Distract with “Wise Mind ACCEPTS”**

**Due Date** \_\_\_\_\_

Write down at least two specific Distract skills to practice during the week when you feel upset (e.g., activity—play the guitar; contributing—bake cookies for my neighbor):



Distract with “ACCEPTS”

**A**ctivities \_\_\_\_\_

**C**ontributing \_\_\_\_\_

**C**omparisons \_\_\_\_\_

**E**motions \_\_\_\_\_

**P**ushing away \_\_\_\_\_

**T**houghts \_\_\_\_\_

**S**ensations \_\_\_\_\_

*(continued)*

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**Practice Exercise: Distract with “Wise Mind ACCEPTS”** (page 2 of 2)

Briefly describe the stressful situations you were in and the specific skills you used: \_\_\_\_\_

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Did using the skills help you to (1) cope with uncomfortable feelings and urges and/or (2) avoid conflict of any kind?

Circle Yes or No.

(Note: If the skill helped you to *not* do anything to make the situation worse, it worked!)

If YES, please describe how it helped: \_\_\_\_\_

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If NO, please describe why you believe it did not help: \_\_\_\_\_

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If you did not practice this skill, please explain why: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Crisis Survival Skills: Self-Soothe with Six Senses

**VISION**      **HEARING**  
**SMELL**      **TASTE**  
**TOUCH**      **MOVEMENT**

- Vision**      Go to your favorite place and take in all the sights; look at a photo album; zone out to a poster/picture; notice colors in a sunset; people watch.
- Hearing**      Listen to your favorite music and play it over and over again; pay attention to sounds in nature (birds, rain, thunder, traffic); play an instrument or sing; listen to a sound machine.
- Smell**      Put on your favorite lotion; use a scented aftershave or body wash; make cookies or popcorn; smell freshly brewed coffee; go to the park and “smell the roses.”
- Taste**      Eat some of your favorite foods; drink your favorite nonalcoholic beverage; have your favorite flavor of ice cream; really notice the food you eat; eat one thing mindfully; don’t overdo it!
- Touch**      Take a long bath or shower; pet your dog or cat; get a massage; brush your hair; hug or be hugged; put a cold cloth on your head; change into your most comfortable clothes.
- Movement**      Rock yourself gently; stretch; go for a run; do yoga; dance!



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# Practice Exercise: Self-Soothe Skills

Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

Write down at least two specific SELF-SOOTHE Skills to practice during the week when you feel upset:



## SELF-SOOTHE WITH SIX SENSES:

VISION \_\_\_\_\_

HEARING \_\_\_\_\_

SMELL \_\_\_\_\_

TASTE \_\_\_\_\_

TOUCH \_\_\_\_\_

MOVEMENT \_\_\_\_\_

(continued)

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**Practice Exercise: Self-Soothe Skills** (page 2 of 2)

Briefly describe the stressful situations you were in and the specific skills you used:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Did using this skill help you to (1) cope with uncomfortable feelings and urges and/or (2) avoid conflict of any kind?

Circle Yes or No.

If YES, please describe how it helped: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If NO, please describe why you believe it did not help: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you did not practice this skill, please explain why: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## Crisis Survival Skills: IMPROVE the Moment

### IMPROVE the Moment with:

**Imagery** Imagine very relaxing scenes of a calming, safe place. Imagine things going well; imagine coping well. Imagine painful emotions draining out of you like water out of a pipe.

**Meaning** Find or create some purpose, meaning, or value in the pain. Make lemonade out of lemons.

**Prayer** Open your heart to a supreme being, greater wisdom, or your own Wise Mind. Ask for strength to bear the pain in this moment.

**Relaxation** Try to relax your muscles by tensing and relaxing each large muscle group, starting with the forehead and working down. Download a relaxation audio or video; stretch; take a bath or get a massage.

**One thing in the Moment** Focus your entire attention on what you are doing right now. Keep your mind in the present moment. Be aware of body movements or sensations while you're walking, cleaning, eating.

**Vacation** Give yourself a brief vacation. Get outside, take a short walk, go get your favorite coffee drink or smoothie, read a magazine or newspaper; surf the web; take a 1-hour breather from hard work that must be done. Unplug from all electronic devices.

**Encouragement** Cheerlead yourself. Repeat over and over: "I can stand it," "It won't last forever," "I will make it out of this," "I'm doing the best I can."



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## Practice Exercise: IMPROVE the Moment

Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

Write down at least two specific IMPROVE Skills to practice during the week when you feel distressed:

**Imagery** \_\_\_\_\_

**Meaning** \_\_\_\_\_

**Prayer** \_\_\_\_\_

**Relaxation** \_\_\_\_\_

**One Thing in the Moment** \_\_\_\_\_

**Vacation** \_\_\_\_\_

**Encouragement** \_\_\_\_\_

Briefly describe the stressful situation(s) you were in and the specific skills you used: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Practice Exercise: IMPROVE the Moment** *(page 2 of 2)*

Did using the skills help you to (1) cope with uncomfortable feelings and urges and/or (2) avoid conflict of any kind?

Circle YES or NO

If YES, please describe how it helped: \_\_\_\_\_

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If NO, please describe why you believe it did not help: \_\_\_\_\_

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If you did not practice this skill, please explain why: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Crisis Survival Skills: Pros and Cons



Select one crisis (emotionally upsetting situation) where you find it *really* hard to tolerate your distress, avoid destructive behavior, and not act impulsively.

Crisis I am faced with: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Crisis urges: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- An urge can intensify a crisis when it is intense and acting on the urge will make things worse in the long term.
- Make a list of the pros and cons of acting on your crisis urges. These might be to engage in addictive or harmful behavior or it might be to give in, give up, or avoid doing what is necessary to build a life you want to live.
- Make another list of the pros and cons of resisting crisis urges—that is, tolerating the distress skillfully and not giving into the urge.

(continued)

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**Crisis Survival Skills: Pros and Cons** (page 2 of 2)

	<b>PROS</b>	<b>CONS</b>
<b>Acting on Crisis Urges</b>	Pros of acting on impulsive urges:	Cons of acting on impulsive urges:
<b>Resisting Crisis Urges</b>	Pros of resisting impulsive urges:	Cons of resisting impulsive urges:

1. Consider short-term and long-term PROS and CONS.
2. Before an overwhelming urge hits:  
Write out your PROS and CONS and carry them with you.
3. When an overwhelming urge hits:  
Review your PROS and CONS and imagine the positive consequences of resisting the urge.  
Imagine (and remember past) negative consequences of giving in to crisis urges.

## Practice Exercise: Pros and Cons

Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

Select one crisis (emotionally upsetting situation) where you find it *really* hard to tolerate your distress, avoid destructive behavior, and not act on your urges.

Crisis I am faced with: \_\_\_\_\_

Crisis urges: \_\_\_\_\_

	PROS	CONS
<b>Acting on Crisis Urges</b>	Pros of acting on impulsive urges:	Cons of acting on impulsive urges:
<b>Resisting Crisis Urges</b>	Pros of resisting impulsive urges:	Cons of resisting impulsive urges:

1. Consider short-term and long-term PROS and CONS.
2. Before an overwhelming urge hits:  
Write out your PROS and CONS and carry them with you.
3. When an overwhelming urge hits:  
Review your PROS and CONS and imagine the positive consequences of resisting the urge.  
Imagine (and remember past) negative consequences of giving in to crisis urges.

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## Crisis Survival Skills: TIPP Skills for Managing Extreme Emotions

**When emotional arousal is very HIGH!!!!!!!**

- You are completely caught in Emotion Mind.
- Your brain is not processing information.
- You are emotionally overwhelmed.

**“TIPP”** your body chemistry to reduce extreme Emotion Mind quickly with:

### Temperature

- **Tip the temperature of your face with cold water to calm down fast.** Holding your breath, put your face in a bowl of cold water; keep water above 50° F. Or, hold a cold pack or ziplock bag with ice water on your eyes and cheeks, or splash cold water on your face. Hold for 30 seconds.

**Caution:** Ice water decreases your heart rate rapidly. Intense exercise will increase heart rate. If you have a heart or medical condition, lowered base heart rate due to medications, take a beta blocker, or have an eating disorder, consult your health care provider before using these skills. Avoid ice water if allergic to the cold.



### Intense Exercise

- **To calm down your body when it is revved up by emotion.** Engage in intense aerobic exercise, if only for a short while (10–15 minutes). Expend your body's stored-up physical energy by running, walking fast, jumping rope or jumping jacks, playing basketball, weight lifting, putting on music and dancing. *Don't* overdo it!

(continued)

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### **Paced Breathing**

- **Slow your pace of breathing way down** (to about 5–7 in and out breaths per minute). Breathe deeply from the abdomen. Breathe *out* more slowly than you breathe *in* (e.g., 4 seconds in and 6 seconds out). Do this for 1–2 minutes to bring down your arousal.

### **Progressive Muscle Relaxation**

- **Tense and relax each muscle group**, head to toe, one muscle group at a time. *Tense* (5 seconds), then let go; *relax* each muscle all the way. *Notice* the tension; *notice* the difference when relaxed.



## Practice Exercise: TIPP Skills

Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

Choose one TIPP skill to practice this week. Check it off now and prepare yourself to use this skill when emotional arousal gets very high.

Rate your emotional arousal before you use the skill: 1–100: \_\_\_\_\_

**TIPP** your body chemistry with:

\_\_\_\_ **T**emperature

Alter your body temperature by holding your breath and placing head in bowl of cold water. Or, splash cold water on your face or place a cold gel mask on your eyes or forehead. Hold for at least 30 seconds. Works best if bent over forward.

\_\_\_\_ **I**ntense exercise

Run in place, do a high-intensity weight circuit, jump, put on music and dance (10–15 minutes). *Don't* overdo it!

\_\_\_\_ **P**aced breathing

Slow down your breath so that you're breathing in for about 4 seconds and out for 5–8 seconds. Do this for 1–2 minutes to bring down your arousal.

\_\_\_\_ **P**rogressive muscle relaxation

Tense and relax each muscle group, head to toe, one muscle group at a time.



Rate your emotional arousal after using the skill: 1–100: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Create Your Crisis Survival Kit for Home, School, or Work

List below 10 “tools” that go into your home crisis survival kit. Choose from your Distract with Wise Mind ACCEPTS skills, your Self-Soothe skills, your IMPROVE skills, and your TIPP skills. Take a shoebox, sturdy bag, or basket and place the relevant items inside: for example, your iPod, a stress ball, your favorite scented lotion or aftershave, picture of your favorite vacation spot, a favorite magazine, a crossword book, herbal tea bags, a favorite piece of candy, a relaxation CD or DVD.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

Create a smaller version of your kit for school or work that fits in a pencil case or lunchbox. Consider items that can be used at your desk: for example, multicolored rubber bands to stretch; paper and pens for doodling; a mini-pack of playdough; a squeeze ball; silly putty; a list of visual stimuli in your class or office that can distract or soothe you; snacks to self-soothe; a list of friends, teachers, counselors, or colleagues you can approach when you have a break.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

## Accepting Reality: Choices We Can Make

*Five optional ways of responding when a serious problem comes into your life:*

1. Figure out how to solve the problem.
2. Change how you feel about the problem.
3. Accept it.
4. Stay miserable (no skill use).
5. Make things worse (act on your impulsive urges).

*When you can't solve the problem or change your emotions about the problem, try acceptance as a way to reduce your suffering.*

### ***Why Bother Accepting Reality?***

- ✓ Rejecting reality does not change reality.
- ✓ Changing reality requires first accepting reality.
- ✓ Rejecting reality turns pain into suffering.
- ✓ Refusing to accept reality can keep you stuck in unhappiness, anger, shame, sadness, bitterness, or other painful emotions.

### ***Radical Acceptance***

- ✓ RADICAL ACCEPTANCE is the skill of accepting the things you can't change.
- ✓ RADICAL = complete and total accepting in mind, heart, and body.
- ✓ ACCEPTANCE = seeing reality for what it is, even if you don't like it.
- ✓ ACCEPTANCE can mean to acknowledge, recognize, endure, not give up or give in.
- ✓ It's when you stop fighting reality, stop throwing tantrums about reality, and let go of bitterness. It is the opposite of "Why me?" It **is** "Things are as they are."
- ✓ Life can be worth living, even with painful events in it.

*(continued)*

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**Accepting Reality: Choices We Can Make** (page 2 of 2)

List one important thing that you need to accept in your life *now*: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

List one less important thing you need to accept *this week*: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

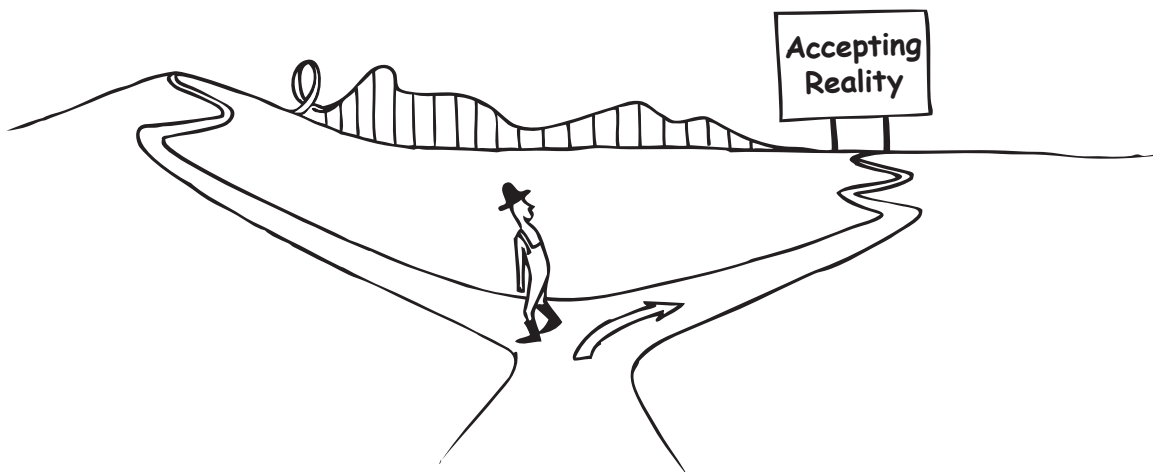
## Accepting Reality: Turning the Mind

- ✓ ACCEPTANCE is a choice. It is like coming to a “fork in the road.” You may have to turn your mind toward the ACCEPTANCE road and away from the REJECTING “Reality Road.”
- ✓ First notice you are not accepting reality (anger, bitterness, “Why me?”)
- ✓ Second, make an inner commitment to ACCEPT.
- ✓ You may have to turn your mind over and over and over again.

### Factors That Interfere with Acceptance

- ✓ Beliefs get in the way: You believe that if you accept your painful situation, you will become weak and just give up (or give in), approve of reality, or accept a life of pain.
- ✓ Emotions get in the way: Intense anger at the person or group that caused the painful event; unbearable sadness; guilt about your own behavior; shame regarding something about you; rage about the injustice of the world.

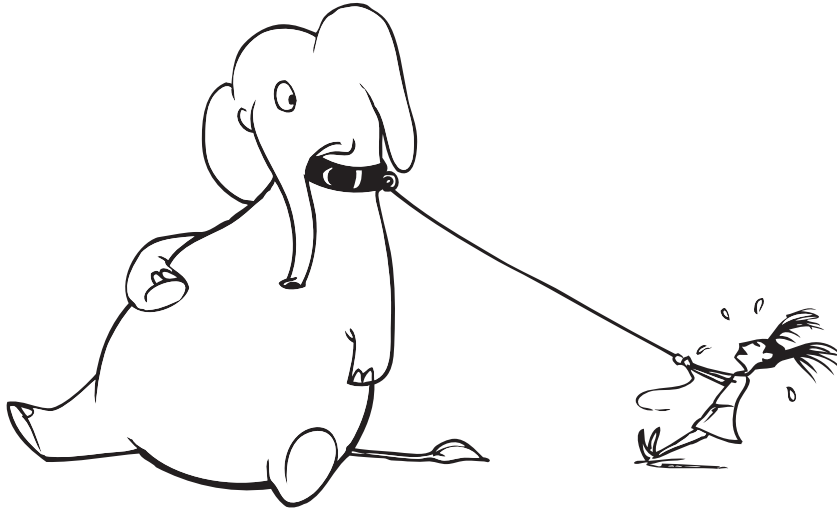
**REMEMBER: ACCEPTANCE DOES NOT MEAN APPROVAL!**



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## Willingness



### WILLFULNESS IS . . .

- Willfulness is refusing to tolerate a situation or giving up.
- Willfulness is trying to change a situation that cannot be changed, or refusing to change something that must be changed.
- Willfulness is “the terrible twos”—“no . . . no . . . no . . .”
- Willfulness is the opposite of “DOING WHAT WORKS”

### REPLACE WILLFULNESS WITH *WILLINGNESS*.

### WILLINGNESS IS . . .

- allowing the world to be what it is and participating in it fully.
- doing just what is needed—no more, no less. It is being effective.
- listening carefully to your Wise Mind and deciding what to do.
- When willfulness doesn’t budge, ask: “What is the threat?”

How can you feel the difference between when you are **willing** and when you are **willful**? Clues that you are being willful: extreme thoughts like “No way!”; muscles tightening.

(continued)

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**Willingness** (page 2 of 2)

Describe a situation when you noticed your **willingness**  
and one in which you noticed your **willfulness**:

Where were you willful? \_\_\_\_\_

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How were you willful (e.g., thoughts, feelings, body sensations)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What happened? \_\_\_\_\_

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Where were you willing? \_\_\_\_\_

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How were you willing (e.g., thoughts, feelings, body sensations)? \_\_\_\_\_

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What happened? \_\_\_\_\_

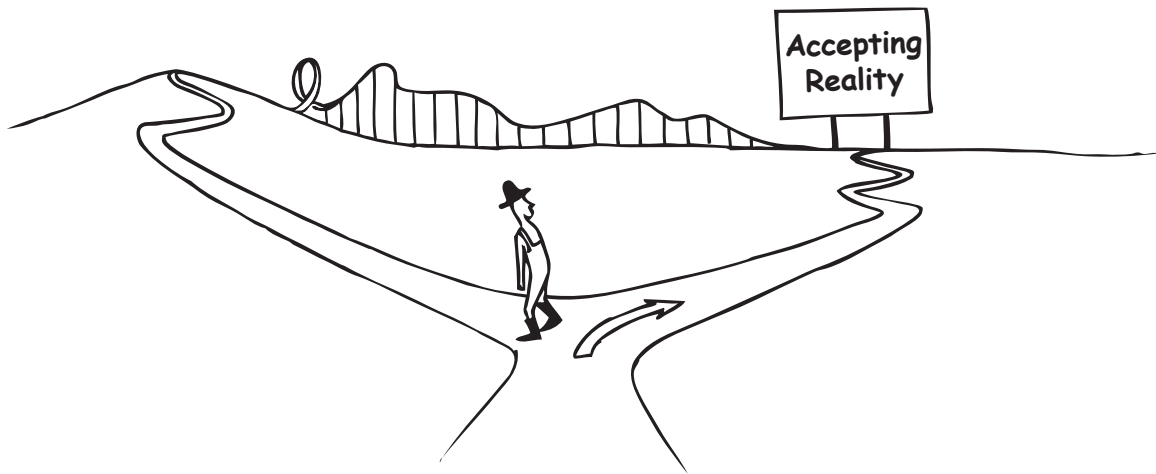
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## Ways to Practice Accepting Reality

1. Acceptance of reality as it is sometimes requires an act of CHOICE.
2. Breathe mindfully to be in the moment and to help develop a more accepting mindset.
3. Accept reality with your face: half-smile.
4. Rehearse in your mind those things that you would do if you really did accept reality *as it is*.
5. Practice willingness.
6. Remember to turn the mind back to accepting Reality Road.



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## Practice Exercise: Accepting Reality

Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

Describe a situation during the week in which you were distressed and there was no way to change the situation right away: \_\_\_\_\_

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Rate your distress from 1 to 10 (with 10 being the worst): \_\_\_\_\_

If you couldn't solve the problem right away or change how you felt about it, what did you choose to do (circle one of the remaining three possibilities)?:

1. ~~Solve the problem.~~
2. ~~Change how you feel about the problem.~~
3. ACCEPT the situation.
4. Stay miserable (refuse to accept situation).
5. Make the situation worse.

If you tried to radically accept the situation, what exactly did you do or say to yourself? \_\_\_\_\_

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Did you notice that you had to "turn your mind" back to radical acceptance? If yes, how? \_\_\_\_\_

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If you chose to stay miserable or make things worse, what did you do? \_\_\_\_\_

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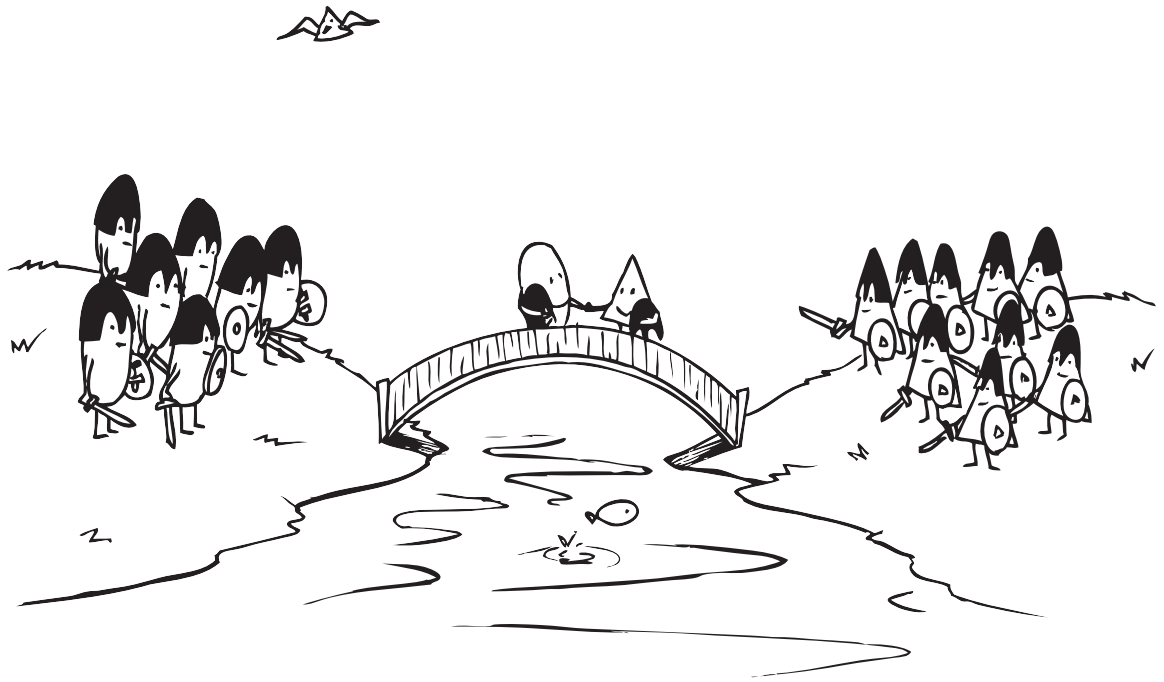
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Rate your distress after you turned your mind toward acceptance (rate 0–10, with 10 being the worst distress): \_\_\_\_\_

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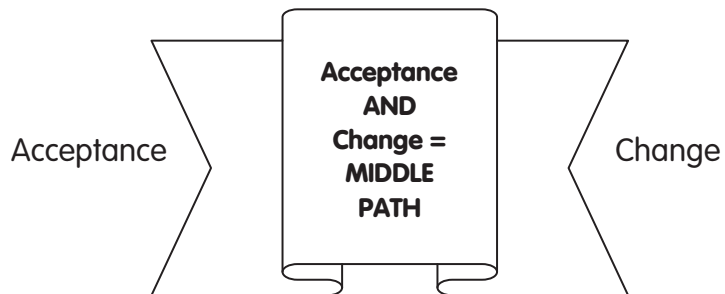
# WALKING THE MIDDLE PATH HANDOUTS



## Dialectics: What Is It?

Dialectics teach us that:

- There is always more than one way to see a situation and more than one way to solve a problem.
- All people have unique qualities and different points of view.
- Change is the only constant.
- Two things that seem like (or are) opposites can both be true.
- *Honor* the truth on both sides of a conflict. This does not mean giving up your values or selling out. Avoid seeing the world in “black-and-white,” “all-or-nothing” ways.



### Examples:

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

I can do this **AND** it's going to be hard. My mom is really strict **AND** she really cares about me. I've got big problems **AND** I can try to solve them. You are tough **AND** you are gentle.

This perspective helps pave the way toward the middle path by helping you:

- Expand your thoughts and ways of considering life situations.
- “Unstick” standoffs and conflicts.
- Be more flexible and approachable.
- Avoid assumptions and blaming.



## Dialectics “How-to” Guide

### Hints for Thinking and Acting Dialectically:

1. Move to “both–and” thinking and away from “either/or” thinking. Avoid extreme words: *always, never, you make me*. Be descriptive.

Example: Instead of saying “Everyone *always* treats me unfairly,” say “*Sometimes* I am treated fairly *and* at other times, I am treated unfairly.”

2. Practice looking at all sides of a situation and all points of view. Be generous and dig deep. Find the kernel of truth in every side by asking “What is being left out?”

Example: “Why does Mom want me to be home at 10:00 P.M.?” “Why does my daughter want to stay out until 2:00 A.M.?”

3. Remember: No one has the absolute truth. Be open to alternatives.

4. Use “I feel . . .” statements, instead of “You are . . .,” “You should . . .,” or “That’s just the way it is” statements.

Example: Say “I feel angry when you say I can’t stay out later just because you said so” instead of, “You never listen and you are always unfair to me.”

5. Accept that different opinions can be valid, even if you do not agree with them.

Example: “I can see your point of view even though I do not agree with it.”

6. Check your assumptions. Do not assume that you know what others are thinking.

Example: “What did you mean when you said . . .?”

7. Do not expect others to know what you are thinking.

Example: “What I am trying to say is. . . .”

(continued)

**Practice:**

Circle the dialectical statements:

1. a. "It is hopeless. I just cannot do it."  
b. "This is easy . . . I've got no problems."  
c. "This is really hard for me and I am going to keep trying."
2. a. "I know I am right about this."  
b. "You are totally wrong about that and I am right."  
c. "I can understand why you feel this way, and I feel different about it."

## Thinking Mistakes

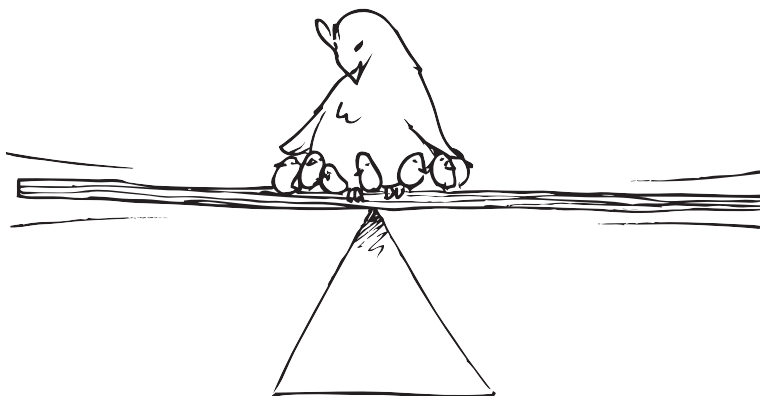
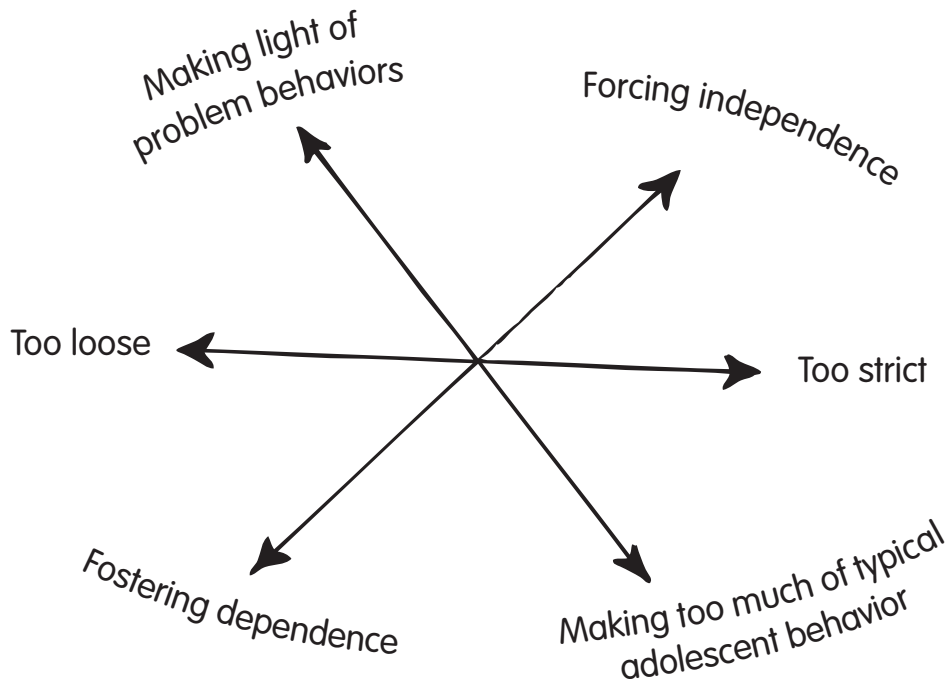
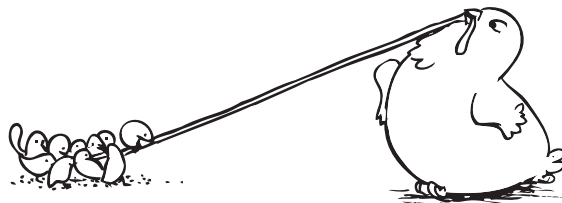
1. **ALL-OR-NOTHING, BLACK-AND-WHITE THINKING:** If you're not perfect, you're a total loser. If you don't get everything you want, it feels like you got nothing. If you're having a good day, the whole rest of your life is perfect and you don't need therapy anymore.
2. **CATASTROPHIZING (FORTUNETELLING ERROR):** You predict the future negatively without considering other, more likely outcomes. "I'm definitely going to fail my test," or "If I tell her that, she'll hate me forever."
3. **MIND READING:** You believe you know what other people are thinking even without asking. "He clearly doesn't think I will do a good job."
4. **OVERGENERALIZATION:** You make a sweeping, negative conclusion that goes far beyond the current situation. "Since I felt uncomfortable in my first day of class, I know that I won't be able to enjoy the rest of the year."
5. **MENTAL FILTER:** You develop selective hearing and vision and only hear and see the one negative thing and ignore the many positive things. "Because my supervisor gave me one low rating on my evaluation (that also had many higher ratings), it means I'm doing a terrible job."
6. **DISQUALIFYING THE POSITIVE:** You tell yourself that the positive experiences, actions, or qualities do not count. "I did well in that one basketball game because I just got lucky."
7. **EMOTIONAL REASONING:** You start thinking your emotions are fact. "I feel . . . ; therefore, it is. I feel like she hates me; therefore, she does." "I feel stupid; therefore I am stupid." "I dread school, so it's a bad idea to go."
8. **"SHOULD" STATEMENTS:** You "should" on yourself or someone else by having a fixed idea of how you or others should behave, and you overestimate how bad it will be if these expectations are not met. "It's terrible that I made a mistake; I should always do my best." "You shouldn't be so upset."
9. **LABELING:** Overgeneralization is taken a step further by the use of extreme language to describe things. "I spilled my milk. I am SUCH A LOSER!" "My therapist didn't call me right back; she is the most uncaring, heartless therapist ever!"
10. **PERSONALIZATION:** You see yourself as the cause for things you have absolutely no control over or the target of stuff that may have absolutely nothing to do with you. "My parents divorced because of me." "The receptionist was short with me because I did something wrong."

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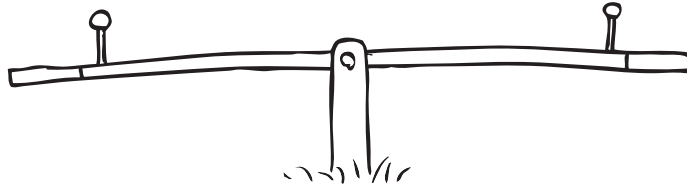
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## Dialectical Dilemmas



## Dialectical Dilemmas: How Does the Dilemma Apply to You?

Too loose



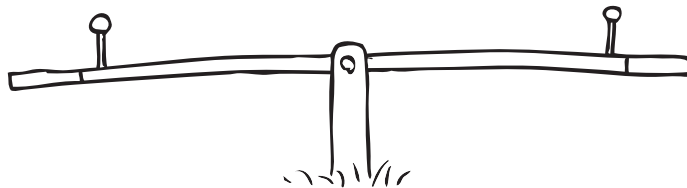
Too strict

Have clear rules and enforce them consistently

**AND AT THE SAME TIME**

Be willing to negotiate on some issues and don't overuse consequences

Making light  
of problem  
behaviors



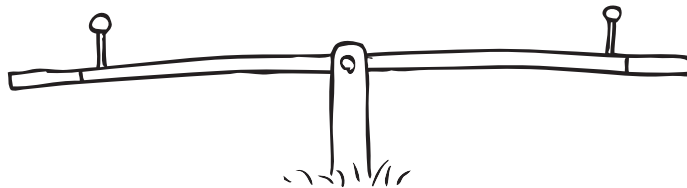
Making too  
much of typical  
adolescent  
behavior

Recognize when a behavior "crosses the line" and get help for that behavior

**AND AT THE SAME TIME**

Recognize which behaviors are part of typical adolescent development

Forcing  
independence



Fostering  
dependence

Give your adolescent guidance, support, and coaching to help figure out how to be responsible

**AND AT THE SAME TIME**

SLOWLY give your adolescent greater amounts of freedom and independence while continuing to encourage an appropriate amount of reliance on others

Place an "X" on each continuum to note where you are, a "Y" where your family member is, and a "Z" for a second family member.

**What do you need to do to think and act more dialectically?**



## What's Typical for Adolescents and What's Cause for Concern?

### Typical

1. Increased moodiness
2. Increased self-consciousness, of feeling "on stage," increased focus on body image
3. Increased dawdling
4. Increased parent-adolescent conflict
5. Experimentation with drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes
6. Increased sense of invulnerability (may lead to increased sensation seeking or risk taking)
7. Stressful transitions to middle and high school
8. Increased argumentativeness, idealism, and criticism; being opinionated

### Not Typical: Cause for Concern

- Intense, painful, long-lasting moods; risky mood-dependent behavior, major depression, or panic attacks; self-injury or suicidal thinking
- Social phobia or withdrawal; perfectionism and unrealistic standards; bingeing, purging, or restricted eating; obsessive about or neglectful of hygiene
- Multiple distractions to point of not being able to complete homework or projects, lack of focus that interferes with daily work or tasks, regularly late for appointments
- Verbal or physical aggression, running away
- Substance abuse, selling drugs, substance-using peer group
- Multiple accidents; encounters with firearms; excessive risk taking (e.g., subway surfing, driving drunk or texting while driving), getting arrested
- School refusal; bullying or being bullied; lack of connection to school or peers; school truancy, failure, or dropout
- Rebellious questioning of social rules and conventions; causing trouble with family members, teachers, or others who attempt to assert authority over the adolescent

*(continued)*

## What's Typical for Adolescents and What's Cause for Concern? *(page 2 of 2)*

### **Typical**

9. Increased sexual maturation; sexual interest or experimentation
10. Becoming stressed by everyday decision making
11. Increased desire for privacy
12. Strong interest in technology; social media
13. Messy room
14. Sleep cycle shifts later (urge to be a "night owl" and to sleep late on weekends)

### **Not Typical: Cause for Concern**

- Sexual promiscuity, multiple partners, unsafe sexual practices, pregnancy
- Becoming paralyzed with indecision
- Isolation from family; breakdown of communication, routine lying, and hiding things
- Many hours per day spent on computer, on high-risk or triggering websites; casually meeting partners online; revealing too much (e.g., "sexting," overly personal posts on Facebook, Tumblr, Instagram, in blog)
- Old, rotting food; teen not able to find basic necessities; dirty clothes covering floor chronically
- Often up nearly all night; sleeps almost all day on weekends; routinely late (or missing school) because of sleep schedule

## Practice Exercise: Thinking and Acting Dialectically

Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

Identify a time this week when you did *not* think or act dialectically.

**Example 1:** Briefly describe the situation (who, what, when) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How did you think or act in this situation? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Are you thinking in extremes (e.g., all or nothing or catastrophizing)? Examples: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What is a more dialectical thought (or action) about the situation? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What was the outcome? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Identify a time this week when you *did* think or act dialectically.

**Example 2:** Briefly describe the situation (who, what, when) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How did you think or act in this situation? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What was the outcome? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Validation

**VALIDATION** communicates to another person that his or her feelings, thoughts, and actions **make sense** and are understandable to you in a particular situation.

**SELF-VALIDATION** involves perceiving your *own* feelings, thoughts, and actions as making sense, accurate, and acceptable in a particular situation.

**INVALIDATION** communicates (intentionally or not, through words or actions) that another person's feelings, thoughts, and actions in a particular situation make no sense, are "manipulative," or "stupid," or an "overreaction," or not worthy of your time, interest, or respect.

### Remember: Validation ≠ Agreement

Validation *does not* necessarily mean that you like or agree with what the other person is doing, saying, or feeling. It means that you understand where they are coming from.

### WHY VALIDATE?

- Validation improves relationships!!!!
- It can deescalate conflict and intense emotions.
- Validation can show that:
  - We are listening.
  - We understand.
  - We are being nonjudgmental.
  - We care about the relationship.
  - We can disagree without having a big conflict.

### WHAT TO VALIDATE?

- Feelings, thoughts, and behaviors in ourselves or others

Validate the valid, not the invalid. You can still validate the feeling *without* validating the behavior. For example: Validate someone feeling upset about a low test grade even though you know he or she didn't study, but *don't* validate the lack of studying that led to the low grade.

## How Can We Validate Others?

1. Actively listen. Make eye contact and stay focused.
2. Be mindful of your verbal and nonverbal reactions in order to avoid invalidation (e.g., rolling eyes, sucking teeth, heavy sighing, walking away, making light of serious things, or saying, for example, "That's stupid, don't be sad," "I don't care what you say," "Whatever!").
3. Observe what the other person is feeling in the moment. Look for a word that describes the feeling.
4. Reflect the feeling back without judgment. The goal is to communicate that you *understand* how the other person feels (e.g., "It makes sense that you're angry"; "I understand that you are having a tough time right now").

For *self-validation*: "I have a right to feel sad." Avoid "Yes, but . . ." thinking. Instead, think about what your best friend in Wise Mind would say to you.

5. Show tolerance! Look for how the feelings, thoughts, or actions make sense given the other's (or your own) history and current situation, even if you don't approve of the behavior, emotion, or action itself.
6. Respond in a way that shows that you are taking the person seriously (with or without words); for example, "That sounds awful." If someone is crying, give a tissue or a hug. You may ask, "What do you need right now? For me to just listen or to help you problem-solve?"

## How Can We Validate Ourselves?

How can I validate myself?

1. Actively listen and pay attention to yourself: Be mindful of your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.
2. Describe your feelings without passing judgment: "Wow, I'm really angry right now!" or "It makes sense that I'm a little nervous."
3. Respond in a way that shows that you take yourself seriously: Accept that it is OK to have your emotion(s) (e.g., "It's OK to feel sad sometimes").
4. Acknowledge that the emotion may make sense in the situation. Show tolerance for yourself and your emotions (e.g., "It makes sense that I'm not able to focus very well with all of the stress I am under").
5. Do not judge your own emotion (or yourself).
6. Use interpersonal effectiveness skills for self-respect to be fair to yourself, not apologize for feeling how you feel, stick up for yourself, and stay true to your values (FAST).

## Practice Exercise: Validation of Self and Others

Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

List *one* self-invalidating statement and *two* self-validating statements:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

List *one* invalidating statement to others and *two* validating statements to others:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Choose a situation during the week in which you used validation skills with someone else or yourself.

**Situation:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who did you validate? \_\_\_\_\_

What *exactly* did you do or say to validate yourself or that person? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What was the outcome? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How did you feel afterward? \_\_\_\_\_

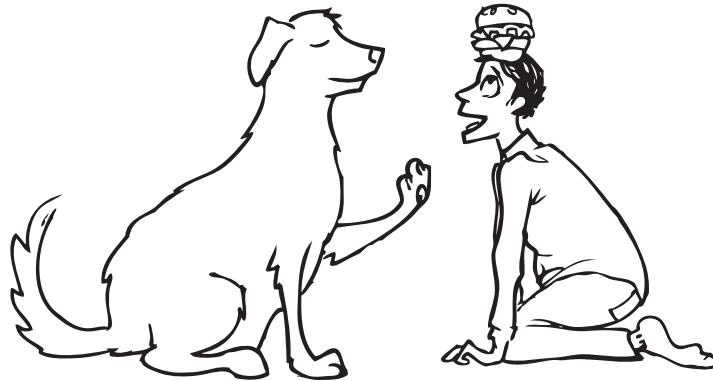
\_\_\_\_\_

Would you say or do something differently next time? What? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Behavior Change



Behavior change skills are strategies used to *increase* behaviors we want and to *reduce* behaviors we don't want (in ourselves and others).

### BEHAVIORS TO INCREASE

Remember to be specific and measurable.

#### SELF:

**What behaviors would you like to increase in yourself** (e.g., exercising, saving money, going to school, doing homework)? \_\_\_\_\_

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#### OTHERS:

**What behaviors would you like to increase in someone else** (e.g., spending more time with you, listening to you, making eye contact, putting dirty dishes in the sink)? \_\_\_\_\_

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(continued)



**Behavior Change** (page 2 of 2)

**BEHAVIORS TO DECREASE**

**SELF:**

**What behaviors would you like to decrease in yourself** (e.g., overeating, cigarette smoking, cutting, blurting out impulsively, arguing back, running away, fighting, skipping classes, lying in bed during the day)? \_\_\_\_\_

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**OTHERS:**

**What behaviors would you like to decrease in someone else** (e.g., nagging, breaking curfew, running away, yelling, avoiding school, invalidation, playing videogames, staying up past bedtime)? \_\_\_\_\_

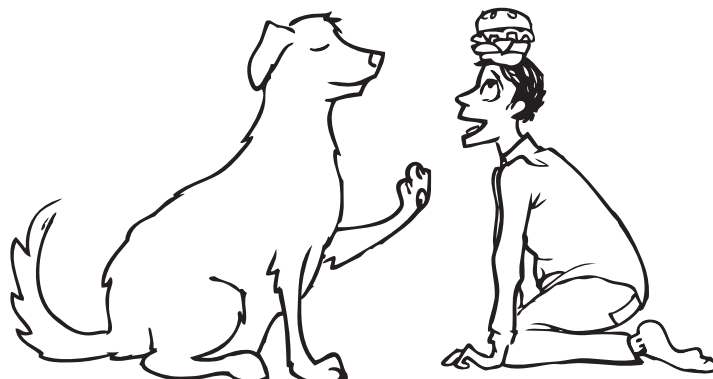
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## Ways to Increase Behaviors



**Reinforcers** are *consequences* that result in an *increase* in a behavior. They provide information to a person about what you want them to do.

- **Positive reinforcement:** Increases the frequency of a behavior by providing a “rewarding” consequence. (e.g., labeled praise; a genuine compliment; an A on an exam).

*HINT: Timing is very important. Give the reward immediately and choose motivating reinforcers! Don't forget to reinforce yourself!*

*Examples:* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- **Negative reinforcement:** Increases the frequency of a behavior by removing something negative; it's *relief* from something unpleasant.

*Examples:* Why take an aspirin when you have a headache? It *relieves* the headache and that makes you more likely to take aspirin next time you have a headache (aversive stimulus). Aspirin taking is negatively reinforced.

If your mom is nagging you, you are more likely to clean your room in order to stop the nagging. If you have intense negative emotions, and a harmful behavior provides temporary relief, you are more likely to repeat the harmful behavior. Remember, you are learning skills to manage this better!

*(continued)*

## Ways to Increase Behaviors (page 2 of 2)

*Examples* of negative reinforcements that are *not* harmful (e.g., positive ways to soothe yourself, leaving painful situations): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- **Shaping:** Reinforcing small steps that lead toward the ultimate goal (e.g., going from A to Z in 26 steps, each step rewarded).

*Example:* A teenager is anxious about going to school and doesn't usually go. She might be encouraged to go for 1 hour on Monday, 2 hours on Tuesday, and so on, until she's able to stay for a whole day, ultimately leading up to staying every day, all week long. Reinforce each step!

## Practice Exercise: Positive Reinforcement

Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. Look for opportunities (since they are occurring all of the time) to positively reinforce yourself and someone else. First, simply notice or acknowledge something positive that occurred (positive tracking).

What is something positive that *you* did this week? \_\_\_\_\_

What is something positive that your *family member* did this week? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Using a different example, identify a specific behavior you wanted to increase and the reinforcer you used to help increase it. Remember, you can reinforce even a small step in the right direction (shaping)!

A. For yourself:

Behavior: \_\_\_\_\_

Reinforcer: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Someone else: \_\_\_\_\_

Behavior: \_\_\_\_\_

Reinforcer: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Describe the situation(s) when you used reinforcement:

A. For yourself: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Someone else: \_\_\_\_\_

4. What was the outcome? What did you observe?

A. For yourself: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

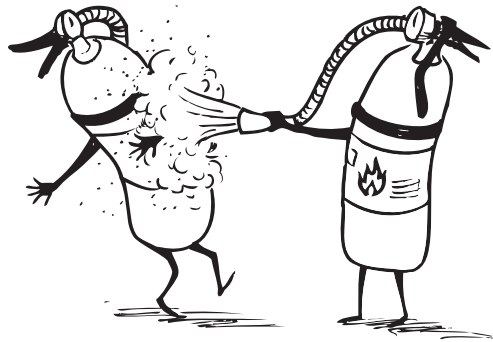
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B. Someone else: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Ways to Decrease or Stop Behaviors



**Extinction:** Reduces a behavior by *withholding* previous reinforcement. When attention is reinforcing, ignore the unwanted behavior. Make sure you reinforce a desirable replacement behavior.

- If a parent ignores a child's tantrum, the child will eventually stop tantruming.
- Beware of the **behavioral burst**, a temporary increase in the behavior you are trying to extinguish. DON'T GIVE UP or forget to orient the person in whom you are beginning to extinguish a particular behavior!
- Beware of **intermittent reinforcement**: Behavior that is reinforced only occasionally is the hardest behavior to extinguish (e.g., never give candy to stop a tantrum after you've ignored episodes).

**Punishment:** A *consequence* that results in a *decrease* in behavior. It tells another person what you don't want him or her to do. **Use sparingly because:**

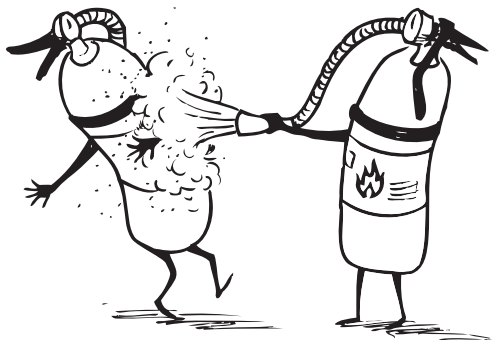
- Punishment does not teach new behavior.
- Punishment can lead to resentment and a feeling of demoralization.
- Punishment may lead to self-punishment.

(continued)

**To use punishment effectively:**

- First, reinforce desired behaviors to **prevent** undesired ones.
- Communicate **clear rules and expectations**.
- Have a menu of possible punishments ready in advance.
- Pair a negative consequence with **reinforcement of desired behavior**.
- Be specific, time limited, and make the punishment fit the crime (e.g., if you're out past curfew 1 hour, your curfew is 1 hour earlier next time).
- Ask yourself, is **Wise Mind** dictating the consequence?
- Apply the punishing consequence immediately or . . .
- Allow natural consequences (e.g., you failed the test because you stayed up all night and were too tired to focus in school).

## Practice Exercise: Extinction and Punishment



### Extinction

Practice ignoring what peers or family members do that is annoying or provocative.

*Important Note 1:* Don't use with behaviors that are dangerous!

*Important Note 2:* If provocative behaviors include bullying or pressuring you to do something that goes against your values, ignoring (extinction) might not be enough. You may need to tell a trusted authority figure and ask for help!

Briefly describe the situation and what you ignored. How did it work out? \_\_\_\_\_

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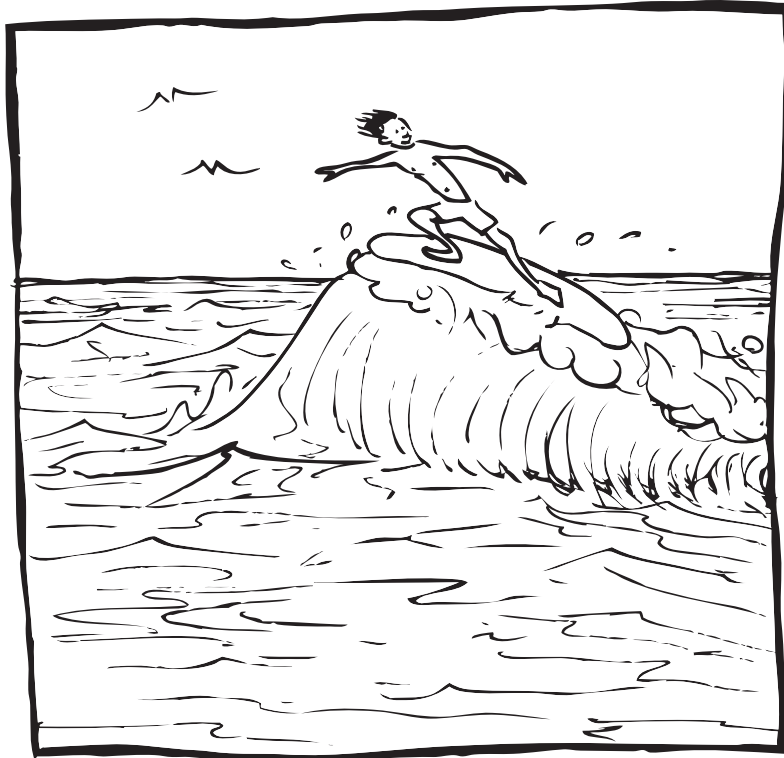
### Punishing Consequences: Use Sparingly or as Last Resort

Parents:

List three Wise Mind-based short-term consequences you can apply when other methods of behavior change haven't worked:

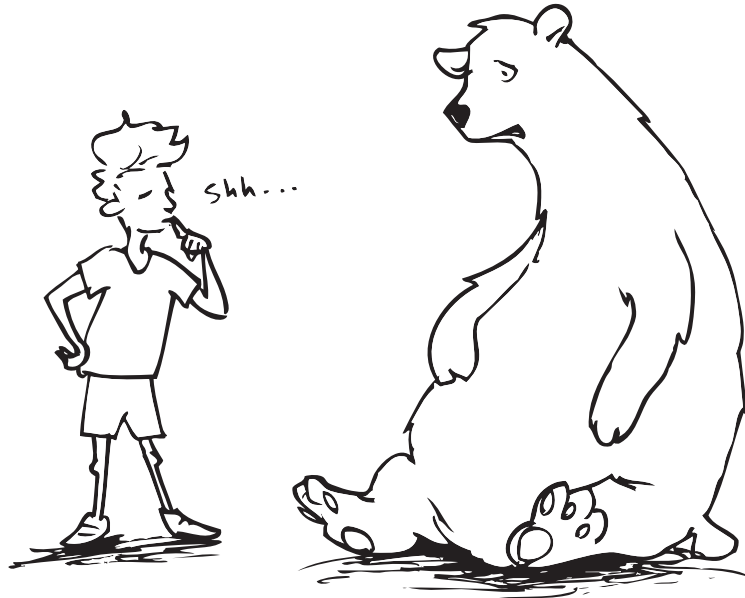
1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

# EMOTION REGULATION HANDOUTS





## Taking Charge of Your Emotions: Why Bother?



### Taking charge of your emotions is important because:

Adolescents often have intense emotions that are difficult to manage, such as anger, shame, depression, or anxiety.

Difficulties controlling these emotions often lead to problematic behaviors that affect you and those around you.

Problematic behaviors are often ineffective solutions to intensely painful emotions.

## Goals of Emotion Regulation Skills Training

### I. Understand the emotions that you experience.

- Identify (observe and describe/name) emotions.
- Know what emotions do for you (are your emotions working for or against you in this moment?).

### II. Reduce emotional vulnerability and stop unwanted emotions from starting in the first place.

- Increase positive emotions.
- Decrease vulnerability to Emotion Mind.

### III. Decrease the frequency of unwanted emotions.

### IV. Decrease emotional suffering; stop or reduce unwanted emotions once they start.

- Let go of painful emotions using *mindfulness*.
- Change emotions through *opposite action*.

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## Short List of Emotions

LOVE HATE FEAR JOY shame Guilt ANXIETY  
loneliness  
ANGER Excited FRUSTRATION sadness shyness envy  
BOREDOM SURPRISE! embarrassed  
  
CONFUSED CURIOUS PRIDE SUSPICIOUS HAPPY  
Rage INTEREST DEPRESSED WORRY IRRITABLE PANIC  
Jealous optimistic hopeless Disgust hurt  
sympathy DISAPPOINTED Content Calm

Other names for emotions I frequently have:

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

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## What Good Are Emotions?

### Emotions Give Us Information.

- Emotions provide us with a signal that something is happening (e.g., “I feel nervous standing alone in this dark alley”).
- Sometimes our emotions communicate by “gut feeling” or intuition. This can be helpful if our emotions get us to check out the facts.
- It’s a problem when we treat emotions as if they are facts about the world. For example: “If I am afraid, there must be a threat,” or “I love him, so he must be good for me.”
- We need to be mindful that emotions are *not* facts. Therefore, it is important to check the facts about the situation.



### Emotions Communicate to, and Influence, Others.

- Facial expressions, body posture, and voice tone say a lot about how you’re feeling. They communicate emotions to others (e.g., your sad face may cause someone to ask you if you are OK and to give you support).
- Whether you realize it or not, your emotions—expressed by words, face, or body language—influence how other people respond to you.



### Emotions Motivate and Prepare Us for Action.

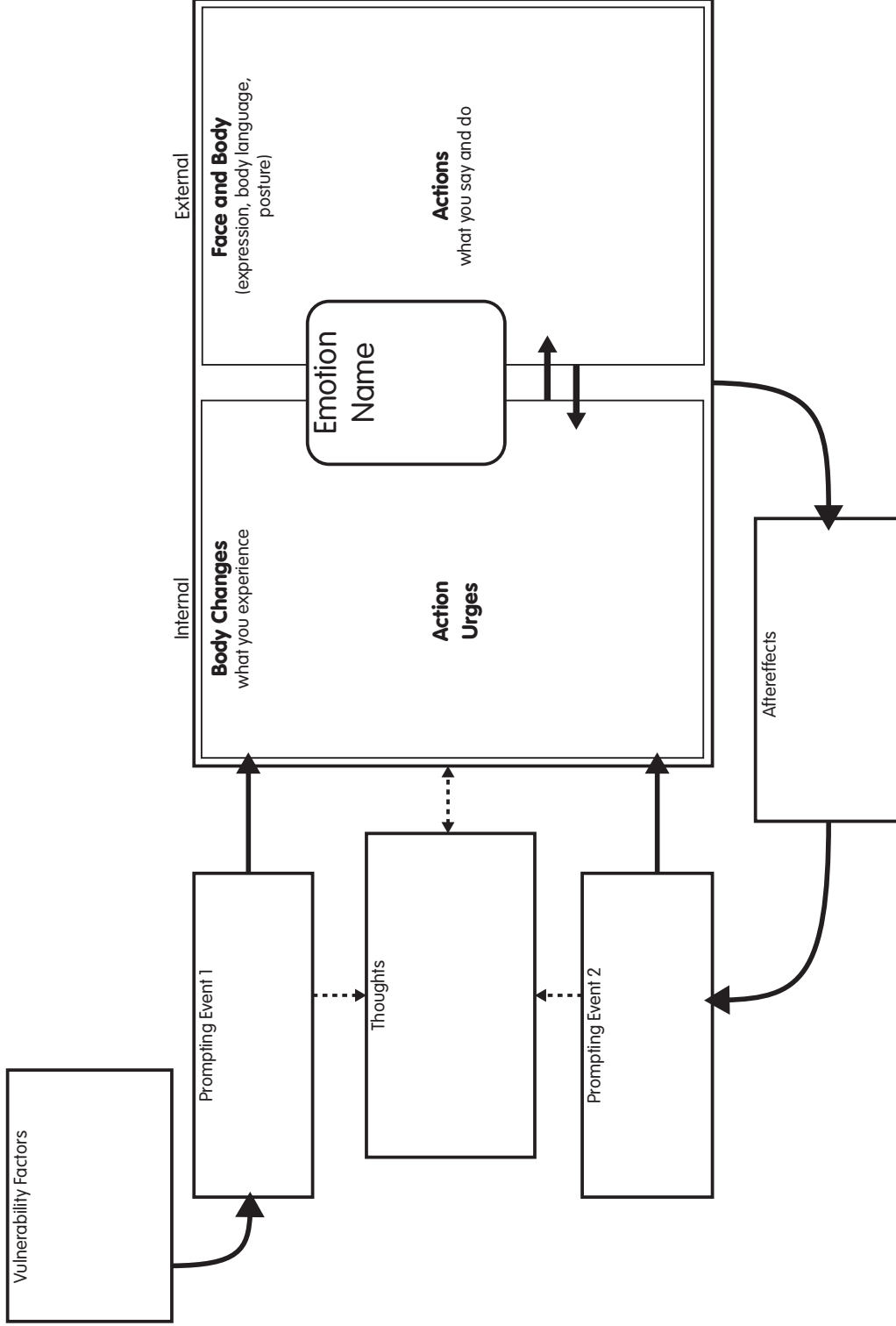
- The action urge connected to specific emotions is often “hardwired.” For example, when we hear a loud horn beep suddenly, we startle.
- Emotions save time in getting us to act in important situations. Our nervous system activates us (e.g., we instantly jump out of the way of an oncoming car). We don’t have to think everything through.
- Strong emotions can help us overcome obstacles—in our mind and in the environment.



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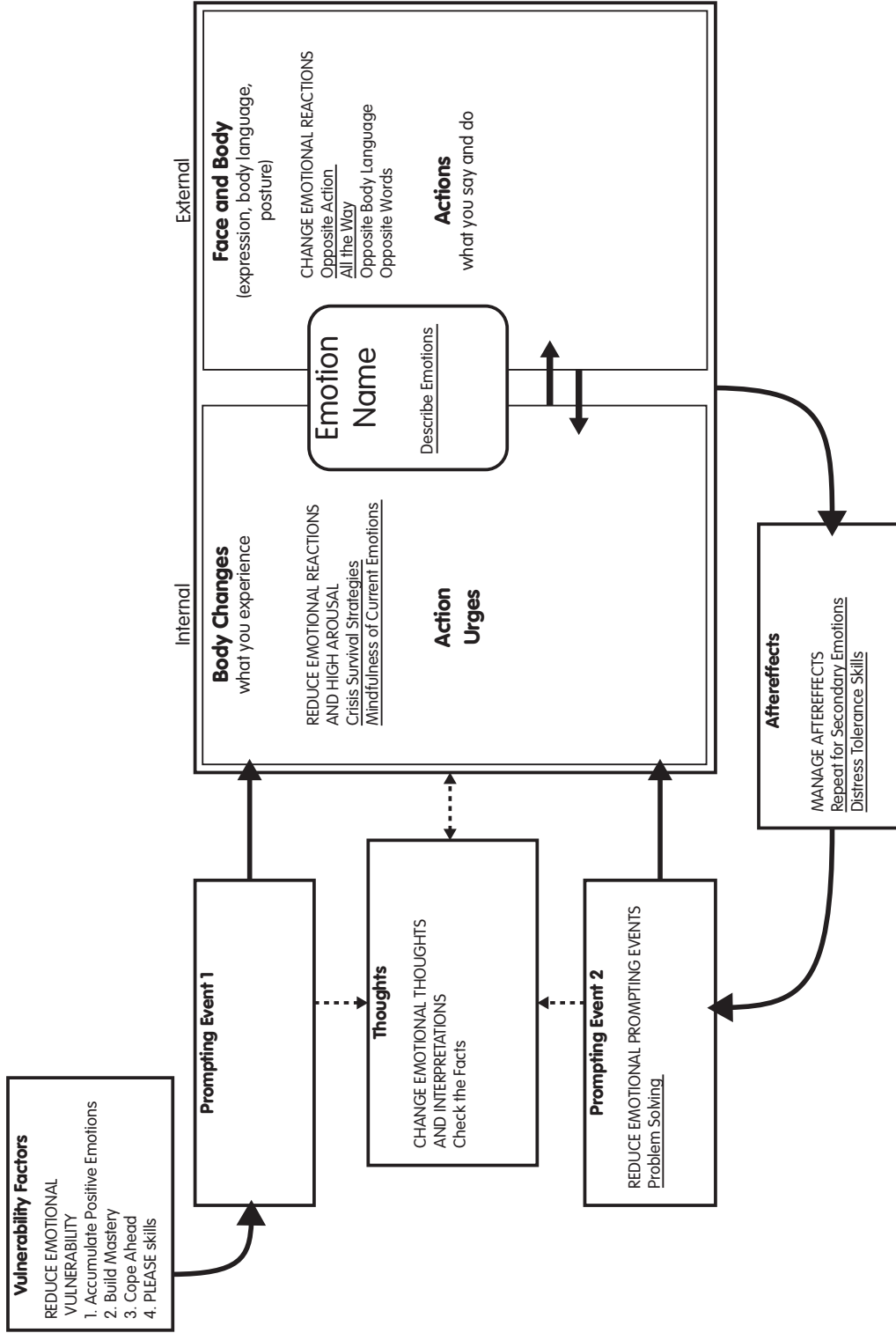
# A Model of Emotions



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# A Model of Emotions with Skills

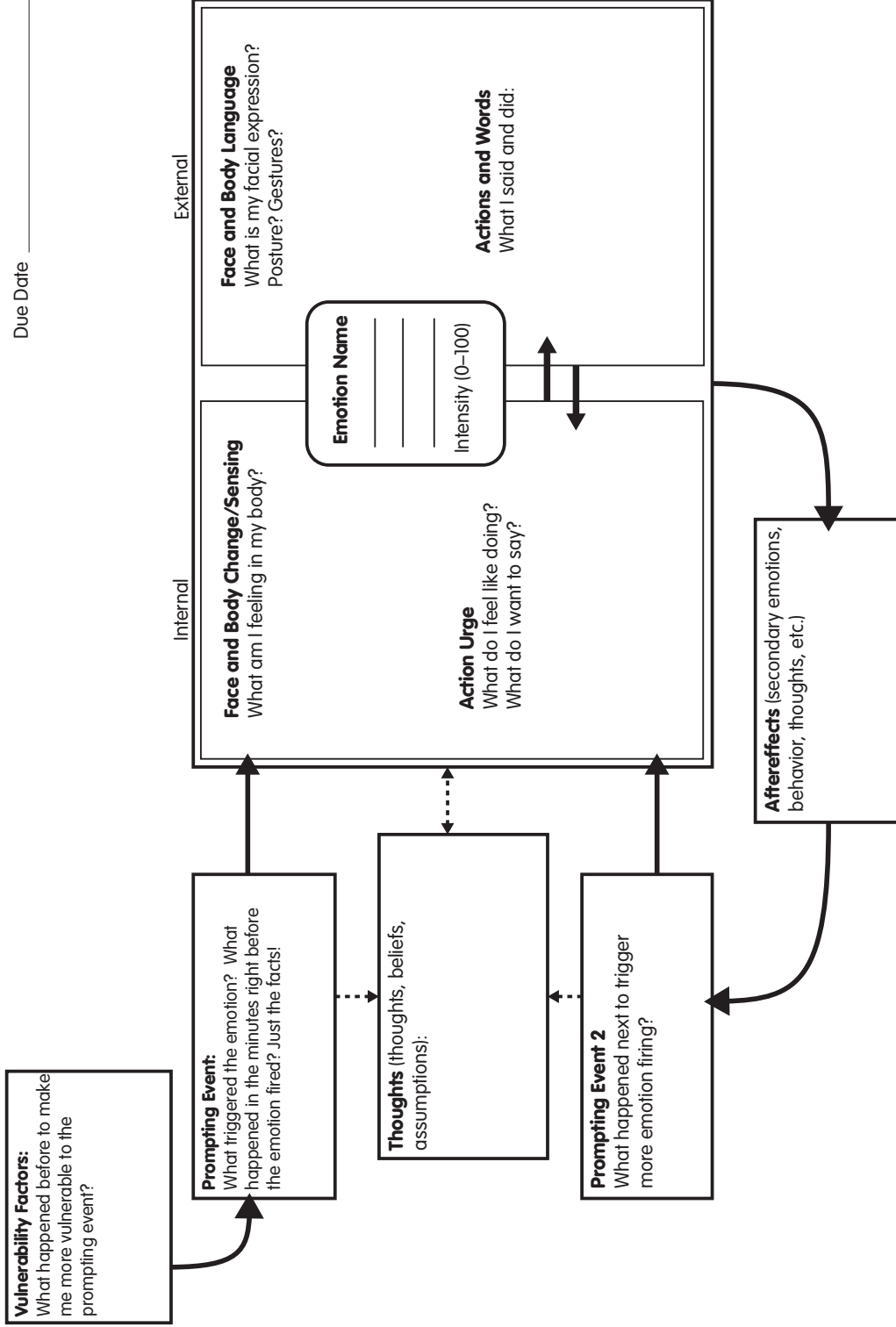


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# Practice Exercise: Observe and Describe an Emotion

Due Date \_\_\_\_\_



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## ABC PLEASE Overview

How to **increase** positive emotions  
and  
**reduce** vulnerability to Emotional Mind

**A**ccumulating positive experiences

**B**uild mastery

**C**ope ahead of time with emotional situations

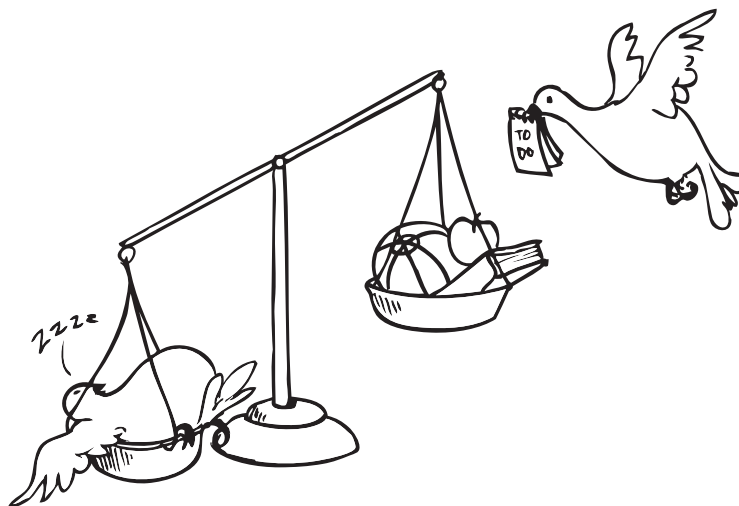
Treat **P**hysical **L** illness

Balance **E**ating

**A**void mood-altering drugs

Balance **S**leep

Get **E**xercise



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# ACCUMULATING Positive Experiences—Short Term

(To Build a Dam between You and the Sea of Emotional Dyscontrol)

## In the Short Term:

Do pleasant things that are possible right now.

- Increase pleasant activities that lead to positive emotions.
- Do one thing each day from the Pleasant Activities List. Also consider the Parent-Teen Shared Pleasant Activities List.
- Be mindful of positive experiences.

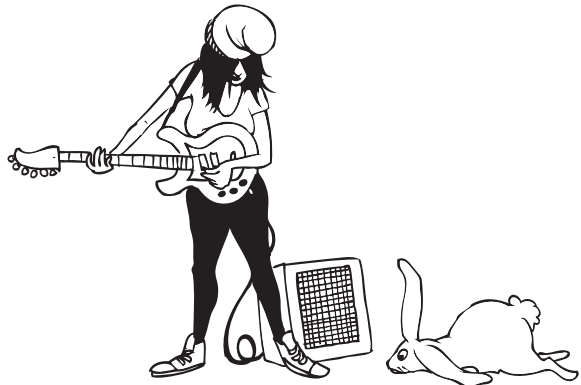


## Be Mindful of Positive Experiences:

- Focus your attention on positive events while they are happening.
- Refocus your attention when your mind wanders to the negative.
- Participate fully in the experience.

## Be Unmindful of Worries:

- Don't destroy positive experiences by thinking about when they will end.
- Don't think about whether you deserve this positive experience.
- Don't think about how much more might be expected of you now.



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## Pleasant Activities List



1. Soaking in the bathtub
2. Thinking about how it will be when school ends
3. Going out with friends
4. Relaxing
5. Going to a movie
6. Going running
7. Listening to music
8. Lying in the sun (with sunscreen)
9. Reading
10. Saving money
11. Planning the future
12. Dancing
13. Fixing or cleaning things around the house
14. Having a quiet night
15. Cooking good food
16. Taking care of your pets
17. Going swimming
18. Writing
19. Drawing or doodling
20. Playing sports (list: \_\_\_\_\_)
21. Going to a party
22. Talking with friends
23. Working out
24. Singing
25. Going ice skating
26. Going to a beach
27. Playing a musical instrument
28. Traveling
29. Making a gift for someone
30. Downloading music or new apps
31. Watching sports on TV
32. Going out to dinner
33. Baking
34. Planning a party for someone
35. Buying clothes
36. Getting a haircut or styling your hair
37. Enjoying a cup of hot chocolate, coffee, or tea
38. Kissing
39. Going to hear live music
40. Getting a manicure or pedicure
41. Spending some time with little kids
42. Going for a bike ride
43. Going sledding in a snowstorm
44. Getting a massage

(continued)

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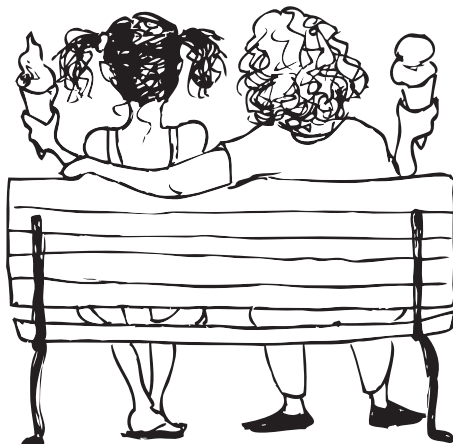
**Pleasant Activities List** (page 2 of 2)

- |  |   |                                      |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| 45. E-mailing or texting friends                               | lessons (sports, dance, music, martial arts)              | 72. Figuring out your favorite scent |
| 46. Writing in a diary or journal                              | 59. Bowling   | 73. Buying yourself a little treat   |
| 47. Looking at photos  | 60. Fantasizing about life getting better                 | 74. Noticing a storm coming          |
| 48. Dressing up however you like                               | 61. Saying "I love you"                                   | 75. Building furniture or carpentry  |
| 49. Playing videogames   | 62. Writing a poem, song, or rap                          | <b>Add Your Own!</b>                 |
| 50. Walking around where you live                              | 63. Thinking about a friend's good qualities              | 76. _____                            |
| 51. Noticing birds or trees (something in nature)              | 64. Putting on makeup                                     | _____                                |
| 52. Surfing the Internet                                       | 65. Making a smoothie and drinking it slowly              | 77. _____                            |
| 53. Surprising someone with a favor                            | 66. Putting on your favorite piece of clothing            | _____                                |
| 54. Completing something you will feel great about             | 67. Playing a game  | 78. _____                            |
| 55. Shooting pool or playing ping-pong                         | 68. Writing a story                                       | _____                                |
| 56. Contacting a relative with whom you have been out of touch | 69. Instant messaging someone                             | 79. _____                            |
| 57. Tweeting, posting online                                   | 70. Watching reruns on TV                                 | 80. _____                            |
| 58. Thinking about taking                                      | 71. Making a card and giving it to someone you care about | _____                                |

## Parent-Teen Shared Pleasant Activities List

**Instructions:** Check off the activities on this list that you would enjoy doing with your parent/teen. Then compare lists (or fill this out together) and select a few activities that you can enjoy together—aim for at least 3 per week.

\*Also, remember to respect each other's need for privacy and alone time.



- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 1. Going bicycling                        | 13. Bowling                                    | 24. Having a barbecue                                |
| 2. Going for coffee                       | 14. Playing golf                               | 25. Going camping                                    |
| 3. Going out for ice cream/<br>yogurt     | 15. Going for a drive                          | 26. Listening to music you<br>both like              |
| 4. Cooking or baking                      | 16. Fixing up part of your<br>home             | 27. Going to a show, game,<br>or concert             |
| 5. Getting a manicure                     | 17. Doing a crossword<br>puzzle                | 28. Watching a favorite TV<br>show or movie together |
| 6. Going for a massage                    | 18. Skiing, ice skating                        | 29. Going for a walk/run                             |
| 7. Walking by the beach                   | 19. Having some quiet<br>reading time together | 30. Getting your hair or<br>makeup done together     |
| 8. Planning a vacation                    | 20. Going to a café/out to<br>eat              | 31. Talking about when you<br>were little            |
| 9. Going shopping                         | 21. Going to an amusement<br>park              | 32. Visiting relatives or<br>friends together        |
| 10. Watching a ballgame                   | 22. Going to a museum                          |  |
| 11. Doing yard work/<br>gardening         | 23. Playing catch                              |  |
| 12. Playing with pets,<br>walking the dog |  |  |

(continued)

**Parent-Teen Shared Pleasant Activities List** (page 2 of 2)

- 33. Doing community service/volunteer work
- 34. Shopping for a gift
- 35. Talking about your day
- 36. Playing videogames
- 37. Playing board games or cards
- 38. Looking thru photos
- 39. Going to a park
- 40. Working out/going to the gym
- 41. Take a yoga/exercise class
- 42. Playing music/jamming together

- 43. Talking about future plans together
- 44. Planning a surprise for someone
- 45. Joking around/being silly
- 46. Doing a creative hobby together (e.g., painting, drawing, knitting, scrapbooking, model building)
- 47. Taking an art class
- 48. Looking at/showing your favorite website
- 49. Teaching the other one something new (e.g., in technology, photography)
- 50. Telling family stories

**Add Your Own!**

- 51. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 52. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 53. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 54. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 55. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## ACCUMULATING Positive Experiences—Long Term (To Build a Life Worth Living)

### In the Long Term:

Make changes in your life so that positive events will occur more often. Build a life worth living. Check “Wise Mind” Values and Priorities List.

Work toward goals based on your values:

- Identify *one* goal (e.g., graduate from high school).
- List small steps toward goals (e.g., get out of bed, go to first class).
- Take first step (e.g., buy an alarm clock or set cell phone alarm).

1. Goal: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Some steps toward my goal: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What’s a simple first step I can take? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Pay attention to relationships:

- Repair old, create new, work on current relationships, and end destructive relationships.

What can I do this week to work on a relationship? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Avoid avoiding:

- Avoiding makes problems build up and increases vulnerability to Emotion Mind. Return that call, schedule that doctor’s appointment, face that work, discuss that problem.
- Avoid giving up.

What have I been avoiding? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## Wise Mind Values and Priorities List

Mark the items that are important to you:

- **Contribute** (e.g., be generous, help people in need, make sacrifices for others, volunteer, service to society).
- **Attend to relationships** (e.g., build new relationships, work on current relationships, repair old relationships, end destructive relationships, treat others well).
- **Be part of a group** (e.g., be social, have close friends, have people to do things with, feel sense of belonging).
- **Build character** (e.g., have integrity, be honest, be loyal, stand up for my beliefs, keep my word, be respectful, be courageous in facing and living life, keep growing as a human being).
- **Be responsible** (e.g., get my work done, earn money, take care of myself more and more, be reliable).
- **Achieve things** (e.g., get good grades, work hard, be financially secure).
- **Learn** (e.g., seek knowledge and information, read, study).
- **Have fun** (e.g., enjoy what I do, laugh, go out and have a good time, relax).
- **Focus on family** (e.g., see family often, keep family relationships strong, do things for family, respect family traditions).
- **Be a leader** (e.g., be seen by others as successful; be in charge of something like a club, team, or committee; be respected by others; be accepted).
- **Be healthy** (e.g., be physically fit, exercise, eat and sleep well, see my doctors when needed, practice yoga).
- **Strive for moderation** (e.g., avoid excesses and achieve balance).
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

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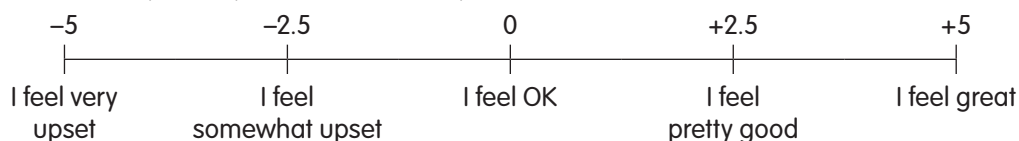
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## Practice Exercise: ACCUMULATING Positive Experiences in the Short and Long Term

Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

### In the short term:

- Engage in at least one activity from your list each day. Also consider the Parent–Teen Shared Pleasant Activities List. Please write down each activity on the list below. Add more rows if you need them.
- Rate your mood *before* you start the activity and then *after*. Use rating scale below.
- Remember to try to *stay mindful* of activity and unmindful of worries.



Date:						
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
/	/	/	/	/	/	/
/	/	/	/	/	/	/

- Were you mindfully participating in each activity? If yes, describe the effect on your emotional state. If no, what happened?

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### In the long term:

- List your **goal** and a **value** with which it is associated: \_\_\_\_\_
- What is the first step in achieving your goal? \_\_\_\_\_
- Take the first step. Describe how taking the first step made you feel? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Building Mastery and Coping Ahead

### **B**UILD MASTERY

1. Do at least one thing each day to feel competent and in control of your life. The idea is to challenge yourself a little, get better at something, or cross something off your "to-do" list. Examples: Put together a piece of furniture, practice your instrument, get one HW assignment done, start a project.

Example: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Plan for success, not failure.
  - Do something difficult, *but* possible.
3. Gradually increase the difficulty over time.
  - If the first task is too difficult, do something a little easier next time.

### **C**OPE AHEAD OF TIME WITH EMOTIONAL SITUATIONS

**Rehearse a plan ahead of time so that you are prepared when there is a threat.**

1. **Describe** a situation that is likely to create negative emotions.
  - Be specific in describing the situation. **Check the facts!**
  - Name the emotions you are likely to experience in the situation.
2. **Decide** what DBT skills (including **problem-solving**) you want to use in the situation.
  - Be specific. Write them out: \_\_\_\_\_
3. **Imagine the situation** in your mind as vividly as possible.
  - Imagine yourself *in* the situation *now*.
4. **Rehearse coping effectively in your mind.**
  - Rehearse exactly what you could do to cope effectively in your mind.
  - Rehearse your actions, your thoughts, what you say, and how to say it.
  - *Troubleshoot*: Rehearse coping with problems that might arise.

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## PLEASE Skills

Treat **P**hysical **L** illness:

Take care of your body. See a doctor when necessary. Take medications as prescribed.

Balance **E**ating:

Don't eat too much or too little. Stay away from foods that may make you overly emotional.

**A**void mood-altering drugs:

Stay off nonprescribed drugs such as marijuana, other street drugs, and alcohol.

Balance **S**leep:

Try to get the amount of sleep that helps you feel rested. Stay on a regular schedule in order to develop good sleep habits.

Get **E**xercise:

Do some sort of exercise every day, including walking. Start small and build on it!



Exercise!



Eat healthy foods!

Get rest!

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## FOOD and Your MOOD

**Step 1: Observe how certain foods affect your mood (both negatively and positively).**

***Negative examples:***

- Soda and sugary snacks might make you feel tired and irritable.
- Heavy, fatty foods (e.g., french fries, potato chips, fried chicken, greasy foods) might make you feel sluggish.
- Caffeine might make you feel jittery and more anxious and interfere with your sleep.

***Positive examples:***

- Complex carbohydrates and fiber (e.g., sweet potatoes, whole wheat pasta, oatmeal, whole-grain cereals, salads) give you slow and steady energy.
- Proteins (e.g., lean meats and poultry, beans, nuts, fish, eggs) also provide your body with steady energy that helps you stay active and strong both physically and mentally.
- Dairy foods (e.g., low-fat milks, cheeses, yogurts) have protein and calcium, which help with energy and bone strength.
- Fruits and vegetables provide you energy, boost your health, and give you a sweet or crunchy treat without zapping your energy or making you feel guilty.
- Once you know what foods make up a balanced diet, you can determine what changes might be needed.

**Step 2: Notice whether you are eating too much or too little.**

**Step 3: Start thinking about changes.**

How can you begin to increase the amount of healthy foods you eat? Keep track of your food choices in a food diary every day so you see your progress!

*(continued)*

**Step 4: Start small.**

Don't try to make dramatic changes to your diet all at once. You may feel overwhelmed, which might set yourself up to fail. Start slowly and gradually to change your habits.

For example:

- Cut down on processed foods and add more fresh foods.
- Add more fruits and vegetables to meals and have them for snacks.
- Add lettuce, tomato, cucumber, and onion to sandwiches.
- Add fruit to cereal.

**Step 5: Notice the effects of eating well on your mood.**

## BEST Ways to Get REST: 12 Tips for Better Sleep

Maintaining a balanced sleep pattern will decrease your emotional vulnerability.

1. **Stick to a schedule** and don't sleep late on weekends. If you sleep late on Saturday and Sunday morning, you will disrupt your sleep pattern. Instead, go to bed and get up at about the same time every day.
2. **Establish a bedtime routine.** This might include shutting off screens (TV, computer, cell phone), changing into comfy PJs, sipping herbal tea, lowering bright lights and reducing noise, and reading.
3. **Don't eat or drink a lot before bed.** Eat a light dinner at least 2 hours before sleeping. If you drink too many liquids before bed, you'll wake up repeatedly for trips to the bathroom. Watch out for spicy foods, which may cause heartburn and interfere with sleep.
4. **Avoid caffeine and nicotine.** Both are stimulants and can keep you awake. Caffeine should be avoided for 8 hours before your desired bedtime.
5. **Exercise.** If you're trying to sleep better, the best time to exercise is in the morning or afternoon. A program of regular physical activity enhances the quality of your sleep.
6. **Keep your room cool.** Turn the temperature in the room down, as this mimics the natural drop in your body's temperature during sleep. Use an air conditioner or a fan to keep the room cool. If you get cold, add more layers. If you are hot, remove some layers.
7. **Sleep primarily at night.** Daytime naps steal hours from your nighttime sleep. Limit daytime sleep to less than 1 hour, no later than 3:00 P.M.
8. **Keep it dark, quiet, and NO SCREENS.** Use shades, blinds, and turn off lights. Silence helps you sleep better. Turn off the radio and TV. Use earplugs. Use a fan, a white noise machine, or some other source of constant, soothing, background noise to mask sounds you can't control. No laptops, iPads, phones, or screens for at least 1 hour before bedtime.

*(continued)*

## **BEST Ways to Get REST: 12 Tips for Better Sleep** *(page 2 of 2)*

9. **Use your bed only for sleep.** Make your bed comfortable and appealing. Use only for sleep—not for studying or watching TV. Go to bed when you feel tired and turn out the lights. If you don't fall asleep in 30 minutes, get up and do something else relaxing like reading books or magazines—NO SCREENS! Go back to bed when you are tired. Don't stress out! This will make it harder to fall asleep.
10. **Soak and sack out.** Taking a hot shower or bath before bed helps relax tense muscles.
11. **Don't rely on sleeping pills.** If they are prescribed to you, use them only under a doctor's close supervision. Make sure the pills won't interact with other medications!
12. **Don't catastrophize.** Tell yourself "It's OK; I'll fall asleep eventually."

# Practice Exercise: Build Mastery, Cope Ahead, and PLEASE Skills

Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Building Mastery:**

List two ways that you built mastery this week.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

## **Coping Ahead of Time with Emotional Situations:**

Describe your plan to effectively manage a future emotional situation. Include skills you will use.

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## **Check off two PLEASE Skills to practice during the week:**

\_\_\_\_ Treat **P**hysical **L** illness

\_\_\_\_ Balance **E**ating

\_\_\_\_ **A**void mood-altering drugs

\_\_\_\_ Balance **S**leep

\_\_\_\_ Get **E**xercise

Describe specifically what you did to practice your PLEASE Skills. \_\_\_\_\_

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Did you notice a difference in your mood? \_\_\_\_\_

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# The Wave Skill: Mindfulness of Current Emotions



## EXPERIENCE YOUR EMOTION

- Observe your feeling.
- Step back and just notice it.
- Get unstuck.
- Experience it as a WAVE, coming and going.
- Don't try to GET RID of it or PUSH it away.
- And don't try to HOLD ON to it.

## PRACTICE MINDFULNESS OF EMOTIONAL BODY SENSATIONS

- Notice WHERE in your body you are feeling emotional sensations.
- Experience the SENSATIONS as fully as you can.

## REMEMBER: YOU ARE NOT YOUR EMOTION

- You don't need to ACT on the feeling.
- Remember times when you have felt differently.

## DON'T JUDGE YOUR EMOTION

- Radically accept it as part of you.
- Invite it home for dinner; name the emotion.
- Practice *willingness* to experience the emotion.

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## Check the Facts and Problem Solving

These two skills can be used as part of Cope Ahead, or as independent emotion regulation skills to help reduce/change intense emotions regarding situations that have already occurred or are ongoing.

1. DESCRIBE the problem situation.
2. CHECK THE FACTS! (Check all the facts; sort them from interpretations.)
  - a. Are you interpreting the situation correctly? Are there other possible interpretations?
  - b. Are you thinking in extremes (all-or-nothing, catastrophic thinking?)
  - c. What is the probability of the worst happening?
  - d. Even if the worst were to happen, could you imagine coping well with it?
  - e. If you are still faced with a big problem, then start the steps below.
3. IDENTIFY your GOAL in solving the problem.
  - a. Identify what needs to happen or change for you to feel OK.
  - b. Keep it simple; keep it something that can actually happen.
4. BRAINSTORM lots of solutions.
  - a. Think of as many solutions as you can. Ask for suggestions from people you trust.
  - b. Do not be critical of any ideas at first (wait for Step 5 to evaluate ideas).
5. CHOOSE a solution that is likely to work.
  - a. If unsure, choose two or three solutions that look good.
  - b. Do pros and cons to compare the solutions. Choose the best to try first.
6. Put the solution into ACTION.
  - a. ACT: Try out the solution.
  - b. Take the first step, and then the second . . .
7. EVALUATE outcomes.
  - a. Did it work? YEAH! Reward yourself!
  - b. It didn't work? Reward yourself for trying and DON'T GIVE UP!
  - c. Try a new solution.

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## Opposite Action to Change Emotions

Emotions come with specific ACTION URGES that push us to act in certain ways.

Often we escape the pain of the emotion in harmful ways.

These are common URGES associated with a sample of emotions:

FEAR → Escaping or avoiding

ANGER → Attacking

SADNESS → Withdrawing, becoming passive, isolating

SHAME → Hiding, avoiding, withdrawing, saving face by attacking others

GUILT → Overpromise that you will not commit the offense again, disclaim all responsibility, hiding, lowering head, begging forgiveness

JEALOUSY → Verbal accusations, attempt to control, acting suspicious

LOVE → Saying "I love you," making effort to spend time with the person, doing what the other person wants and needs, and giving affection

**ACTING OPPOSITE = act opposite to the action urge when the emotion is doing more harm than good (see Emotion Regulation Handout 4, "What Good Are Emotions?").**

EMOTION-----OPPOSITE ACTION

**Fear/Anxiety-----APPROACH**

- Approach events, places, tasks, activities, people you are afraid of, over and over; confront.
- Do things to increase a sense of control and mastery over fears.

**Anger-----GENTLY AVOID**

- Gently avoid the person you are angry with (rather than attacking).
- Take a time out and breathe in and out deeply and slowly.
- Be kind rather than mean or attacking. (Try to have sympathy or empathy for the other person.)

**Sadness-----GET ACTIVE**

- Approach, don't avoid.
- Build mastery and increase pleasant activities.

*(continued)*

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## Opposite Action to Change Emotions (page 2 of 3)

### EMOTION-----OPPOSITE ACTION

**Shame**-----**FACE THE MUSIC** (when your behavior violates your moral values or something shameful has been revealed about you and the shame fits the facts):

- Apologize and repair the harm when possible.
- Try to avoid making same mistake in the future and accept consequences.
- Forgive yourself and let it go.

**GO PUBLIC** (when your behavior DOES NOT violate your moral values and the shame does NOT fit the facts):

- You continue to participate fully in social interactions, hold your head high, keep your voice steady, and make eye contact.
- Go public with your personal characteristics or your behavior (with people who won't reject you).
- Repeat the behavior that sets off shame over and over (without hiding it from those who won't reject you).

**Guilt**-----**FACE THE MUSIC** (when your behavior violates your moral values, hurts feelings of significant others, and the guilt fits the facts):

- Experience the guilt.
- You ask, but don't beg, for forgiveness and accept the consequences.
- You repair the transgression and work to prevent it from happening again.

**DON'T APOLOGIZE OR TRY TO MAKE UP FOR IT** (when your behavior DOES NOT violate your moral values and the guilt does NOT fit the facts):

- Change your body posture, look innocent and proud, head up, puff up your chest, maintain eye contact, keep voice steady and clear.

**Jealousy**-----**LET GO OF CONTROLLING OTHERS' ACTIONS** (when it does not fit the facts or is not effective):

- Stop spying or snooping.
- Relax your face and body.

**Love**-----**STOP EXPRESSING LOVE** (when it does not fit the facts or is not effective, e.g., the relationship is truly over, not accessible, or abusive):

- Avoid the person and distract yourself from thoughts of the person.
- Remind yourself of why love is not justified and rehearse the "cons" of loving this person.
- Avoid contact with things that remind you of the person (e.g., pictures).

(continued)

## Opposite Action to Change Emotions (page 3 of 3)

### OPPOSITE ACTION WORKS BEST WHEN:

1. **The emotion does NOT FIT THE FACTS.**

- An emotion does *not fit the facts* when:
  - The emotion does *not fit the facts* of the actual situation (e.g., terror in response to speaking in public)

or

- The emotion, its intensity, or its duration are *not effective* for your goals in the situation (e.g., you feel angry at your math teacher, but three periods later you're still fuming and can't focus on science).

2. **The opposite action is done ALL THE WAY.**

- Opposite behavior
- Opposite words and thinking
- Opposite facial expression, voice tone, and posture

### OPPOSITE ACTION REQUIRES THESE seven STEPS:

1. Figure out the emotion you are feeling.
2. What is the action URGE that goes with the emotion?
3. Ask yourself: Does the emotion fit the facts in the situation? If yes, will acting on the emotion's urge be effective?
4. Ask yourself: Do I want to change the emotion?
5. If yes, figure out the OPPOSITE ACTION.
6. Do the opposite action—ALL THE WAY!
7. Repeat acting in the opposite way until the emotion goes down enough for you to notice.

## Practice Exercise: Opposite Action

Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

Ask yourself the following questions as a guide to OPPOSITE ACTION:

**Observe** and **Describe** the emotion.

What is the current emotion you want to change?

What is your action urge?

Do the opposite action ALL THE WAY.

How did you feel after acting opposite to your emotion?

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# INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS HANDOUTS



## What Is Your Goal and Priority?

### **Keeping and maintaining healthy relationships (GIVE Skills)**

Question: How do I want the other person to feel about me?

*Example:* If I care about the person or if the person has authority over me, act in a way that keeps the person respecting and liking me.

### **Getting somebody to do what you want (DEAR MAN Skills)**

Question: What do I want? What do I need? How do I get it?  
How do I effectively say “no”?

*Example:* How do I ask for something, resolve a problem, or have people take me seriously?

### **Maintaining Your Self-Respect (FAST Skills)**

Question: How do I want to feel about myself after the interaction?

*Example:* What are my values? Act in a way that makes me feel positive about myself.

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## What Stops You from Achieving Your Goals?

### I. Lack of skill

You actually *don't know* what to say or how to act.

### II. Worry thoughts

You have the skill, but your worry thoughts interfere with your doing or saying what you want.

- Worries about bad consequences:
  - "They won't like me"; "He will break up with me."
- Worries about whether you deserve to get what you want:
  - "I'm such a bad person, I don't deserve this."
- Worries about being ineffective and calling yourself names:
  - "I won't do it right"; "I'm such a loser."

### III. Emotions

You have the skill, but your emotions (anger, fear, shame, sadness) make you unable to do or say what you want. Emotion Mind, instead of skills, controls what you say and do.

### IV. Can't decide

You have the skills, but you *can't decide* what you really want: asking for too much versus not asking for anything; saying "no" to everything versus giving in to everything.

### V. Environment

You have the skill, but the environment gets in the way:

- Other people are too powerful (sometimes despite your best efforts).
- Other people may have some reason for not liking you if you get what you want.
- Other people won't give you what you need unless you sacrifice your self-respect.

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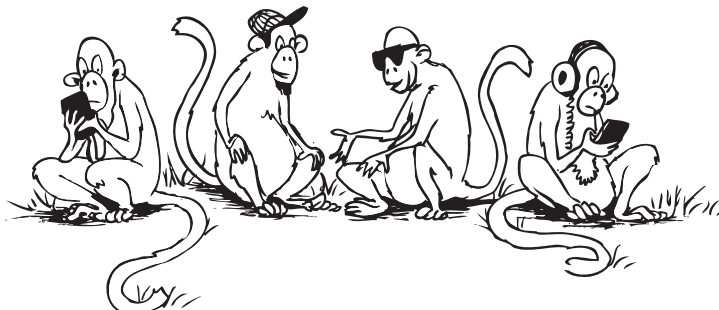
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## Building and Maintaining Positive Relationships: GIVE Skills

Remember **GIVE**:

(be) **G**entle  
(act) **I**nterested  
**V**alidate  
(use an) **E**asy manner



- (be) **G**entle: Be nice and respectful!  
Don't attack, use threats, or cast judgments.  
Be aware of your tone of voice.
- (act) **I**nterested: LISTEN and act interested in what the other person is saying.  
Don't interrupt or talk over him or her.  
Don't make faces.  
Maintain good eye contact.
- V**alidate: Show that you understand the other person's feelings or opinions.  
Be nonjudgmental out loud.  
"I can understand how you feel *and* . . ."  
"I realize this is hard . . ."  
"I see you are busy, *and* . . ."  
"That must have felt . . ."
- (use an) **E**asy manner: SMILE.  
Use humor.  
Use nonthreatening body language.  
Leave your attitude at the door.

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## Practice Exercise: GIVE Skills

Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Choose two situations during the week in which you used your GIVE skills and describe how.**

Remember **GIVE** . . .

(be) **G**entle

(act) **I**nterested

**V**alidate

(use an) **E**asy manner

### SITUATION 1:

With whom are you trying to keep a good relationship? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the situation in which you chose to use your GIVE skills? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What was the outcome? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How did you feel after using your skills? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### SITUATION 2:

With whom are you trying to keep a good relationship? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the situation in which you chose to use your GIVE skills? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What was the outcome? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How did you feel after using your skills? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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## Getting Someone to Do What You Want: DEAR MAN Skills

Remember **DEAR MAN**:

Describe      Mindful  
Express      Appear Confident  
Assert      Negotiate  
Reinforce

Describe: Describe the situation. Stick to the facts. "The last three weekends, I have noticed you coming home after curfew."

Express: Express your feelings using "I" statements ("I feel . . .," "I would like . . ."). Stay away from "you should . . ."; instead, say, "When you come home late, *I feel*/worried about you."

Assert: Ask for what you want or say "no" clearly. Remember, the other person cannot read your mind. "*I would like* you to come home by curfew."

Reinforce: Reward (reinforce) the person ahead of time by explaining the positive effects of getting what you want. "I would be able to trust you more and give you more privileges if you stuck to our curfew agreement."

Mindful: Keep your focus on what you want, avoiding distractions. Come back to your assertion over and over, like a "broken record." Ignore attacks. "I know the other kids stay out later than you, *and* I would still like you to do your best to meet your curfew."

Appear Confident: Make (and maintain) eye contact. Use a confident tone of voice—do not whisper, mumble, or give up and say "Whatever."

Negotiate: Be willing to **GIVE TO GET**. Ask for the other person's input. Offer alternative solutions to the problem. Know when to "agree to disagree" and walk away. "If you can do this for the next 2 weeks, then I will feel comfortable letting you stay out later for the party."

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## Practice Exercise: DEAR MAN Skills

Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

Choose one situation during the week in which you used your DEAR MAN skills and describe below.

What happened? (Who did what? What led up to what? What is the problem?) \_\_\_\_\_

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What did you want (e.g., asking for something, saying "no," being taken seriously)?

Be specific: \_\_\_\_\_

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**DEAR MAN Skills used (write down *exactly* how you used each one):**

**Describe** (describe the situation; just the facts): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Express** (feelings): \_\_\_\_\_

**Assert:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reward:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mindful:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Appear confident:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Negotiate:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What was the result of using your DEAR MAN skills?** \_\_\_\_\_

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## Maintaining Your Self-Respect: FAST Skills

Remember **FAST**:

- (be) **F**air
- (no) **A**pologies  
**S**tick to values
- (be) **T**ruthful



- (be) **F**air: Be fair to *yourself* and to the *other* person.
- (no) **A**pologies: Don't *over*apologize for your behavior, for making a request, or for being you.  
(If you wronged someone, don't *under*apologize.)
- S**tick to values: Stick to your own values and opinions.  
Don't sell out to get what you want, to fit in, or to avoid saying "no."  
(Refer to Emotion Regulation Handout 13, "Wise Mind Values and Priorities List.")
- (be) **T**ruthful: Don't lie.  
Don't act helpless when you are not.  
Don't make up excuses or exaggerate.

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## Worry Thoughts and Wise Mind Self-Statements

Turn negative thoughts into realistic ones.

1. Why bother asking? It won't make a difference anyway.

WISE MIND STATEMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

2. If I ask for something, she'll think I'm stupid.

WISE MIND STATEMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

3. I can't take it if he's [she's] upset with me.

WISE MIND STATEMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

4. If I say "no," they won't like me or want to hang out with me anymore.

WISE MIND STATEMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

5. If I say "no," they'll be really angry at me.

WISE MIND STATEMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

6. If I make a request or ask for help, I will look weak.

WISE MIND STATEMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

### Examples of Wise Mind Self-Statements:

1. "Just because I didn't get what I wanted last time does not mean that if I ask skillfully this time that I won't get it."
2. "I can handle it if I don't get what I want or need."
3. "It takes a strong person to admit that he [she] needs help from someone else and then ask for it."
4. "If I say 'no' to people and they get angry, it doesn't mean I should have said 'yes.'"
5. "I can deal with it if he [she] is annoyed with me."

Others? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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## Practice Exercise: FAST Skills

Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

Choose two situations during the week in which you used your FAST skills and describe below.

Remember **FAST** . . .

- (be) Fair
- (no) Apologies
- Stick to values
- (be) Truthful

### SITUATION 1:

In what way are you trying to maintain your self-respect? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the situation in which you chose to use your FAST skills and how did you use them? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the outcome? \_\_\_\_\_

How did you feel after you used your skills? \_\_\_\_\_

### SITUATION 2:

In what way are you trying to maintain your self-respect? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the situation in which you chose to use your FAST skills and how did you use them? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the outcome? \_\_\_\_\_

How did you feel after you used your skills? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Factors to Consider in Asking for What You Want (or Saying "No" to an Unwanted Request)



- 1. Priorities:** Objectives very important? (Is it important to get what I want?)  
Relationship shaky? On good terms?  
Self-respect on the line?
- 2. Capability:** Is the person able to give me what I want? (Or do I have what the person wants?)
- 3. Timeliness:** Is this a good time to ask? Is the person in the mood to listen or able to pay attention to me? (Is this a bad time to say "no"?)
- 4. Preparation:** Do I know all the facts I need to know? Am I clear about what I want?  
(Am I clear on the facts that I am using to explain why I am saying "no"?)
- 5. Relationship:** Is what I want appropriate to the current relationship? (Is what the person is asking me appropriate to our current relationship?)
- 6. Give and take:** Has the other person helped me in the past? Have I overused his [her] help? (Have I helped the other person in the past? Has he [she] overused my help?)

Which of the above do you need to pay more attention to? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## Practice Exercise: Factors to Consider in Asking or Saying "No"

Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

Choose a situation during the week in which it was hard to determine whether to ask for something or to say "no," or how *strong* your request or your "no" should be.

Did you consider each of the factors below? Check off which ones applied. If the factor applied, what was the circumstance, and did considering it lead you to still ask for what you wanted or say "no" to what someone else wanted? Did it make your request or your "no" stronger or weaker?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Describe Circumstance</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Priorities</b>	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Capability</b>	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Timeliness</b>	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Preparation</b>	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Relationship</b>	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Give and take</b>	_____ _____

So, what did you decide to do, and how did it work out? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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## Practice Exercise: Using Skills at the Same Time

Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

Choose a situation during the week that required more than one interpersonal effectiveness skill.

Describe situation: \_\_\_\_\_

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What were my priorities? (Check all that apply.)

\_\_\_\_ Build/maintain relationship

\_\_\_\_ Get what I want, say "no," or be taken seriously

\_\_\_\_ Build/maintain self-respect

What I said or did and how I did so (check and describe):

\_\_\_\_ Gentle

\_\_\_\_ Describe

\_\_\_\_ Fair

\_\_\_\_ Interested

\_\_\_\_ Express

\_\_\_\_ No apologies

\_\_\_\_ Validate

\_\_\_\_ Assert

\_\_\_\_ Stick to values

\_\_\_\_ Easy manner

\_\_\_\_ Reinforce

\_\_\_\_ Truthful

\_\_\_\_ Mindful

\_\_\_\_ Appear confident

\_\_\_\_ Negotiate

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## THINK Skills

When you want to make peace, reduce conflict, and reduce anger, **THINK** about it differently.

We often make interpretations or assumptions about others that fuel our Emotion Minds and can make the situation worse. So . . .

What's the situation? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How are your interpretations about the other person fueling your Emotion Mind? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Now try these steps to THINK about it differently:

**Think** . . . about it from the other person's perspective.

**Have empathy** What might he or she be feeling or thinking?

**Interpretations** Can you think of more than one possible interpretation or explanation for the other's behavior? List other possible reasons for the behavior; come up with at least *one benign reason*:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Notice** . . . ways the other person has been trying to make things better, to help, or to show he or she cares. Or, notice how the other person may be struggling with his or her own stress or problems.

Use **Kindness** Can you use kindness and be gentle when you approach the other person?

## Practice Exercise: THINK Skills

**THINK** about it differently:

With whom did you want to make peace/reduce conflict/reduce anger? \_\_\_\_\_

Briefly, what was the situation? \_\_\_\_\_

How were your interpretations or assumptions about the other person fueling your Emotion Mind or making things worse? \_\_\_\_\_

**Indicate which steps you used and HOW you used them to THINK about it differently:**

**Think** about it from the other person's perspective—what was his or her perspective?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Have** empathy—what might he or she have been feeling or thinking? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Interpretations**—were you able to think of more than one possible interpretation or explanation for the other's behavior? List other possible reasons for the behavior; did you come up with at least *one benign reason*?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Notice:** What are ways the other person had been trying to make things better, to help, or to show he or she cared? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Or, how was the other person struggling with his or her own stress or problems? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Did you use **Kindness** and were you gentle when you approached the other person? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What was the outcome? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_