

## 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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