WYLDE COLLECTIVE

modern mental healthcare for all

WHAT IS DBT?

WHAT IS DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOR THERAPY?

✓ DBT is a form of cognitive behavioral therapy developed originally for the treatment of Borderline Personality Disorders, although today it is used for a variety of conditions.

✓ The main goal of DBT is to teach people how to live in the moment, develop healthy ways to cope with stress and distress, regulate their emotions, and improve their relationships with others.

✓ DBT focuses specifically on skill building, with clearly outlined skills and strategies introduced in either an individual or group setting.

THE 4 CORE SKILL GROUPS

MINDFULNESS SKILLS

Mindfulness skills in DBT targets a persons ability to slow down and focus on using healthy coping skills when in the midst of emotional pain. The strategy can also help the person stay calm and avoid engaging in automatic negative thought patterns and impulsive behavior.

INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS SKILLS

Interpersonal effectiveness skills in DBT are designed to help the person become more assertive in relationships while still keeping the relationships positive and healthy.

EMOTION REGULATION SKILLS

Emotion regulation skills in DBT focuses on navigating intense feelings in a more effective way. The skills learnt will help the person to identify, name, and change the emotions.

DISTRESS TOLERANCE SKILLS

Distress tolerance techniques in DBT help prepare the person for intense emotions, while empowering them to cope with the emotions with a more positive long-term outlook.

GOALS OF SKILLS TRAINING

The general goal of DBT therapy and skills training is to learn how to change your own behaviors, emotions, and thoughts that are currently linked to problems in day-to-day living, and which may be causing you challenges and distress. It is however important to also set more individual goals that are specific to your life and situation. Read through and complete your goal setting below.

I WOULD LIKE TO ADDRESS/REDUCE THE FOLLOWING:

- ☐ Mindlessness, feelings of emptiness, being out of touch with myself and others, and/or judgmentalness.
- ☐ Interpersonal conflict and stress, and/or feelings of loneliness.
- ☐ Absence of flexibility in thoughts or behaviours, experiencing difficulties with change.
- ☐ Experiencing up-and-down and extreme emotions, experiencing mood-dependent behavior, and/or difficulties in regulating emotions.
- ☐ Engaging in impulsive behaviors, acting without thinking, and/or difficulties accepting reality as it is.
- ☐ Suicidal thoughts and behaviors, or behaviors of self-harm.

BEHAVIORS TO DECREASE:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

SKILLS TO INCREASE:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

RECOMMENDED USE OF WORKSHEETS

FRANTIC EFFORTS TO AVOID REAL OR IMAGINED ABANDONMENT:

- Mindfulness of others
- DEAR MAN
- GIVE
- FAST
- Understanding interpersonal effectiveness
- Loving kindness meditation
- Validation
- How to set boundaries
- Dialectics
- Chain analysis

IMPULSIVITY IN POTENTIALLY SELF-DAMAGING AREAS:

- STOP
- The TIP sheet
- WHAT
- HOW
- Wise mind
- How to set boundaries
- Opposite action
- Chain analysis

STRESS-RELATED PARANOIA OR DISSOCIATIVE SYMPTOMS.

- Checking the facts
- Build mastery and cope ahead
- Problem solving
- Self-soothing
- Accumulating positive emotions (short-term)
- Pleasant events checklist
- Chain analysis

RECURRENT SUICIDAL THOUGHTS & BEHAVIOURS:

- The TIP sheet
- DEAR MAN
- Problem solving
- Safety plan
- Self-soothing
- Chain analysis

UNSTABLE & REACTIVE MOODS, INTENSE ANGER OR DIFFICULTY IN CONTROLLING EMOTIONS:

- STOP
- The TIP sheet
- Body scan meditation
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Self-soothing
- WHAT
- HOW
- Wise mind
- Chain analysis
- ABC PLEASE
- Opposite action
- Accumulating positive emotions (short-term)
- Pleasant events checklist
- Dialectics

CHRONIC FEELINGS OF EMPTINESS & AN UNSTABLE SENSE OF SELF.

- Myths about emotions
- Ways to describe emotions
- Validation
- WHAT
- HOW
- How to set boundaries
- Pleasant events checklist
- Accumulating positive emotions (long-term)
- Dialectics

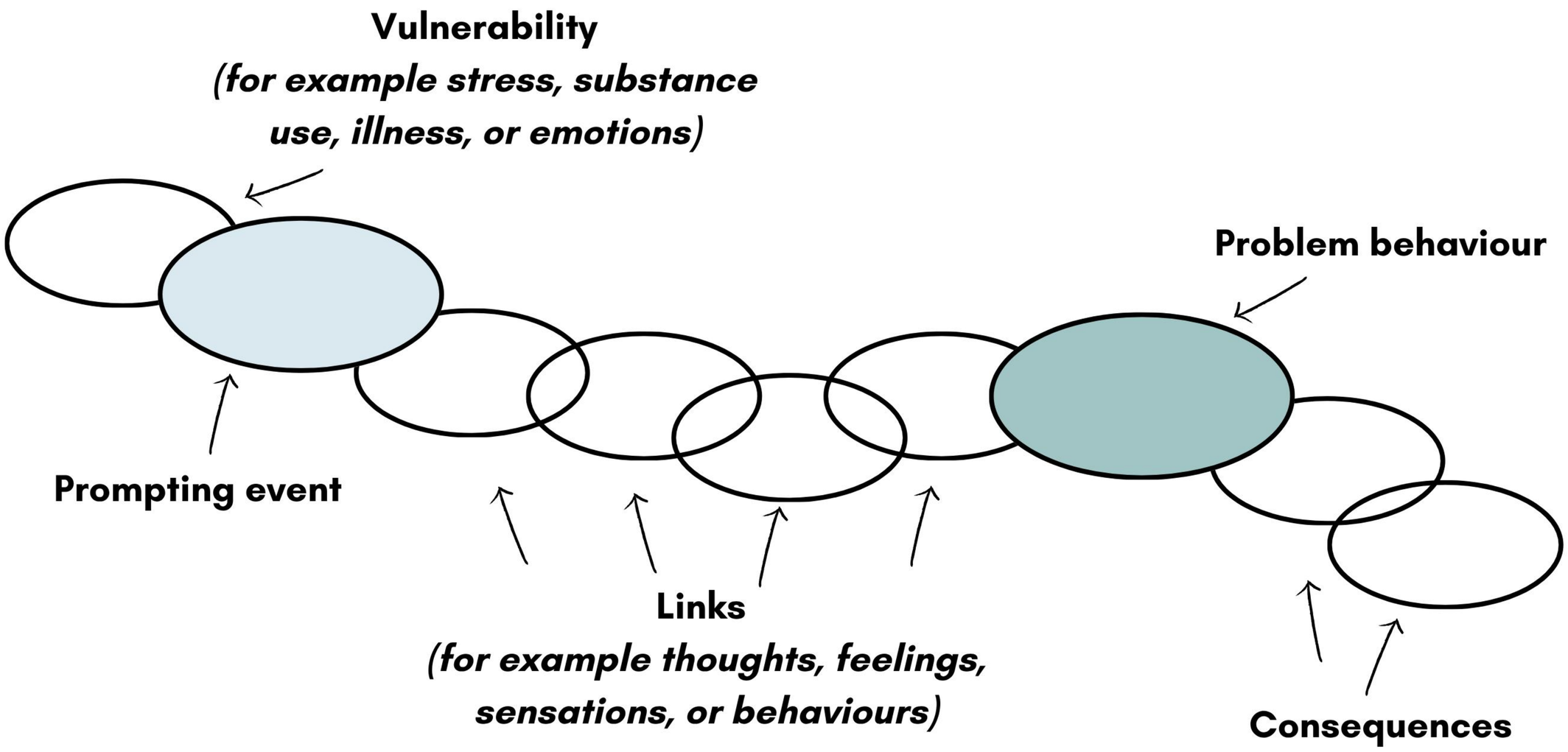
Analysing Behavior

CHAIN ANALYSIS

WHAT IS A CHAIN ANALYSIS & WHY DO WE USE IT?

A chain analysis is a tool utilised to examine the chain of events that lead to ineffective or problematic behaviours, as well as the consequences of those behaviours. Problem behaviours can be any behaviour that is causing upset, injury, distress or has a negative effect on your relationships.

Learning about how a problem behaviour is linked with certain vulnerabilities, prompting events, and any links between them, can help you better understand how the behaviour came about and how you can take action to minimise the occurrence of this behaviour in the future.



CHAIN ANALYSIS

1

Describe the problem behaviour. Stick to the facts here and just list what happened (for example, overeating, self harming, yelling at your partner, dissociating, avoiding etc).

PROBLEM BEHAVIOUR

2

Describe the prompting event that started the chain of events. This could be something in your environment, something another person said or did, or your own thoughts or behaviours.

PROMPTING EVENT

3

Describe any events that made you more vulnerable to the triggers in step 2. This could be alcohol or drugs, lack of sleep, stress, illness or injury, or intense emotions such as fear.

VULNERABILITIES

4

Describe in intense detail each link in the chain of events between the prompting event and behaviour. Include actions, sensations, feelings and emotions, as well as thoughts and beliefs.

CHAIN OF EVENTS

5

Describe the consequences of your behaviour. Think about what the effects were on you as well as others in your environment.

CONSEQUENCES

6

Once the chain is completed, go back over the links and reflect on where you could have utilised skills (and what skills) or changed behaviours to interrupt the chain of events.

SKILFUL BEHAVIOURS

7

Describe any preventative measures you could have taken to reduce your vulnerabilities and in turn stop the chain from ever starting.

PREVENTION PLANS

8

Describe any actions you can take to repair any damage caused and remedy any consequences of the problem behaviour.

REPAIR

CHAIN ANALYSIS

1	DESCRIBE THE PROBLEM BEHAVIOUR
2	DESCRIBE THE PROMPTING EVENT
3	DESCRIBE ANY VULNERABILITIES
4	DESCRIBE THE CHAIN OF EVENTS
5	DESCRIBE THE CONSEQUENCES
6	DESCRIBE HOW SKILFUL BEHAVIOUR COULD HAVE BEEN USED
7	DESCRIBE ANY PREVENTATIVE MEASURES THAT COULD HAVE BEEN USED
8	DESCRIBE STEPS TO TAKE TO REPAIR DAMAGE

CHAIN ANALYSIS

IDENTIFYING MISSING LINKS

When you have completed a chain analysis, it can be helpful to move on to complete a missing links analysis. This is where you have the opportunity to review why effective behaviour that was needed or expected did not occur. To complete a missing links analysis, complete the steps below.

Ask yourself...

1. Did you know what effective behaviour was needed or expected at the time? *E.g. what skill to use from previous DBT skills training.*

2. Were you willing to do the needed or expected effective behaviour? If not, what got in the way of willingness to do effective behaviours?

3. If yes to the previous question, did the thought of doing the needed or expected effective behaviour ever enter your mind?

4. What got in the way of doing the needed or expected effective behaviour right away?

Mindfulness

MINDFULNESS

WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

✓ Intentionally living with awareness in the present moment...

✓ ...without judgement or rejecting the moment

✓ ...and without attachment to the moment

Mindfulness is the practice of experiencing the world that is firmly in the 'here and now'. Mindfulness can be actively practiced through the use of meditation exercises in which you focus on being intensely aware of what you're sensing and feeling in the moment, without interpretation or judgment.

WHAT IS MINDFULNESS PRACTICE?

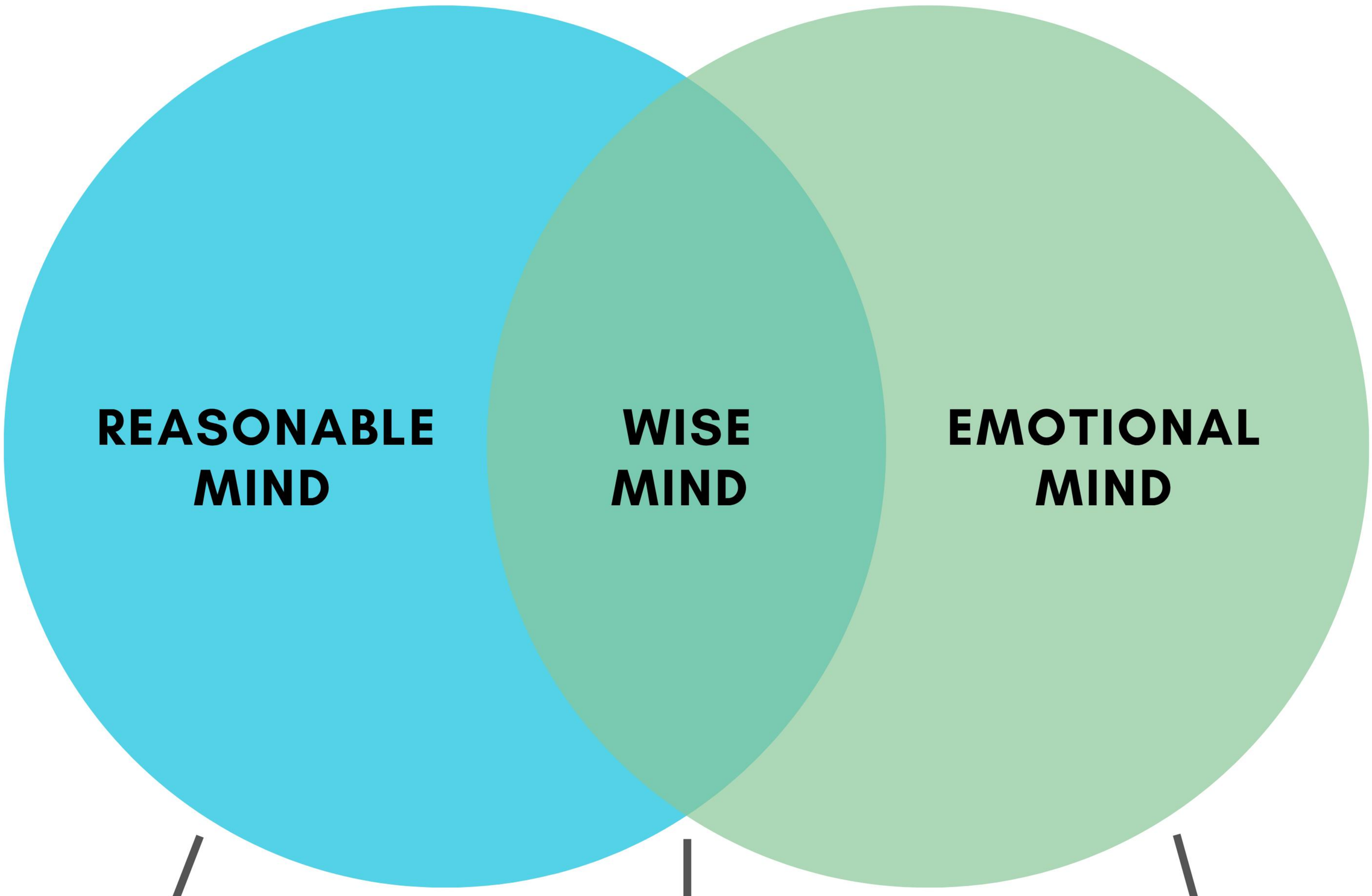
Mindfulness skills can be practiced at any time and anywhere. It can be practiced while doing just about anything. Intentionally paying attention to the moment, without judging it or holding on to it, is all that is required for practice.

Practising mindfulness can also involve meditative practice, breathing strategies, guided imagery and other practices to relax the body and mind, while bringing your attention back to the present moment.

Meditation is the practice of mindfulness and mindfulness skills while sitting, standing or lying quietly for a set period of time. When meditating, we choose to focus the mind by paying attention to body sensations, emotions, thoughts, or our breath. We can also practice opening the mind by paying attention to whatever comes into our awareness.

WISE MIND

Wise mind is the point of overlap between our emotional and reasonable mind. As can be seen in the diagram below, our wise mind is part reason and part emotion. Accessing your wise mind is achieved by finding the middle path between the reasonable and emotional mind.



REASONABLE MIND IS:

Cool

Rational

Task-Focused

WISE MIND IS:

The wisdom within each person

Seeing the value of both reason and emotion

Bringing left brain and right brain together

The middle path

EMOTIONAL MIND IS:

Hot

Mood-Dependent

Emotion-Focused

WHAT

The 'WHAT' skills exercise teaches you the fundamentals of mindfulness practice. The core focus is to allow your mind to observe, name and participate in the present moment without judgment and without holding on to, nor pushing away thoughts, feelings or sensations.



OBSERVE	✓ Notice your body sensations ✓ Pay attention to the present moment ✓ Control your attention, without holding on to anything ✓ Observe your thoughts as they come and go ✓ Observe what is going on internally as well as around you
DESCRIBE	✓ Name your experience (this can be a thought, feeling or sensation) ✓ Label what you observe ✓ Stick to the facts (the “who, what, when, and where") ✓ If you can’t observe it through your senses, let it pass through
PARTICIPATE	✓ Completely throw yourself in to an activity ✓ Become 'one' with the activity ✓ Do just what is needed in the situation ✓ Go with the flow. Allow for spontaneity to occur as needed

HOW TO PRACTICE WHAT SKILL

There are many ways to practice the WHAT skills. You can do this using any (or all) of your senses. Read on below for a few suggestions to get you started.

OBSERVE

- Lie on the ground and watch the clouds float by in the sky.
- Stop for a moment and listen to the sounds around you. Listen to the silences between the sounds.
- When breathing in, notice any smells around you. Bring something close to your nose, notice the smell. Notice the changes as you move the item away from you again.
- Eat a meal or a snack, paying attention to the taste of each mouthful.

DESCRIBE

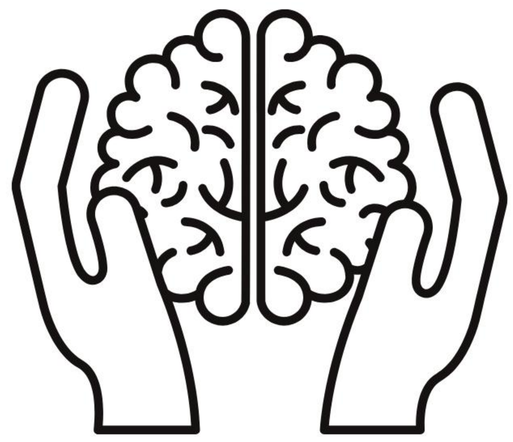
- Lie on the ground and watch the clouds float by. Find and describe cloud patterns that you can see.
- Find things in nature (for example a leaf, a drop of water, or an animal). Describe each thing in as much detail as you can.
- Describe your feelings as they arise within you. For example, “a feeling of sadness is simmering within me.”
- Describe what a person has done or is doing now. Be very specific, however describe actions only without judging.

PARTICIPATE

- Dance to some music you like.
- Sing along with music you are listening to.
- Throw yourself in to what another person is saying, really pay attention and soak in every word.
- Go running, focusing only on running.
- Paint, or draw.
- Go swimming, focus your attention on every stroke and the sensation of the water pushing away and towards you.
- Take a walk in nature. Pay attention to how your feet hit the ground. Notice the pressure and sensation as you walk.

HOW

The 'HOW' mindfulness skills involve how we can practically utilise mindfulness. It focuses on the practical steps and actions involved in mindfulness, which are practicing non-judgment, being one with the task and being effective in the practice.



NON-JUDGMENT	✓ Observe, but don't evaluate as good or bad ✓ Accept each moment as it is without judgement ✓ Acknowledge the difference between helpful and harmful, safe and dangerous, but don't put any judgement on it ✓ Acknowledge your values, wishes, and emotional reactions without judgement ✓ If you find yourself judging, practice acceptance and non-judgement around the judging
ONE-MINDFULLY	✓ Be completely present in this one moment ✓ Allow yourself to do one thing at a time fully ✓ Let go of any distractions ✓ If your mind wanders, gently focus it back on to the one task at hand
EFFECTIVELY	✓ Be mindful of your goals in the situation and focus on them ✓ Focus on what is effective and works ✓ Act as skilfully as you can in the present moment ✓ Let go of wilfulness* and procrastination

HOW TO PRACTICE HOW SKILL

There are many ways to practice the HOW skills. You can do this using any (or all) of your senses. Read on below for a few suggestions to get you started.

NON-JUDGMENT

- Practice observing judgmental thoughts and statements by saying in your mind, "a judgmental thought entered my mind."
- Count judgmental thoughts and statements (for example by marking them on a piece of paper).
- Practice changing judgmental facial expressions, posture and tones of voice.
- Tell someone what you did today without judgement. Stick only to the facts.

ONE-MINDFULLY

- Wash the dishes with full awareness and engagement. Do it as though each bowl is an object of contemplation. Consider each bowl priceless. Pay attention to your breath to prevent your mind from wandering. Do not try to hurry to get the job done. Do the dishes as if it was the most important thing in your life.
- Prepare a pot of tea or coffee. Do each movement slowly. Do not let one detail of your movements go by without being aware of it. Soak up every action and step as you take it.

EFFECTIVELY

- Observe when you begin to get angry or hostile with yourself or someone else. Ask yourself, "is this effective? "
- Observe yourself when you start wanting to be "right" instead of true to yourself and the situation. Give up on being "right" and switch your mindset to trying to be effective.
- Notice wilfulness in yourself. Ask yourself, "is this effective?"

*Wilfulness- *The trait of being prone to disobedience and lack of discipline*

LOVING KINDNESS MEDITATION

WHAT IS LOVING KINDNESS?

Loving kindness is a mindfulness practice designed to increase love and compassion both for ourselves and for others around us. This could include our friends and family, as well as those we are angry with, for people we find 'difficult' to be around, for enemies, and lastly for all beings.

Loving kindness can help protect us from developing and holding on to judgment, ill will, or negative and hostile feelings toward ourselves and others around us.

PRACTICING LOVING KINDNESS

Practicing loving kindness is like saying an intention or prayer for yourself or someone else. When you do this, you are asking for something for yourself or others and you actively send loving, kind wishes into the world. Do this by repeating to yourself words and phrases that express good will, acceptance and kindness toward yourself and others.

LOVING KINDNESS STEP BY STEP

1. Choose a person to send loving kindness toward. If you are new to this practice, then start with yourself. If you find this difficult to do, you can also start with a person you already love.

2. Sitting, standing, or lying down, begin by taking a few slow and deep breaths. Now open the palms of your hands and gently bring the person to mind.

3. Express loving kindness by repeating a set of warm wishes, such as “May I be happy,” “May I be at peace,” “May I be healthy,” “May I be safe,” or another set of positive wishes you decide on. Repeat the script slowly several times. As you do focus on the meaning of each word as you say it in your mind. Continue until you feel yourself immersed in warmth and loving kindness.

4. Start with yourself, before gradually working yourself up through loved ones, friends, those you are angry with, people you may dislike, and finally all beings. For example, use a phrase such as “may Jane be happy,” “may Jane be at peace,” and so on, as you concentrate on radiating loving kindness to Jane. If it helps, you can visualise the kindness as a soft cloud of a colour which represents love and care to you.

5. Practice each day, starting with yourself and then moving to others as you go.

Distress Tolerance

WHAT IS DISTRESS?

Understanding distress

Distress is unpleasant emotions, feelings, thoughts, sensations, and behaviours. It can be a feeling of panic, but it can also be a feeling of anger. Distress is not one single emotion or sensation, but a combination of several and can look and feel different from person to person.

Distress can affect the way you think, feel or act, and can make it hard to cope and think rationally and logically when experiencing it. A certain amount of distress is normal to experience. When faced with stressful situations, loss or illness we often experience different degrees of distress. Distress can however become more frequent or feel unmanageable for some people or in some situations. In these instances it is important to get to know what distress looks and feels like for you. Before then engaging in some simple exercises to help you learn to sit through and accept distress, while also dampening overwhelming and uncomfortable symptoms.

Distress tolerance

Distress tolerance is a person's ability to manage an emotional incident without feeling overwhelmed or out of control. It focuses on sitting through emotions, sensations and thoughts without engaging in avoidance or negative coping strategies. To improve distress tolerance, we can practice certain strategies and skills which allow a person to get through the immediate emotional crisis, without making it worse. Returning to a more balanced emotional state faster and in a healthy way.

DISTRESS TOLERANCE CHEAT SHEET

THE 'TIP' SHEET

TIP THE TEMPERATURE

Run your hands under cold water, splash cold water on your face, or hold a cold pack (or zip-lock bag of cold water, ice blocks or a cold soft drink or similar) on your temple, eyes and cheeks.

INTENSE EXERCISE

Engage in intense exercise, if only for a short while. Expend your body's stored up physical energy by running, walking fast, jumping, playing basketball, lifting weights, etc.

PACED BREATHING

Breathe deeply into your belly. Slow your pace of inhaling and exhaling way down.
Breathe out more slowly than you breathe in.

PAIRED MUSCLE RELAXATION

While breathing into your belly deeply tense the muscles in your hands, arms and shoulders. Notice the tension in your body. While breathing out, say the word "Relax" in your mind. Let go of the tension. Repeat this 2-5 times as needed.

SELF SOOTHING

HEARING

- Listen to soothing music
- Pay attention to the sounds of nature
- Listen to a podcast
- Use a meditation audio app
- Express my feelings through art

TASTE

- Make yourself a cup of tea
- Mindfully eat a piece of fruit
- Chew your favourite gum
- Suck on a piece of peppermint candy
- Make your favourite meal

VISION

- Look through a photo album
- Take a walk in a park or a scenic hike
- Go people-watching
- Go to a museum or gallery
- Read a book

SMELL

- Use your favourite soap or perfume
- Light a candle
- Burn incense
- Open a package of coffee
- Smell an essential oil

TOUCH

- Take a long warm bath or shower
- Cuddle your pet
- Hug someone
- Hold on to a soft pillow or blanket

STOP SKILL

STOP

Do not just react. Stop! Your emotions may try to make you act without thinking. Here's your chance to stay in control.

TAKE A STEP BACK

Take a step back from the situation. Take a deep breath.

OBSERVE

Notice what is going on through your body, as well as around you.

PROCEED MINDFULLY

Once you've found a moment of calm, proceed with mindful actions. Ask yourself, will this action help or hurt me and others?

BODY SCAN MEDITATION

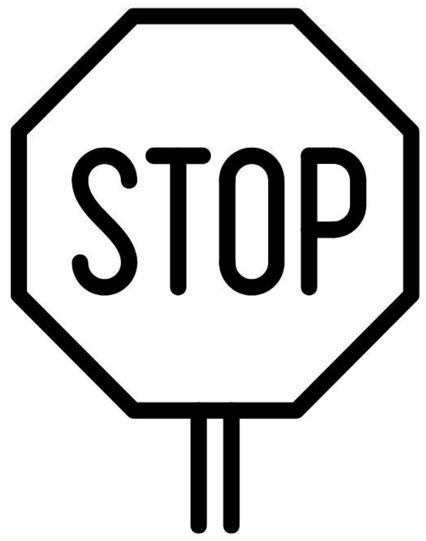
Start by taking a deep breath. Imagine it flowing all the way through your body. Keep focusing on your breathing. Notice how the air moves in and out of your body.

Now, direct your attention to the toes of your left foot. Notice the sensations in that part of your body while remaining aware of your breath. Imagine each breath flowing to your toes. Ask yourself, "What am I feeling in this part of my body?" Focus on your left toes for as long as you need to really feel every sensation in them. Then move your focus to the arch and heel of your left foot and hold it there for a while. Repeat with the right leg, starting with your toes.

Then move through the rest of your body in the same way, stopping at each body part all the way through to the top of your head. Then let go of your body altogether, move your fingers and toes, stretch and allow your focus to come back to the present moment.

STOP

The STOP skill is a great skill to use in the heat of the moment to prevent yourself doing something you might regret later. It can help you stop unhelpful urges to act, while tapping into what you are feeling and the reasons causing you to want to take action. From there it can give you the space to proceed mindfully, bringing your attention back to the here and now.



S

STOP

Do not just react. Stop! Do not move a muscle or say a word. Your emotions may try to make you act without thinking. Here's your chance to stay in control.

T

TAKE A STEP BACK

Take a step back from the situation. Take a deep breath. Take a break or step away from the situation if you need to. Let go. Do not let your feelings make you act impulsively.

O

OBSERVE

Notice what is going on through your body, as well as around you. What is the situation? What are your thoughts and feelings? What are others saying or doing?

P

PROCEED MINDFULLY

Once you've found a moment of calm, proceed with mindful actions. In deciding what to do, consider your thoughts and feelings, the situation, and other people's thoughts and feelings. Ask yourself, will this action help or hurt me and others?

THE “TIP” SHEET

In most situations we focus on preventing the brain from getting to a stage of panic or distress, however there are times when we can't stop these feelings from coming on. In these situations we want to shift the focus to 'tolerating' distress by acknowledging that it is there, while also taking action to minimise the symptoms. This allows us to surf through the emotions and sensations and come out on the other side. Here the TIP sheet becomes a crucial strategy that can help us tolerate and minimise extreme emotions when in distress.

Read on for four key strategies to manage extreme emotion fast.

TIP THE TEMPERATURE

(to calm down fast)

Run your hands under cold water, splash cold water on your face, or hold a cold pack (or zip-lock bag of cold water, ice blocks or a cold soft drink or similar) on your temple, eyes and cheeks.

INTENSE EXERCISE

(when your body is revved up by emotion)

- Engage in intense exercise, if only for a short while.
- Expend your body’s stored up physical energy by running, walking fast, jumping, playing basketball, lifting weights, etc.

PACED BREATHING

(slowing down your breathing)

- Breathe deeply into your belly.
- Slow your pace of inhaling and exhaling way down.
- Breathe out more slowly than you breathe in.

Try breathing in for 4 seconds, holding your breath for 2 seconds, and exhaling for 6 seconds. Repeat 10 times.

PAIRED MUSCLE RELAXATION

(pairing muscle relaxation with paced breathing)

- While breathing into your belly deeply tense the muscles in your hands, arms and shoulders (not so much as to cause a cramp).
- Notice the tension in your body.
- While breathing out, say the word “Relax” in your mind.
- Let go of the tension.
- Repeat this 2-5 times as needed.
- Notice the difference in your body.

SELF-SOOTHING

When we feel distressed or upset it can be helpful to use some positive distractions for self soothing purposes. When self soothing we can get maximum effect through utilising one or several of our five senses. Read through the checklist spanning across the five senses and tick any strategies that you find helpful or would like to try. There is also space to add an additional strategy for each sense if you can think of something else that is not already on the list.

VISION

- [ ] Look through a photo album
- [ ] Take a walk in a park or a scenic hike
- [ ] Go people-watching
- [ ] Go to a museum or gallery
- [ ] Read a book
- [ ] Watch a movie or tv show
- [ ] Watch a sunrise or a sunset
- [ ] Watch the clouds or stars
- [ ] Other_____

HEARING

- [ ] Listen to soothing music
- [ ] Pay attention to the sounds of nature
- [ ] Listen to a podcast
- [ ] Use a meditation audio app
- [ ] Express my feelings through art
- [ ] Sing along to your favourite songs
- [ ] Play an instrument
- [ ] Open the window & listen to the sounds outside
- [ ] Other_____

SMELL

- [ ] Use your favourite soap or perfume
- [ ] Light a candle
- [ ] Burn incense
- [ ] Open a package of coffee
- [ ] Smell an essential oil
- [ ] Buy some fresh flowers
- [ ] Use a scented bath bomb or bath salts
- [ ] Open a window & smell the air
- [ ] Other_____

TASTE

- [ ] Make yourself a cup of tea
- [ ] Mindfully eat a piece of fruit
- [ ] Chew your favourite gum
- [ ] Suck on a piece of peppermint candy.
- [ ] Make your favourite meal
- [ ] Enjoy a sweet dessert
- [ ] Other_____

TOUCH

- [ ] Take a long warm bath or shower
- [ ] Cuddle your pet
- [ ] Hug someone
- [ ] Hold on to a soft pillow or blanket
- [ ] Get a massage
- [ ] Put on lotion
- [ ] Other_____

PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

One method of reducing muscle tension and relieving physical symptoms of distress is a technique called Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR). Follow the steps below to complete the exercise.

1. Find a quiet, comfortable place to sit, then close your eyes and let your body go loose. Take about 5 slow, deep breaths before you begin.

2. Start by applying muscle tension to a specific part of the body. This step is essentially the same regardless of which muscle group you are targeting. First, focus on the target muscle group. Next, take a slow, deep breath and squeeze the muscles as hard as you can for about 5 seconds. It is important to really feel the tension in the muscles.

3. After about 5 seconds, let all the tightness flow out of the tensed muscles. Exhale as you do this step. You should feel the muscles become loose and limp, as the tension flows out. Deliberately focus on and notice the difference between the tension and relaxation.

4. Remain in this relaxed state for about 15 seconds, then move on to the next muscle group. Repeat the tension-relaxation steps. After completing all of the muscle groups, take some time to enjoy the deep state of relaxation.

RECOMMENDED MUSCLE GROUP SEQUENCE

- Right foot
- Right lower leg and foot
- Entire right leg
- Left foot
- Left lower leg and foot
- Entire left leg
- Right hand
- Right forearm and hand
- Entire right arm
- Left hand
- Left forearm and hand
- Entire left arm
- Abdomen
- Chest
- Neck and shoulders
- Face

Take care not to hurt yourself while tensing your muscles. You should never feel intense or shooting pain while completing this exercise.

BODY SCAN MEDITATION

The body scan mediation is a great grounding exercise that helps you practice connecting with your body and using the breath to practice relaxation. Follow the script below to practice.

Sit on a chair, or lie down on your back in a comfortable position. Gently place your arms by your side. You can close your eyes or gently soften your gaze if you would like. Adopt a sense of curiosity and interest as you move through the exercise.

Now, go through the exercise step by step (I recommend you read this through prior to practicing the body scan meditation, or if you'd like, you can try it the first few times seated in a comfortable position while reading through the steps and practicing them).

- Start by taking a deep breath. Imagine it flowing all the way through your body.
- Keep focusing on your breathing. Notice how the air moves in and out of your body.
- Take several deep breaths until you begin to feel comfortable and relaxed.
- Now, direct your attention to the toes of your left foot.
- Notice the sensations in that part of your body while remaining aware of your breath.
- Imagine each breath flowing to your toes.
- Looking with curiosity, ask yourself, “What am I feeling in this part of my body?”
- Focus on your left toes for as long as you need to really feel every sensation in them (this can be seconds or minutes, it is completely up to you).
- Then move your focus to the arch and heel of your left foot, and hold it there for a while.
- Notice the sensations on your skin, of warmth or coldness. Notice the weight of your foot on the floor.
- Imagine your breath flowing to the arch and heel of your left foot.
- Again ask, “What am I feeling in this part of my body?”
- Follow the same procedure as you move to your left ankle, calf, knee, upper legs, and thigh.
- Repeat with the right leg, starting with your toes.
- Then move through your pelvis, and lower back, and around to your stomach.
- Focus on the rising and falling of your stomach as your breath goes in and out.
- Now move to your chest; left hand, arm, and shoulder. Then the right hand, arm, and shoulder. Moving through to your neck, chin, tongue, and mouth.
- Notice your breath as it enters and exits your nostrils.
- Then focus on your upper cheeks, eyes, forehead, and scalp.
- Finally, focus on the very top of your hair.
- Then let go of your body altogether. Gently move your fingers and toes, stretch and allow your focus to come back to the present moment.

MY SAFETY PLAN

Name _____ Date _____

EMERGENCY NUMBERS/CRISIS SERVICES

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

MY SUPPORT PEOPLE

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

MY TRIGGERS

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

MY WARNING SIGNS THAT I AM NOT DOING WELL

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

HOW I CAN LIMIT MEANS

_____

_____

_____

APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED

Provider:	Date/time:
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

IN THE NEXT 24 HOURS I WILL...

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

When we feel distressed or overwhelmed it can be hard to think about the things we can do to help manage the emotions. Making a brief plan can be a helpful tool in managing overwhelm and distress by not having to 'think on the spot'.

SIGNS THAT I AM FEELING OVERWHELMED

- [ ] Increased heart rate
- [ ] Feeling on edge/Muscle tension
- [ ] Faster/more shallow breathing
- [ ] Sweating
- [ ] 'Upset' stomach feeling
- [ ] Heightened sensitivity to sound/light
- [ ] Shaking/trembling
- [ ] Increased & uncontrollable worry
- [ ] Getting irritable
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____

MY REASONS TO LIVE

- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____

SELF SOOTHING STRATEGIES I CAN ENGAGE IN

- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____

DISTRESS TOLERANCE STRATEGIES TO USE

- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____

OTHER RESOURCES I CAN USE TO KEEP MYSELF WELL

- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____

Emotion Regulation

UNDERSTANDING EMOTIONS

Understanding emotions

Emotions are a normal part of the human experience. A common misconception is that some emotions are good, while others are bad. This is simply not true. All emotions are normal and a vital function of the human experience. A balanced level of these emotions should be experienced. The concern however, is that sometimes our emotional experience is out of balance and we may feel some emotions more strongly or more frequently than is helpful to us.

So what do emotions do when working in a balanced way?

They...

...motivate us and help us take action.
...help us communicate with and influence others.
...communicate with ourself to alert us to how a situation or experience may be affecting us.

The importance of naming & understanding emotions

When we have a poor understanding of, or connection with our emotions we may find ourselves struggling with communicate with the people around us. We are also more prone to higher levels of distress and negative coping.

By learning skills to identify, name and regulate our emotions, we can decrease worry and low mood, improve our social relationships and decrease engagement in negative coping strategies that will hurt us long term.

MYTHS ABOUT EMOTIONS

Myths or mistaken beliefs about emotions often get in the way of our ability to regulate emotions. For example, myths that emotions are bad or weak can lead to avoiding emotions. While on the other hand, myths that extreme emotions are necessary or are part of our identity may keep us from trying to regulate emotions. Take a moment to read through some common myths about emotions below and practice challenging the myths by rethinking how you look at emotions.

1. There is a right way to feel in every situation.
Challenge: *For example, "every situation is unique and there are many different ways to feel in a situation"*

2. Letting others know that I am feeling bad is a weakness.
Challenge: *For example, "being able to communicate my feelings to others can show great strength"*

3. Negative feelings are bad and destructive.
Challenge:

4. Being emotional means being out of control.
Challenge:

5. Some emotions are stupid.
Challenge:

6. All painful emotions are a result of a bad attitude.
Challenge:

7. If others don't approve of my feelings, I obviously shouldn't feel the way I do.
Challenge:

8. Other people are the best judges of how I am feeling.
Challenge:

9. Painful emotions are not important and should be ignored.
Challenge:

10. Extreme emotions get you a lot further than trying to regulate your emotions.
Challenge:

MYTHS ABOUT EMOTIONS

11. Creativity requires intense, often out-of-control emotions.
Challenge:

12. Drama is cool.
Challenge:

13. It is inauthentic to try to change my emotions.
Challenge:

14. Emotional truth is what counts, not factual truth.
Challenge:

15. People should do whatever they feel like doing.
Challenge:

16. Acting on your emotions is the mark of a truly free individual.
Challenge:

17. My emotions are who I am.
Challenge:

18. My emotions are why people love me.
Challenge:

19. Emotions can just happen for no reason.
Challenge:

20. Emotions should always be trusted.
Challenge:

WAYS TO DESCRIBE EMOTIONS

It can be difficult at times to identify and describe emotions. You may notice that you are well aware of some emotions and not others as well. Take a moment to read through the list of emotions and take notice of other words that describe these emotions, as well as sensations, feelings and urges that can often be associated with this emotion to learn more about how you may be experiencing these emotions.

ANGER

- [ ] Other words for anger: agitation, annoyance, hostility, rage, irritation, outrage, frustration
- [ ] Muscles tightening
- [ ] Clenching jaw or hands
- [ ] Feeling your face get hot
- [ ] Being unable to stop tears
- [ ] Feeling like you are going to explode
- [ ] Wanting to hit something or someone
- [ ] Wanting to hurt something or someone

DISGUST

- [ ] Other words for disgust: dislike, loathing, disdain, contempt, hate, repulsion
- [ ] Sick feeling/feeling of nausea
- [ ] Experiencing a lump in the throat
- [ ] Aversion to drinking or eating
- [ ] Feeling contaminated, dirty or unclean
- [ ] Urge to run or push away

ENVY

- [ ] Other words for envy: bitterness, discontent, resentment, disgruntled
- [ ] Muscles tightening
- [ ] Jaw tensing
- [ ] Feeling your face get hot
- [ ] Pit in the stomach feeling
- [ ] Wanting to hurt the people you envy
- [ ] Feeling pleasure when others experience failure

FEAR

- [ ] Other words for fear: anxiety, dread, panic, worry, terror, fright
- [ ] Breathlessness
- [ ] Heart rate increasing
- [ ] Muscles tensing
- [ ] Jaw clenching
- [ ] Getting cold or clammy
- [ ] Urge to scream or call out
- [ ] Wanting to run away or avoid things

JEALOUSY

- [ ] Other words for jealousy: wary, possessive, watchful, rivalrous
- [ ] Breathlessness
- [ ] Heart rate increasing
- [ ] Experiencing a lump in the throat
- [ ] Feeling of rejection
- [ ] Feeling a need to be in control

WAYS TO DESCRIBE EMOTIONS

HAPPINESS

- [ ] Other words for happiness: joy, bliss, satisfaction, pleasure, enthusiasm
- [ ] Feeling excited
- [ ] Feeling full of energy
- [ ] Feeling at peace
- [ ] Feeling like giggling or laughing
- [ ] Urge to maintain source of feeling
- [ ] Feeling face flush
- [ ] Feeling open

LOVE

- [ ] Other words for love: adoration, affection, fondness, attraction
- [ ] Feeling excited or full of energy
- [ ] Increased heart rate
- [ ] Feeling of warmth
- [ ] Feeling relaxed and calm
- [ ] Wanting emotional closeness
- [ ] Wanting the best for the other person
- [ ] Wanting physical closeness

SHAME

- [ ] Other words for shame: embarrassment, humiliation, self-consciousness
- [ ] Sense of dread
- [ ] Pit in the stomach feeling
- [ ] Feeling your face get hot or flushed
- [ ] Wanting to shrink down and/or disappear
- [ ] Wanting to hide or cover your face and body

GUILT

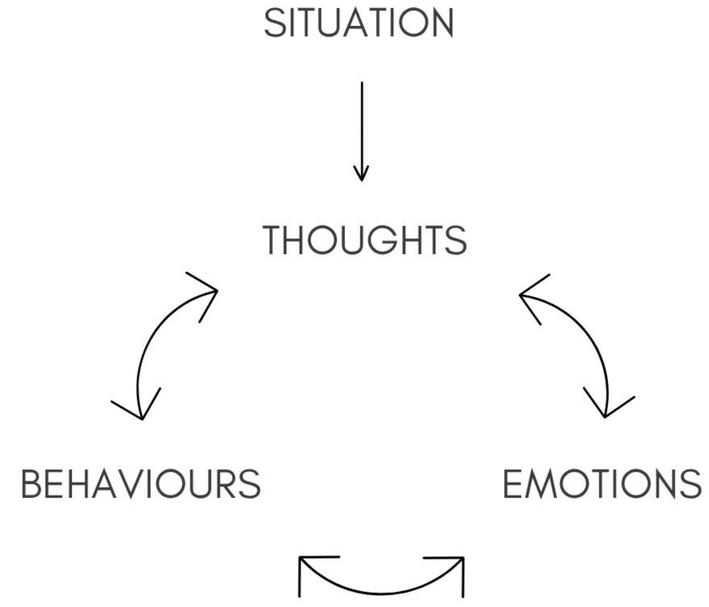
- [ ] Other words for guilt: remorse, regret, sorry, apologetic
- [ ] Sense of dread
- [ ] Pit in the stomach feeling
- [ ] Feeling your face get hot or flushed
- [ ] Jitteriness/nervousness
- [ ] Feeling like it is hard to breathe

SADNESS

- [ ] Other words for jealousy: despair, grief, anguish, dismay, gloom, unhappiness
- [ ] Feeling tired and/or lethargic
- [ ] Feeling empty
- [ ] Feeling as if nothing is pleasurable any more
- [ ] Pain feeling in chest or stomach
- [ ] Feeling like it is hard to breathe

CHECKING THE FACTS

Often our emotions are not the result of events we experience, but rather how we interpret and think about these events. Not only are our thoughts and interpretations key, but our thoughts, feelings and behaviours are constantly interacting with and influencing one another.



Examining our thoughts and checking the facts can help us in better managing and changing our emotions.

HOW TO PRACTICE CHECKING THE FACTS

To practice checking the facts you can ask yourself the following 6 questions:

1. What is the emotion I want to change?

2. What is the event prompting my emotion? *Stick to the facts of what actually happened.*

3. What are my interpretations, thoughts and assumptions about the event? *Think of other possible interpretations. Practice looking at all sides of a situation and all points of view.*

4. Am I assuming a threat? *Label the threat. Assess the possibility of the threat actually occurring.*

5. What is the catastrophe? *Imagine the catastrophe really occurring and envision coping with the catastrophe if it were to occur.*

6. Does my emotion and/or its intensity fit the actual facts? *Now that you have reviewed the event, emotion, threat and possible worst case scenarios you can make a judgement on whether the emotion fits the facts.*

OPPOSITE ACTION

The time to use opposite action is when our emotions do not fit the facts, or when acting on the emotion/s is not effective.

Every emotion comes with an urge to act in a certain way. What we want to try and achieve is changing the action following an urge, and by doing this changing the emotion and its effect.
Read on for some common emotions, action urges, and suggested opposite actions

EMOTION	URGE	OPPOSITE ACTION
Fear	Run away or avoid	Approach or stay put
Anger	Attack	Step back or use kindness
Sadness	Withdraw or isolate	Get active
Hide or avoid	Hide or avoid	Talk to people who will understand

HOW TO PRACTICE OPPOSITE ACTION

To practice opposite action follow these 7 steps.

1. Identify and name the emotion you want to change.

2. Check the facts of the emotion *(use the check the facts handout if helpful)*.

3. Identify and describe your urge(s) to act.

4. Ask yourself, is expressing or acting on this emotion in this way effective? *If yes, or emotions fit the facts stop here. If not move on to step 5.*

5. Identify possible opposite actions to your urge(s).

6. Implement opposite action fully in response to your urge(s).

7. Repeat opposite action until your emotion changes.

PROBLEM SOLVING

SPECIFY THE PROBLEM BE SPECIFIC. ASK YOURSELF "WHY IS THIS A PROBLEM FOR ME?"	

CHECK THE FACTS MAKE SURE YOU HAVE IDENTIFIED THE CORRECT PROBLEM SITUATION.	

IDENTIFY YOUR GOAL IDENTIFY WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN OR CHANGE FOR YOU TO FEEL OKAY ABOUT THE SITUATION.	

OPTIONS LIST YOUR OPTIONS. ADD ANY IDEAS YOU CAN THINK OF. DO NOT EVALUATE AT THIS STEP.	

LIST PROS & CONS WHAT ARE THE LIKELY BENEFITS AND DISADVANTAGES OF EACH OPTION?	

VERIFY THE SOLUTION CHOOSE THE BEST SOLUTION FROM YOUR LIST ABOVE AND ACTION YOUR SOLUTION.	

EVALUATE WHAT WENT WELL? WHAT DID NOT GO WELL (IF ANYTHING)? IF IT DIDN'T WORK GO BACK TO STEP 5.	

ABC PLEASE

A key tool to managing emotions is to reduce vulnerability to emotion mind, which occurs when your thoughts are being controlled by your emotions.

A helpful acronym to remember the practice of reducing emotion mind and building coping is ABC PLEASE. Read on for each step of this activity below.

A

ACCUMULATE POSITIVE EMOTIONS

Engage in pleasant activities in the short term, and make changes in your life to increase positive experiences more frequently long term.

B

BUILD MASTERY

Do things that make you feel competent and increase your sense of self efficacy to combat feelings of hopelessness and helplessness.

C

COPE AHEAD OF TIME WITH EMOTIONAL SITUATIONS

Rehearse a plan around how you will cope ahead of the situation or event so that you are prepared to cope skilfully with emotional situations.

PLEASE

TAKE CARE OF YOUR MIND BY TAKING CARE OF YOUR BODY

Attend to and treat **p**hysica**l** illness, balance **e**ating, avoid mood-**a**ltering substances, balance **s**leep, and get **e**xercise.

ACCUMULATING POSITIVE EMOTIONS

Short-Term

You can start to accumulate positive emotions in the short-term by using the following steps for building positive experience, noticing the positives in the now, and reducing focus on worry based thoughts.

BUILD POSITIVE EXPERIENCES NOW

- Increase engagement in positive events/activities that lead to positive emotions.
- Do one thing each day from the pleasant events checklist.
- Practice opposite action, and avoid avoiding wherever possible.
- Practice mindfulness when engaging in pleasant events (avoid multitasking).

BE MINDFUL OF POSITIVE EXPERIENCES

- Focus your attention on positive moments as they are happening (again avoid multitasking).
- Gently bring your mind back to the activity at hand when it wanders to other thoughts or worries.
- Participate and fully engage in the activity.

REDUCE ENGAGEMENT IN WORRYING

When your thoughts wander to negatives or worries, gently refocus your thoughts on the activity. These may be thoughts such as...

- When the positive experience will end.
- Whether you deserve this positive experience.
- What and how much is expected of you.

PLEASANT EVENTS CHECKLIST

Sometimes it can be difficult to get started when it comes to identifying positive and enjoyable activities to engage in as part of accumulating positive emotions. This page contains an "activity menu" to help you get started and to get some inspiration for activities you perhaps used to enjoy but have lost touch with recently, or new activities you can try that may interest you. Simply tick the box of any activity you may be interested in engaging in.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- [ ] Go for a walk or a jog
- [ ] Bike riding
- [ ] Swimming
- [ ] Doing some gardening
- [ ] Playing lawn games (e.g. bowls or bocce)
- [ ] Dancing
- [ ] Playing a sport
- [ ] Going to the gym
- [ ] Other_____

SOCIAL

- [ ] Call a friend or family member
- [ ] Get a coffee with someone
- [ ] Join a class (e.g. exercise or art class)
- [ ] Host a dinner party or movie night
- [ ] Going out to dinner
- [ ] Take a walk with a friend
- [ ] Other_____

AT HOME

- [ ] Do some cleaning
- [ ] Organise my closet
- [ ] Doing arts and crafts
- [ ] Watch a movie
- [ ] Listening to music
- [ ] Play with the dog/cat
- [ ] Make a nice tea/coffee/hot chocolate
- [ ] Read a book
- [ ] Other_____

IN THE COMMUNITY

- [ ] Volunteer for an important cause
- [ ] Watch a live sports game
- [ ] Go to the theatre or movies
- [ ] Visit a local tourist attraction in my city
- [ ] Go to a concert
- [ ] Visit a museum or gallery
- [ ] Go to a local park or national park
- [ ] Go to the beach
- [ ] Other_____

LOOKING AFTER MYSELF

- [ ] Take a long warm bath or shower
- [ ] Get a massage
- [ ] Put on lotion
- [ ] Get a haircut
- [ ] Paint my nails/do my makeup
- [ ] Cook my favourite meal
- [ ] Other_____

ACCUMULATING POSITIVE EMOTIONS

Long-Term

By accumulating positive emotions in the long-term we can create a value driven life. This is a life filled with enjoyment, balance and feelings of mastery and competence. Read on for 7 steps to start accumulating positive emotions long-term.

1

Avoid avoiding. Stop avoiding and procrastinating. The best thing you can do for yourself is to start taking small gradual steps. Start with the following 6 steps:

2

Identify values that are important to you. Ask yourself, what values are really important to me in my life? For example, "be productive, be kind, be healthy and fit." If helpful write a list of these values.

3

Identify one value to work on now. Ask yourself, out of the values I've identified what is one value that is really important to me, right now, to work on in my life? Pick from the list you created for yourself before.

4

Identify some goals related to this value. Ask yourself, what specific goals can I work on that will make this value part of my life? Make a list of these goals.

5

Choose one goal to work on now. Pick one goal that is central to your values and that you can start working on immediately. For example, "get a job that I enjoy and where I feel like I contribute to something bigger."

6

Identify small action steps toward your goal. Ask yourself, what small steps can I take to get to my goal?
Break your goals down in to smaller steps/chunks. For example, "research jobs I may be interested in, update my resume, get feedback on my resume, start sending in job applications."

7

Take one action step now. Once you've identified the steps to reach your goal, get started straight away! If the first step still feels too overwhelming try and break it down in even smaller chunks, or set a timer for how long you want to work on this task (for example "spend 20 minutes researching jobs on job site x".

BUILD MASTERY & COPE AHEAD

BUILD MASTERY

- Plan on doing at least one thing each day to help build a sense of accomplishment.
- Plan for success, not failure, by focusing on tasks that may be difficult but still possible to achieve.
- Gradually increase the difficulty over time. If you find that a task is too difficult, then start with a smaller task first and build up to the more difficult tasks.
- Look for a challenge. If the task is instead too easy, make sure to look for something more challenging to try next time.

COPE AHEAD OF TIME WITH DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

1. Describe the situation that is likely to prompt a problem behaviour. Make sure to check the facts and be specific when describing the situation. Include emotions and actions that may interfere with you using your skills.

_____

_____

2. Decide what coping or problem-solving skills you want to use in the situation. Be specific and write out in detail how you will cope with the situation and any emotions or urges.

_____

_____

3. Imagine the situation in your mind as vividly as possible. Tap in to all senses as much as possible when imagining the situation.

4. Rehearse in your mind how you will cope effectively. What will you do, say, and think? What skills will you use? Make sure to also practice coping with any challenges that may come up.

_____

_____

5. Practice relaxation after rehearsing.

Interpersonal Effectiveness

UNDERSTANDING INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Interpersonal effectiveness skills are key in building healthy, and lasting relationships. These types of skills can be used in all kinds of relationships, and help you to communicate in an effective and positive way.

So what are the goals for improving interpersonal effectiveness?

Being skilful in getting what you need and want from others

- Get others to understand your needs and give you what you are asking for.
- Get others to take your opinions seriously.
- Get better at saying no to unwanted requests.

Building healthy relationships

- Strengthen current relationships, and make repairs to relationships when needed.
- Build new relationships.
- Resolve conflicts effectively.

Walk the middle path

- Create and maintain balance in relationships.
- Balance acceptance and change in relationships.

INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Myths or mistaken beliefs about interpersonal effectiveness often get in the way of our ability to build healthy relationships. Take a moment to read through some common myths about interpersonal effectiveness below and practice challenging the myths by rethinking how you look at relationships.

1. I don't deserve to get what I want or need.
Challenge: *For example, "my wants and needs are important and need to be considered"*

2. Making a request for something will make me look week.
Challenge: *For example, "being able to communicate my feelings and needs to others can show great strength"*

3. I have to be sure of the other persons answer before I ask for something.
Challenge:

4. If they say no, I won't be able to manage it.
Challenge:

5. Asking for things for myself is selfish.
Challenge:

6. I have to sacrifice my own needs for others happiness.
Challenge:

7. Communicating my needs is only okay if I can do the other person a favour.
Challenge:

8. I shouldn't have to ask. The other person should just now what I need.
Challenge:

9. Other people have to approve of me.
Challenge:

10. Why should I make an effort if they are not willing to.
Challenge:

11. Others don't deserve respect unless they show me respect first.
Challenge:

12. My partner/friends/family should be willing to drop everything to help me.
Challenge:

13. Showing that I am upset will make the other person think I'm dramatic.
Challenge:

14. Saying no to their request is selfish of me.
Challenge:

15. Their needs come first.
Challenge:

16. The problem is just in my head.
Challenge:

17. I'm a burden to others when I speak up for myself or state my needs.
Challenge:

18. If I say what I think people will push me away.
Challenge:

19. There is no point in trying to build relationships. Everyone leaves me eventually anyway.
Challenge:

20. Getting what I want, when I want it, is the most important thing.
Challenge:

DEAR MAN

Communication can be challenging. This is particularly true when you have to ask for something from another person, or set boundaries and expectations. The DEAR MAN technique is a great first step to make sure you get the most out of the conversation and get what you ask for.

D

DESCRIBE

Describe the situation at hand. Stick to the facts only. For example, "you told me you would be home for dinner at 6pm, but you came home 11pm last night".

E

EXPRESS

Express your feelings and thoughts about the situation. Don't just guess that the other person knows why you're upset. For example, "when you don't come home when you've told me you will be home I start to worry".

A

ASSERT

Assert what you want by asking for what you want, or saying no if relevant. For example, "I would really like it if you would call me when you are going to be late."

R

REINFORCE

Reinforce the benefit to the other person if they do what you have asked of them. For example, "if you can call me if you'll be late, I will be more relaxed and we can spend more quality time together without fighting when you do come home".

M

MINDFUL

Stay focused on your goal in the conversation. Don't allow yourself to get distracted and stay on the topic at hand.

A

APPEAR CONFIDENT

Appear effective and confident. Stand tall, keep your voice calm, and maintain eye contact.

N

NEGOTIATE

Be willing to negotiate. If the other person genuinely want to work with you on a solution, come up with solutions together and take time to listen to the other persons thoughts and concerns as well.

GIVE

Once you have mastered the initial interpersonal effectiveness skill of DEAR MAN, the next step is to work on your approach when communicating your needs. For this we can use the GIVE skills.

G

GENTLE

Be nice and respectful. Avoid any communication or actions that can be interpreted as attacks, threats, judging or sneering.

I

INTERESTED

Listen to the other person and show interested. This includes using body language that is open, good eye contact, not crossing your arms or turning away. It also includes letting the other person speak without interrupting.

V

VALIDATE

With both words and actions, show that you are hearing and understanding the other person. Phrases such as, "I realise this is hard for you, and..." can be helpful

E

EASY MANNER

Leave your attitude at the door. Using kindness and a little bit of humor can get you a long way.

FAST

You've learnt about DEAR MAN, GIVE. Now we turn to the final step of interactions which is making sure you keep respect for yourself, while also showing respect and consideration for the other person. For this we want to use the FAST skills.

F	<u>*BE* FAIR</u> Be fair both to yourself and the other person. Don't forget to validate both your own and the other persons thoughts, wishes, and feelings.
A	<u>*NO* APOLOGIES</u> Don't over-apologise. You do not need to apologies for your needs, opinion or for disagreeing with the other person.
S	<u>STICK TO YOUR VALUES</u> Be clear on you values and don't abandon your values just because the situation is pressured or difficult. Your values are important and should be respected!
T	<u>*BE* TRUTHFUL</u> Don't lie. Nothing will get better from lying, exaggerating or making up excuses

HOW TO SET BOUNDARIES

WHAT TO SAY

"I'm not comfortable with this"

"I can't do that for you"

"This doesn't work for me"

"I don't have the capacity right now"

"I need to ask that you don't do that"

"That has not been my experience"

"This is not acceptable"

"I'm drawing the line at..."

"I've decided not to"

"Not at this time"

"I've decided not to"

"I disagree with that approach"

"I'm not comfortable with..."

"Please don't do that"

WHAT TO DO

USE CONFIDENT BODY LANGUAGE

Face the person you are speaking to, make eye contact, and use a steady tone of voice at an appropriate volume.

PLAN AHEAD

Think about what you want to say, and how you will say it, before entering a difficult discussion.

BE RESPECTFUL

Avoid yelling, do not attack, or give the silent treatment. Its okay to be firm and concise, but make sure to also listen actively.

COMPROMISE

When appropriate, listen to and consider the needs of the other person. You don't have to compromise, but give-and-take is part of any healthy relationship.

VALIDATION

VALIDATION MEANS...

...finding the truth in a persons perspective or experience, and verifying the facts of that situation, while also acknowledging the persons thoughts, emotions and behaviours.

To validate we do not need to agree with the person, nor do we need to validate things that are invalid. However, by validating we can make the other person feel seen and heard.

WHY VALIDATE?

- It improves our relationship with others by showing that we are listening to and understanding them.
- It improves interpersonal effectiveness by reducing pressure to prove who is right, negative reactions, and anger.
- It makes problem solving, closeness and support possible.
- Invalidation is hurtful and harmful to our relationships.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO VALIDATE

- The facts of a situation.
- The experiences, thoughts, feelings, beliefs and opinions of the other person.
- Suffering and difficulties encountered by the other person.

REMEMBER...

- Validating does not necessarily mean you agree.
- Validating does not mean you like it.
- Only validate the valid.

HOW TO VALIDATE

- ✓ Pay attention to what the other person is saying.
- ✓ Reflect back and paraphrase what they have just told you.
- ✓ Pay attention to the other persons body language and facial expressions.
- ✓ Show equality. Be yourself and be willing to admit faults and mistakes.
- ✓ Admit to the valid. If they ask you for something reasonable, accept this.
- ✓ Show care and compassion.
- ✓ Show understanding by using phrases such as "It makes sense that you . . . because . . . "

Don't forget to also practice validating yourself. Validation is not just for other people. It is equally important to validate and acknowledge your own experiences, thoughts, feelings, beliefs and opinions.

MINDFULNESS OF OTHERS

Relationships and friendships in general last longer and get stronger when we practice mindfulness of others when interacting with those around us. Read through the steps below for practicing mindfulness of others and put it in to practice.

OBSERVE

- Pay attention to those around you with interest and curiosity.
- Don't multitask. Stay present in your current interaction.
- Listen attentively instead of thinking about what to say next.
- Be open to new information about others.
- Give up on clinging to always being right.

DESCRIBE

- Replace words of judgment with descriptive words.
- Avoid assuming what another person thinks or means. Check the facts if needed.
- Avoid questioning other peoples motives unnecessarily.
- Give others the benefit of the doubt.

PARTICIPATE

- Throw yourself in to interactions with others. Move away from passiveness.
- Go with the flow rather than trying to control the conversation.
- Fully embrace group activities, conversations, and discussions. Enter them with an open mind and a sense of curiosity.

DIALECTICS

Walking the middle part is an important part of balancing acceptance and change. To be able to do this we have to consider dialectics.

Dialectics teach us that...

...there is always more than one way to see a situation and to solve a problem.
...all people have unique qualities and different points of view.
...change is the only constant in our lives.
...two things that seem like opposites can be true at the same time.
...we can honour the truth on both sides of a conflict. This does not mean that we do not honour our values and opinions, it simply allows us to step away from "black or white" thinking.

EXAMPLES OF OPPOSITES THAT CAN BE TRUE

1. You can be tough AND gentle.
2. You can be independent AND also want help.
3. You can do a good job AND still be able to improve.
4. You can be with others AND feel lonely.
5. You can be by yourself AND feel connected to others.
6. You can be mad at someone AND also respect and love the person.
7. You can understand how a person may be feeling AND still disagree with their actions or behaviour.

DIALECTIC THINKING

Dialectic thinking and behaviours can be challenging at times. This is particularly true when we have very set beliefs of how the word or others should be or treat us. Moving away from "black and white" or "either, or" thinking can however have a great affect on our relationship with others. Take a moment to read through some examples and steps for practicing thinking and acting dialectically.

HOW TO THINK AND ACT DIALECTICALLY

- ✓ Look for both sides of arguments or situations. There is always at least two sides.
- ✓ Let go of extremes. Very few things are "either, or".
- ✓ Treat others as you want to be treated.
- ✓ Look for similarities instead of differences in other people.
- ✓ Allow and embrace change.
- ✓ Practice getting used to change. Make small adjustments to your plans.
- ✓ Pay attention to your effect on others and their effect on you.
- ✓ Practice letting go of blame.
- ✓ Remember that change is transactional. You affect your environment and your environment affects you.