Taking Care of Your Mind by Taking Care of Your Body

Remember these as PLEASE skills.

**P** 1. Treat Physical Illness.  
   Take care of your body. See a doctor when necessary. Take prescribed medication.

**L** 2. Balance Eating.  
   Don’t eat too much or too little. Eat regularly and mindfully throughout the day. Stay away from foods that make you feel overly emotional.

**E** 3. Avoid Mood-Altering Substances.  
   Stay off illicit drugs, and use alcohol in moderation (if at all).

**A** 4. Balance Sleep.  
   Try to get 7–9 hours of sleep a night, or at least the amount of sleep that helps you feel good. Keep to a consistent sleep schedule, especially if you are having difficulty sleeping.

**S** 5. Get Exercise.  
   Do some sort of exercise every day. Try to build up to 20 minutes of daily exercise.
**DISTRESS TOLERANCE HANDOUT 6**

( Distress Tolerance Worksheet 4 )

**TIP Skills: Changing Your Body Chemistry**

To reduce extreme emotion mind *fast*.

Remember these as TIP skills:

**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, or hold a cold pack (or zip-lock bag of cold water) on your eyes and cheeks.
- Hold for 30 seconds. Keep water above 50°F.

**INTENSE EXERCISE**
*(to calm down your body when it 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**
*(pace your breathing by slowing it down)*

- Breathe deeply into your belly.
- Slow your pace of inhaling and exhaling way down (on average, five to six breaths per minute).
- Breathe *out* more slowly than you breathe *in* (for example, 5 seconds in and 7 seconds out).

**PAIRED MUSCLE RELAXATION**
*(to calm down by pairing muscle relaxation with breathing out)*

- While breathing into your belly deeply tense your body muscles (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.
- Notice the difference in your body.

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

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DISTRESS TOLERANCE HANDOUT 7
(Distress Tolerance Worksheets 5–5b)

Distracting
A way to remember these skills is the phrase “Wise Mind ACCEPTS.”

With Activities:
- Focus attention on a task you need to get done.
- Rent movies; watch TV.
- Clean a room in your house.
- Find an event to go to.
- Play computer games.
- Go walking. Exercise.
- Surf the Internet. Write e-mails.
- Play sports.
- Go out for a meal or eat a favorite food.
- Call or go out with a friend.
- Listen to your iPod; download music.
- Build something.
- Spend time with your children.
- Play cards.
- Read magazines, books, comics.
- Do crossword puzzles or Sudoku.
- Other: ____________________________

With Contributing:
- Find volunteer work to do.
- Help a friend or family member.
- Surprise someone with something nice (a card, a favor, a hug).
- Give away things you don’t need.
- Call or send an instant message encouraging someone or just saying hi.
- Make something nice for someone else.
- Do something thoughtful.
- Other: ___________________________

With Comparisons:
- Compare how you are feeling now to a time when you felt different.
- Think about people coping the same as you or less well than you.
- Compare yourself to those less fortunate.
- Watch reality shows about others’ troubles; read about disasters, others’ suffering.
- Other: __________________________

With different Emotions:
- Read emotional books or stories, old letters.
- Watch emotional TV shows; go to emotional movies.
- Listen to emotional music.
- (Be sure the event creates different emotions.)
- Ideas: Scary movies, joke books, comedies, funny records, religious music, soothing music or music that fires you up, going to a store and reading funny greeting cards.
- Other: __________________________

With Pushing away:
- Push the situation away by leaving it for a while.
- Leave the situation mentally.
- Build an imaginary wall between yourself and the situation.
- Block thoughts and images from your mind.
- Notice ruminating: Yell “No!”
- Refuse to think about the painful situations.
- Put the pain on a shelf. Box it up and put it away for a while.
- Deny the problem for the moment.
- Other: __________________________

With other Thoughts:
- Count to 10; count colors in a painting or poster or out the window; count anything.
- Repeat words to a song in your mind.
- Work puzzles.
- Watch TV or read.
- Other: __________________________

With other Sensations:
- Squeeze a rubber ball very hard.
- Listen to very loud music.
- Hold ice in your hand or mouth.
- Go out in the rain or snow.
- Take a hot or cold shower.
- Other: __________________________