

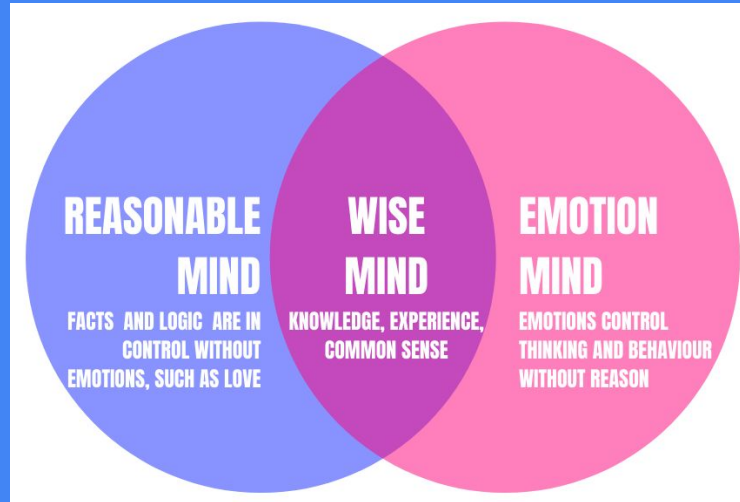
# STAUNTON CLINIC

## DIALECTICAL BEHAVIORAL THERAPY (DBT)

### Toolkit

#### Toolkit includes:

- Skills to help tolerate difficult events
- Skills to regulate emotions well enough to be effective
- Therapeutic videos



# DISTRESS TOLERANCE: Crisis Survival Skills

Crisis survival skills are used to help tolerate difficult events, urges and emotions when you cannot make things better right away.

The primary objective is to not make the situation worse.





# Distress Tolerance

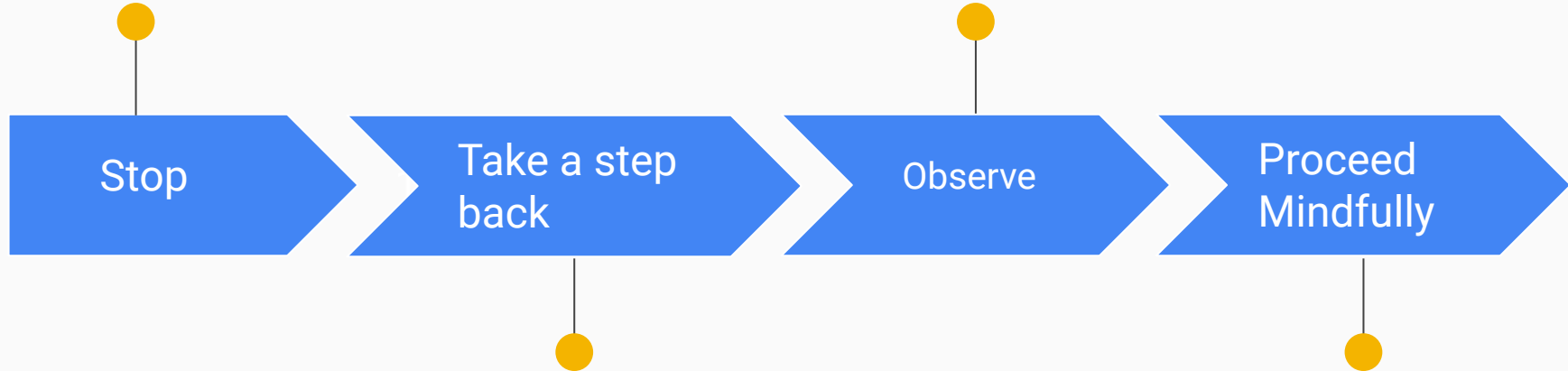
## Skill 1: S.T.O.P. Skill

- STOP
- TAKE A STEP BACK
- OBSERVE
- PROCEED MINDFULLY

Objective: Helps refrain from acting impulsively on emotions.

**Stop!** Do not react. Your emotions may try to make you act without thinking.

**Observe** what is going on inside and outside you. What are your thoughts and feelings. What are others saying or doing?



**Take a step back** from the situation. Take a deep breath. Do not let your feelings make you act impulsively.

**Proceed Mindfully:** Act with awareness consider your thoughts and feelings as well as others. Ask **Wise Mind**.

# Distress Tolerance

## Skill 2: T.I.P. (Changing Your Body Chemistry)

- Tip the Temperature\*
- Intense Exercise\*
- Paced Breathing
- Paired Muscle Relaxation

**\*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.

# 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 on your eyes and cheeks.
- Hold for 30 seconds. Keep water above 50 degrees.

When you put your face into cold water or a cold item on your eyes and upper cheeks, and hold your breath, it tells your brain you are diving underwater. This causes the “dive response” to occur. Your heart slows down, blood flow to non essential organs is reduced, blood flow is redirected to the brain and heart.



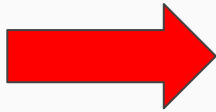
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# Intense Exercise (to calm down you body when it is revved up by emotion)\*

- Engage in intense exercise. 20-30 minutes of exercise can rapidly impact mood.
- Expend your body's stored up energy by engaging in a physically strenuous activity.



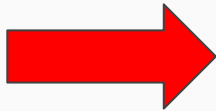
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# Paced Breathing (pace your breathing by slowing it down)

- 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 breath in (for example, 5 seconds in and 7 seconds out).



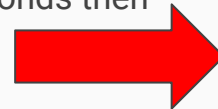
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# Paired Muscle Relaxation (to calm down by pairing muscle relaxation with breathing out)

- When you are starting, practice in a quiet place to reduce distractions. As you improve with practice, you will want to practice in different environments so that you can relax effectively when you need it the most.
- If judgments arise, observe them, let them go, and return to the activity.
- Get your body into a comfortable position in which you can relax. Lie or sit down, with all body parts uncrossed.
- While breathing deeply into your belly tense your body muscles (not so much as to cause a cramp and focus on one muscle group at a time). Hold the tension as you inhale for 5-6 seconds, then release and breathe out.
- While breathing out, say the word “Relax” in your mind.
- Observe the changes in sensations as you relax for 10-15 seconds then move on to the next muscle.



*Click on Image to Play*



# Distress Tolerance

## Skill 3: Improving the Moment

**Improving the Moment** is replacing immediate negative events with more positive ones to make the moment more positive and tolerable.

*Click on Image to Play*



### With Imagery:

Using Imagery you can create a situation different from the actual one. It is like leaving the current situation e.g. Imagine a very relaxing scene or a happy time in your life.

### With Meaning:

Based on the premise that people need to find or create meaning in their lives to survive suffering. Find purpose or meaning in a painful situation. Focus on whatever positive aspects of a painful situation you can find.

### With Prayer:

Open your heart to a supreme being, God, or your own Wise Mind to ask for strength to bear the pain.

### With Relaxing actions:

Select activities that ordinarily are calming. When calm it is easier to resist crisis behaviors.

### With One thing in the moment:

The only pain one has to survive is just this moment. Let go of thoughts about the future or past.

### With a brief Vacation:

Give yourself a Brief vacation from stressful negative events and engage in another activity.

### With self-Encouragement and rethinking the situation:

Talk to yourself as you would talk to someone else you care about.

# EMOTION REGULATION

Emotions serve 3 valuable functions. They communicate to others, to ourselves and motivate us for action. Emotional reactions can give us important information about a situation. Emotions can be signals or alarms that something is happening.

*Caution:* If we assume that our emotions represent facts about the world, we may use them to justify our thoughts or actions.

Once again, emotions are valuable so we need them. The objective of Emotion Regulation is to regulate or balance our emotions well enough to be effective.



# Emotion Regulation

## Skill 1: Checking the Facts



Emotional responses are often triggered by our interpretations, assumptions and beliefs about the situation and not the Facts. Examining our thoughts and *checking the facts* can help us change our emotions.

### How to Check the Facts

1. Ask: What is the emotion I want to change?
2. Ask: What is the event prompting the emotion?  
Describe the facts that you observed through your senses. Challenge judgements, absolutes, and black-and-white descriptions.
3. Ask: What are my interpretations, thoughts, and assumptions about the event?  
Think of other interpretations. Practice looking at all sides of a situation and all viewpoints.
4. Ask: Am I assuming a threat?  
Assess the probability that the threatening event will really occur. Think of as many other possible outcomes.
5. Ask: What is the catastrophe?
6. Ask: Does my emotion and/or intensity fit the actual facts?  
Ask **Wise Mind**

If the emotions do **not** fit the facts or when acting on your emotions is **not** effective then use the Opposite Action skill (next slide).

# Emotion Regulation

## Skill 2: Opposite Action

Click on Image to Play



Use Opposite Action when your emotions do NOT fit the facts or when acting on your emotions is NOT effective.

Every emotion has an action urge. Change the emotion by *Acting Opposite* to its action urge.

<u>Emotion</u>	<u>Action Urge</u>	<u>Opposite Action</u>
Fear	Run away/avoid	Approach/don't avoid
Anger	Attack	Gently avoid/be nice
Sadness	Withdraw/isolate	Get active
Shame	Hide	Tell people who will accept it

### How to do Opposite Action, Step by Step

1. **Identify And Name the Emotion** you want to change
2. **Check the Facts** to see if your emotion is justified by the facts. Check also whether the intensity and duration of the emotion fit the facts.
3. **Identify and Describe Your Action Urges.** What do I feel like doing?
4. **Ask Wise Mind:** Is expression or acting on this emotion effective in this situation? If I act on my urge, will it make things better or worse?
5. **Identify Opposite Actions** to your action urges.
6. **Act Opposite All the Way** to your action urges.
7. **Repeat Acting Opposite** to your action urges until your emotion changes.

# References

## Slides Adapted from:

- DBT Skills Training Handouts and Worksheets, Second Edition, by Marsha M. Linehan. Copyright 2015. Published by The Guilford Press A Division of Guilford Publications, Inc.
- DBT Skills Training Manual, Second Edition, by Marsha M. Linehan. Copyright 2015. Published by The Guilford Press A Division of Guilford Publications, Inc.

## Videos:

- Dialectical Behavior Therapy Clinic at Rutgers University (DBT-RU). DBT Skills from Experts. [<https://www.youtube.com/@DBTRU/featured>]