

A Mini DBT Workbook



Dialectical Behavior Therapy is a form of therapy that is strongly skill based, focusing on four categories: mindfulness, distress tolerance, emotion regulation, and interpersonal effectiveness. I recently taught a DBT course for licensed clinicians and certified coaches and part of their final project was to create a worksheet based on a DBT skill and present it to the rest of the group (NO PRESSURE).

They all did an amazing job and gave me permission to share their worksheets with the world.

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STOP

R.M. Daley, LCDC, LPC-Intern

STOP is one of the first skills that people usually learn in DBT is one of the first skills to learn, the framework which the other skills will fall into naturally. STOP is a tool to manage emotional regulation and to help you behave less impulsively and be able to approach situations with your wise mind in a way that helps not harms you.

S: Stop. *When you recognize a situation is becoming unmanageable stop and need to disengage.*

What are some of your cues that it might be time to stop?

T: Take a step back. *Ground your mind to your body by taking a physical step back. If you're sitting, stand up.*

What ways can you take a step back and remove yourself? List as least three.

O: Observe the situation. *This might take some time. If you're still very elevated stay stepped back and engage in some soothing activities. When you are ready observe mindfully. See the situation from all angles in a nonjudgmental and curious manner.*

Observe through your five senses. List what you are experiencing.

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P: Proceed mindfully. *Ask your wise mind for the way to proceed and trust in your wisdom.*

List some ways you can communicate in a healthy way. What is it you want to take away from this situation?

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TIP

(Faith G. Harper, PhD, LPC-S, ACS, ACN)

We think of the brain as sending information to the body, but in fact the body is also sending information to the brain on a continuous basis. Stephen Porges, the polyvagal theory guy, says that while the message stream from the brain to body is a one lane road, and the message stream from the body to the brain is a four lane road. TIP skills are designed to have the body use the four lanes of information to the brain in order to manage overwhelming emotions.

T-Temperature Change

I: Intense Exercise

P: Progressive Relaxation

T stands for temperature...meaning doing something to introduce a *temperature change* to the body. Some people use ice, either holding it in their hand to “shock” their system a bit or holding it on the place on their body that had been a self-injury spot for them in the past. Some people will dunk their heads in a bowl of ice water for a literally immersive effect. (It invokes the dive reflex in the body, slowing down the whole system to preserve energy which keeps the body alive when submerged in cold water (and slows down the body’s freak-out when in panic mode). Annd since people don’t respond well to ice, or they have medical conditions that make using ice dangerous so that option is no Bueno. A safer option for them would be to engage in a temperature change in the opposite direction, such as taking a warm/hot bath or shower

I stands for intense, meaning *intense exercise*. Short bursts of exercise that is good for getting the heart pumping and detoxing some of those stress hormones. Running around the block, doing jumping jacks, turning on a song and dancing around, whatever floats your boat (and doesn’t cause any pain or exacerbates any injuries you have).

P stands for progressive, and in this case *progressive relaxation*. There is a ton of ways of doing progressive relaxation, but essentially you are mindfully focusing on one area of your body at a time and relaxing where you are tense. You can also tense up an area mindfully, and then relax it so you can really notice the difference between the two.

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Opposite Action Andrés Sánchez

In what is definitely not a surprise to anyone, emotions and behaviors often come in pairs. For example, even if you don't speak Spanish, you would most likely be able to find out that Maria, the protagonist of our invented Telenovela, is angry the second she glares into the camera, yells into the phone, and slams it down. You don't even have to see the next scene where she throws all of Javier's photos into the trash can and lights them ablaze. We know she's angry because of her behaviors. (For those of you paying attention, Javier, her fictional boyfriend in our Telenovela, most likely did something which triggered her angry outburst.) Just like Maria, we have a set of behaviors that often accompany anger. In the same way, when we see Antonio, the devilishly handsome and wounded artist, crying alone in his studio, we know that he's feeling sad. He's withdrawn, listening to sad ranchera music that our abuelitas would have really enjoyed, and behaving in a way that accompanies sadness.

Poor Antonio.

While these intense emotions create awesome, binge-worthy drama in our telenovela, they can definitely be unwelcome guests in our lives, too. So how do we change our emotions? One tactic we can use is the relationship between behaviors and emotions. Instead of taking an action or behavior that amplifies that feeling, we can choose an opposite action. If you normally isolate yourself when you're sad, choose to go out and socialize or call a friend.

Here are a couple of examples in the first two boxes then space for you to create your own regular actions and a possible opposite action you can use instead.

Emotion	Associated Action	Opposite Action
Anger	Yelling, Slamming Doors	Speak quietly and move gently
Sadness	Withdraw from friends, family	Seek out friends, socialize

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5 Senses of Mindfulness Worksheet

Vanessa Benavides, LPC

Use this worksheet to quickly ground yourself to this current moment in time please choose one or more of the options listed to bring yourself to the present.

Taste- Place an M&M in your mouth and experience the outer candy shell melt and the chocolate taste begin to appear. You can also use your preferred snack and take sense of what your mouth is currently registering and log your experience.

See - Observe your surroundings and notice what is around you. It could be the texture of the ceiling, the way the light reflects certain images, all the different shades of green in the room, or the way clouds make formations.

Smell - Take a moment to take inventory of what you smell. It could be the automatic air freshener that you forgot you had or a new wax melt bar you bought last week. You could also take a bubble bath using your favorite bath bomb or putting on a scented location that you have.

Hear- Close your eyes and listen to everything around you. We tend to be automatically selective on what we are listening to everyday. You may notice the noisy air conditioning unit, planes flying overhead, birds, how squeaky a door is when someone closes it.

Touch- Feel the way your clothing fits you, your loose sweatpants or a snug fitting shirt that you may have on. The texture of your clothing can also be felt, is it a soft Cotton or a silky feeling dry fit shirt.

What I Noticed When Trying This Skill:

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Improving the Moment

Becca Jones, MA, LCDC, LPC-Intern

Sometimes we're going about our lives and things are great when something happens and knocks us right off our ass. Sometimes it throws us for a loop so hard that we don't know what to do and we begin to believe that we can't handle the situation in front of us. One way to handle situations like this is to practice the skill called improving the moment. Improving the moment is actually a series of strategies that we can use to make the moment more positive and easier to tolerate. Some of these skills involve distraction and distancing from the moment while others keep us connected to it in some form. This can help make it easier for us to accept the current reality. The strategies listed are suggestions that can help you come up with healthy coping methods of your own for each of the categories in the acronym IMPROVE.

Imagery: Take yourself to a safe space in your mind. This could look like a room, a beach, the forest, or any soothing, safe scene for you. Imagine all of the details about this space. What do you see? Smell? Taste? Hear? Feel- both physically and emotionally? What about this space helps you feel safe? Nothing can touch you here. Imagine painful feelings melting off of you.

Meaning: Think about what is important to you. What do you value? Find purpose or meaning in the painful situation. Focus on whatever positive aspects of this situation that you can find. This brings to mind the saying of "what doesn't kill you makes you stronger."

Prayer: This skill can be used by those who are not spiritual or religious, too. Prayer could mean connecting to God, a higher power, the universe, or relatives passed on; opening your heart or mind to the present moment. Ask for strength to bear with the painful emotions. Give things over to your higher power if you have one. Draw on strength you have felt during similar situations in the past.

Relaxation: Do something that calms you. Take a hot bath. Listen to music or watch a movie. Practice yoga or stretching. Breathe deeply.

One Thing in the Moment: Bring your awareness to the present moment. Take your mind away from thoughts of the past and the future. Focus on one thing you are doing in this moment and the physical sensations associated with it. Practice a grounding technique.

Vacation: Adulting is hard. Sometimes it flat out sucks and we wake up and say, "I just don't want to adult today." Using the vacation skill does not have to mean taking a literal vacation. Although it certainly can be a beach getaway or that tip you've always want to take. A vacation could look like a 20 minute

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timeout from what you're doing. Crawl into bed and pull the covers over your head. Go for a walk. Disconnect from social media.

Encouragement: "Unleash the bubbly cheerleader!" says the goth/punk therapist. The way we talk to ourselves is important and can make a difference. Tell yourself, "I'm a badass. I can do this!" "This too shall pass." "I've survived other difficult situations, and I will get through this one, too!"

What I Noticed When Trying This Skill:

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