

Why Bother Tolerating Painful Feelings and Urges?

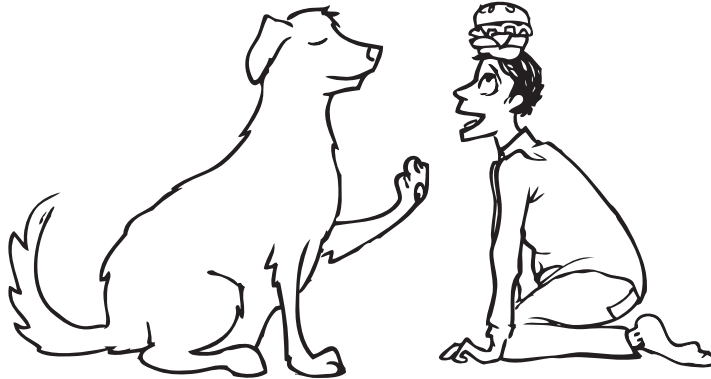
Because . . .

1. Pain is part of life and can't always be avoided.

2. If you can't deal with your pain, you may act impulsively.

3. When you act impulsively, you may end up hurting yourself, hurting someone else, or not getting what you want.

Behavior Change



Behavior change skills are strategies used to *increase* behaviors we want and to *reduce* behaviors we don't want (in ourselves and others).

BEHAVIORS TO INCREASE

Remember to be specific and measurable.

SELF:

What behaviors would you like to increase in yourself (e.g., exercising, saving money, going to school, doing homework)? _____

OTHERS:

What behaviors would you like to increase in someone else (e.g., spending more time with you, listening to you, making eye contact, putting dirty dishes in the sink)? _____

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BEHAVIORS TO DECREASE

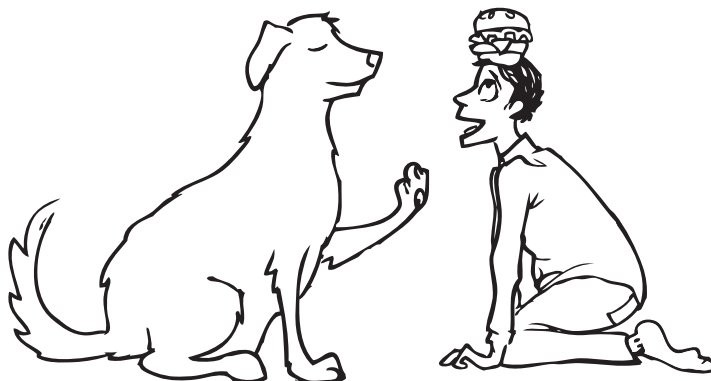
SELF:

What behaviors would you like to decrease in yourself (e.g., overeating, cigarette smoking, cutting, blurting out impulsively, arguing back, running away, fighting, skipping classes, lying in bed during the day)? _____

OTHERS:

What behaviors would you like to decrease in someone else (e.g., nagging, breaking curfew, running away, yelling, avoiding school, invalidation, playing videogames, staying up past bedtime)? _____

Ways to Increase Behaviors



Reinforcers are *consequences* that result in an *increase* in a behavior. They provide information to a person about what you want them to do.

- **Positive reinforcement:** Increases the frequency of a behavior by providing a “rewarding” consequence.(e.g., labeled praise; a genuine compliment; an A on an exam).

HINT: Timing is very important. Give the reward immediately and choose motivating reinforcers! Don't forget to reinforce yourself!

Examples: _____

- **Negative reinforcement:** Increases the frequency of a behavior by removing something negative; it's *relief* from something unpleasant.

Examples: Why take an aspirin when you have a headache? It *relieves* the headache and that makes you more likely to take aspirin next time you have a headache (aversive stimulus). Aspirin taking is negatively reinforced.

If your mom is nagging you, you are more likely to clean your room in order to stop the nagging. If you have intense negative emotions, and a harmful behavior provides temporary relief, you are more likely to repeat the harmful behavior. Remember, you are learning skills to manage this better!

(continued)

Ways to Increase Behaviors (page 2 of 2)

Examples of negative reinforcements that are *not* harmful (e.g., positive ways to soothe yourself, leaving painful situations): _____

- **Shaping:** Reinforcing small steps that lead toward the ultimate goal (e.g., going from A to Z in 26 steps, each step rewarded).

Example: A teenager is anxious about going to school and doesn't usually go. She might be encouraged to go for 1 hour on Monday, 2 hours on Tuesday, and so on, until she's able to stay for a whole day, ultimately leading up to staying every day, all week long. Reinforce each step!

Crisis Survival Skills Overview

Skills for tolerating painful events and emotions when you can't make things better right away and you don't want to make things worse!

Distract with "Wise Mind ACCEPTS"

Activities
Contributing
Comparisons
Emotions
Pushing Away
Thoughts
Sensations

SELF-SOOTHE with Six Senses

Vision
Hearing
Smell
Taste
Touch
Movement

IMPROVE the Moment

Imagery
Meaning
Prayer
Relaxation
One thing in the moment
Vacation
Encouragement

PROS AND CONS

TIPP

Temperature
Intense exercise
Paced breathing
Progressively relaxing your muscles

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Crisis Survival Skills: Distract with “Wise Mind ACCEPTS”

- Activities** ***Do something.*** Call, e-mail, text, or visit a friend; watch a favorite movie or TV show; play your instrument or sing; play videogames; draw, cook, or bake; write in a journal; clean your room; go for a walk or exercise; read a book; listen to your iPod, go online and download music, apps; play a game with yourself or others.
- Contributing** ***Contribute to (do something nice for) someone.*** Help a friend or sibling with homework; make something nice for someone else; donate things you don’t need; surprise someone with a hug, a note, or a favor; volunteer.
- Comparisons** ***Compare yourself*** to those less fortunate. Compare how you are feeling now to a time when you were doing worse. Think about others who are coping the same or less well than you.
- Emotions** ***Create different emotions.*** Watch a funny TV show or emotional movie; listen to soothing or upbeat music; get active when you are sad; go to a store and read funny greeting cards or joke books.
- Pushing away** ***Push the painful situation out of your mind temporarily.*** Leave the situation mentally by moving your attention and thoughts away; build an imaginary wall between you and the situation. Put the pain in a box and on a shelf for a while.
- Thoughts** ***Replace your thoughts.*** Read; do word or number puzzles; count numbers, colors in a poster, tiles on a wall, anything; repeat the words to a song in your mind.
- Sensations** ***Intensify other sensations.*** Hold or chew ice; listen to loud music; take a warm or cold shower; squeeze a stress ball; do sit-ups and push-ups; pet your dog or cat.

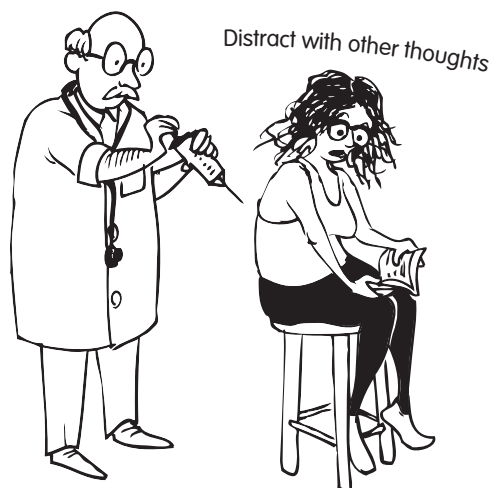
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Practice Exercise: Distract with “Wise Mind ACCEPTS”

Due Date _____

Write down at least two specific Distract skills to practice during the week when you feel upset (e.g., activity—play the guitar; contributing—bake cookies for my neighbor):



Distract with “ACCEPTS”

Activities _____

Contributing _____

Comparisons _____

Emotions _____

Pushing away _____

Thoughts _____

Sensations _____

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Practice Exercise: Distract with “Wise Mind ACCEPTS” (page 2 of 2)

Briefly describe the stressful situations you were in and the specific skills you used: _____

Did using the skills help you to (1) cope with uncomfortable feelings and urges and/or (2) avoid conflict of any kind?

Circle Yes or No.

(Note: If the skill helped you to *not* do anything to make the situation worse, it worked!)

If YES, please describe how it helped: _____

If NO, please describe why you believe it did not help: _____

If you did not practice this skill, please explain why: _____
