

Distress Tolerance Activities

Body Moving Activities These activities encourage us to move our body to increase circulation, distract us from our worries and burn off energy. They are most effective when we feel agitated or lethargic

- Bike ride
- Chop wood
- Clean
- Climb up and down stairs
- Dance
- Do yoga
- Gardening
- Go for a run
- Hit or throw a ball
- Kick something
- Play a sport
- Stretch your body
- Walk or hike
- Workout/exercise
- Wrestle
- Yoga
- _____
- _____

Relaxing Activities These are activities that can relax and calm the body

- Breath deeply for 3,5,10 breaths
- Go for a run/walk
- Exercise hard
- Engage in a hobby
- Listen to a relaxing tape
- Massage
- Play a game
- Rock in a rocking chair
- Progressive breathing
- Sit in the dark
- Sit in the sun
- Take a break from problem solving
- Visualize a mini vaca
- Visualize a peaceful place
- Visualize a safe secret room
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- _____
- _____

Emotional Expression Activities These activities get us in touch with our feelings and help us express them. Some activities require words but are designed to allow us to feel

- Bite something
- Rip up paper
- Cry
- Talk in loving and helpful ways
- Use assertion to name feelings/needs
- Visualize a drain
- Write a letter expressing feelings
- Pound a pillow
- Scream
- Squeeze rubber ball
- Do opposite of current feeling
- Grunt, stomp, shout
- Journal or doodle
- Look for meaning
- _____
- _____

Socializing Activities These activities engage us with others. Help us see that we are not alone

- Ask for support
- Be with people you admire
- Call a friend or family member
- Give something to someone
- Help someone in need
- Listen to someone else's perspective
- Make eye contact and smile
- Spend time with uplifting people

- Go out of way to be kind to others
- Go to a support group
- Go to an event
- Go to the mall
- Visit with family or friends
- Volunteer
- _____
- _____

In the Moment Activities These activities bring our focus to making things better, as best as we can, in the moment. Some activities are easy to do without any preparation, some set up for pleasurable experiences in the future, and others require that we prepare a space.

- Accept what I cannot change
- Affirm yourself
- Buy or pick flowers
- Create art
- Imagine a wall
- Imagine how someone you admire would be
- Name things you are grateful for
- Sing
- Shout “STOP” to though
- _____
- _____
- Packaing(box up a thought and set aside)
- Play with a craft
- Compare
- Read uplifting material
- Recall a pleasant memory
- Reward yourself for success
- Smile
- Observe without judgment
- _____
- _____

Sensation Focused Activities These activities take our attention to our senses. They stimulate awareness and can be used as a distraction. Most are pleasurable.

- Burn incense
- Drink tea
- Put on lotion
- Hold an ice cube until it melts
- Light a candle
- Listen to music
- Listen to guided imagery
- _____
- _____
- Paint your fingernails
- Put a cold washcloth on face
- Eat something tasty
- Splash cold water on your face
- Eat candy
- Take a hot bath/shower
- _____
- _____

Thought Challenge Activities These activities take our minds to a task that requires thought or sharp focus. These actions help steer the mind from things that are troubling by giving a problem to solve or question to ponder.

- Color name
- Count backwards by 3’s from 100
- See situation as an opportunity to learn
- Sing something complex
- Think of long term goals
- Work a puzzle
- Plan a fun event
- Name some of your favorite things
- Read
- Count things in room
- Count to 10 slowly
- Creative writing
- Pros and cons list
- Focus on what you like
- _____
- _____

