

MENTAL HEALTH MOMENT

Distress Tolerance Skills for your well-being

Distress is a part of life and, despite our best efforts, cannot be avoided completely. Despite this fact the actual moment of distress does not last forever, and we can use skills to avoid ruminating or focusing on the distress which often leads to crisis. There are many mental health skills that are available for us to use when there is nothing you can do to fix the problem immediately. Below is a list of skills to help us tolerate distressful moments.



Self Soothe

Use your five senses. Touch something soft or soothing or squeeze a stress ball. Light a pleasant smelling candle. Spray some of your favorite perfume or cologne. Play soft music or use ear buds/headphones and play music that is soothing to you. Reward yourself with a small snack that is pleasing. Find a way to cue a positive response in an intentional way for a brief moment.

Distract

Remove yourself from the situation either physically or mentally. Give yourself a brief break by choosing not to focus on the negatives of the situation. If there is a tight deadline at work, allow yourself to focus on another task for a brief moment. Simple moments of self care can help you recharge and focus with more motivation.

Improve the Moment

Remind yourself of times you have succeeded. Cheerlead yourself with simple statements such as "I can do this." When we are distressed, our mind tends to naturally focus on negative thoughts unless we choose to replace these thoughts with positive ones of our own. If your mind focuses on the negative, refocus again, and again, and again...

Pros/Cons

Admit to yourself the pros and cons. Many times we tend to judge things as simply impossible or horrible. In truth, many distressing events have short term cons and long term pros. Quitting smoking causes us to experience many short term stressors related to withdrawal but can provide long term health.

Radical Acceptance

Accepting a situation is NOT the same as **approving** of being in the situation. Often we do not accept something for its pros and cons because we simply don't like **being** in the situation. But we **are**. Choosing to accept and acknowledge a situation is the **FIRST** step in making an effective response and planning. Many times that choice can be "radical" because we do it to be effective, not because we "want" to admit it.

These skills and many other mental health skills are available through seeing a counselor as part of the Bowen Center Employee Assistance Plan. To schedule a free and confidential EAP counseling session please call 1-800-342-5652.

Mental Health Moment is an Employee Assistance Program publication. For more information on your Employee Assistance Program benefit, please contact your HR Dept. or call Bowen Center at 1.800.342.5653

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