



## TIP Skills: Changing Your Body Chemistry

To reduce extreme emotion mind *fast*.

Remember these as **TIP** skills:

**T**

### **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 (or zip-lock bag of cold water) on your eyes and cheeks.
- Hold for 30 seconds. Keep water above 50°F.

**I**

### **INTENSE EXERCISE\*** (to calm down your body when it is revved up by emotion)

- Engage in intense exercise, if only for a short while.
- Expend your body's stored up physical energy by running, walking fast, jumping, playing basketball, lifting weights, etc.

**P**

### **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 breathe *in* (for example, 5 seconds in and 7 seconds out).

### **PAIRED MUSCLE RELAXATION** (to calm down by pairing muscle relaxation with breathing out)

- While breathing into your belly deeply tense your body muscles (*not* so much as to cause a cramp).
- Notice the tension in your body.
- While breathing out, say the word "Relax" in your mind.
- Let go of the tension.
- Notice the difference in your body.

**\*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.

From *DBT Skills Training Handouts and Worksheets, Second Edition*, by Marsha M. Linehan. Copyright 2015 by Marsha M. Linehan. Permission to photocopy this handout is granted to purchasers of *DBT Skills Training Manual, Second Edition*, for personal use or use with individual clients only. (See page ii of this packet for details.)

## Using Cold Water, Step by Step

### **COLD WATER CAN WORK WONDERS\***

When you put your full face into cold water . . . or you put a zip-lock bag with cold water 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. (It may take 15–30 seconds to start.)

Your heart slows down, blood flow to nonessential organs is reduced, and blood flow is redirected to the brain and heart.

This response can actually help **regulate your emotions**.

This will be useful as a **distress tolerance strategy** when you are having a very **strong, distressing emotion**, or when you are having very **strong urges to engage in dangerous behaviors**.

(This strategy works best when you are sitting quietly—activity and distraction may make it less effective.)

### **TRY IT OUT!**

**\*Caution:** Very cold water decreases your heart rate. If you have any heart or medical condition, have a lowered base heart rate due to medications, or are on a beta-blocker, consult your health care provider before using these skills. Avoid ice water if you are allergic to the cold.

From *DBT Skills Training Handouts and Worksheets, Second Edition*, by Marsha M. Linehan. Copyright 2015 by Marsha M. Linehan. Permission to photocopy this handout is granted to purchasers of *DBT Skills Training Manual, Second Edition*, for personal use or use with individual clients only. (See page ii of this packet for details.)

## Paired Muscle Relaxation, Step by Step

If you have decided to practice **paired muscle relaxation**, it can be very helpful to practice relaxing each of your muscles first.

**When you are starting**, practice in a quiet place to reduce distractions, and make sure that you have enough time. As you improve with practice, you will want to practice in many different kinds of places, so that you can relax effectively when you most need to.

**Remember that effectiveness improves with practice.** If judgments arise, observe them, let them go, and return to your practice. If you become anxious, try focusing on breathing *in* to the count of 5 and *out* to the count of 7 (or the counts you have already determined for paced breathing), breathing all the while into your belly until you can return to relaxation exercises.

**Now that you are ready to begin . . .**

1. Get your body into a comfortable position in which you can relax. Loosen tight clothing. Lie or sit down, with all body parts uncrossed and no body part supporting any others.
2. For each area of the body listed below, gather tension by tightening muscles. Focus on the sensation of tightness in and around that area. Hold the tension as you inhale for 5–6 seconds, then release and breathe out.
3. As you release, say in your mind very slowly the word “Relax.”
4. Observe the changes in sensations as you relax for 10–15 seconds then move on to the next muscle.

Start first with each of the 16 muscle groups.

Once you can do that, practice with medium groups of muscles and then large groups.

Once you are good at that, practice tensing your entire body at once.

When you tense your entire body, you are like a robot—stiff, nothing moving.

When you relax your entire body, you are like a rag doll—all muscles drooping down.

Once you can relax all your muscles, practice three or four times a day until you can routinely relax your entire body rapidly.

By practicing pairing exhaling and the word “Relax” with relaxing your muscles, you will eventually be able to relax just by letting go and saying the word “Relax.”

Large  
Medium  
Small

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| } | 1. Hands and wrists: Make fists with both hands and pull fists up on the wrists.       |
|   | 2. Lower and upper arms: Make fists and bend both arms up to touch your shoulders.     |
|   | 3. Shoulders: Pull both shoulders up to your ears.                                     |
| } | 4. Forehead: Pull eyebrows close together, wrinkling forehead.                         |
|   | 5. Eyes: Shut eyes tightly.  |
| } | 6. Nose and upper cheeks: Scrunch up nose; bring upper lips and cheeks up toward eyes. |
|   | 7. Lips and lower face: Press lips together; bring edges of lips back toward ears.     |
| } | 8. Tongue and mouth: Teeth together; tongue pushing on upper mouth.                    |
|   | 9. Neck: Push head back into chair, floor, or bed, or push chin down to chest.         |
| } | 10. Chest: Take deep breath and hold it.   |
|   | 11. Back: Arch back, bringing shoulder blades together.                                |
| } | 12. Stomach: Hold stomach in tightly.  |
|   | 13. Buttocks: Squeeze buttocks together.   |
| } | 14. Upper legs and thighs: Legs out; tense thighs.                                     |
|   | 15. Calves: Legs out; point toes down.   |
|   | 16. Ankles: Legs out; point toes together, heels out, toes curled under.               |

**Remember**, paired relaxation is a skill. It takes time to develop. With practice, you will notice the benefits.

*Note.* Adapted from Smith, R. E. (1980). Development of an integrated coping response through cognitive–affective stress management training. In I. G. Sarason & C. D. Spielberger (Eds.), *Stress and anxiety* (Vol. 7, pp. 265–280), Washington, DC: Hemisphere. Copyright 1980 by Hemisphere Publishing Corporation. Adapted by permission.

From *DBT Skills Training Handouts and Worksheets, Second Edition*, by Marsha M. Linehan. Copyright 2015 by Marsha M. Linehan. Permission to photocopy this handout is granted to purchasers of *DBT Skills Training Manual, Second Edition*, for personal use or use with individual clients only. (See page ii of this packet for details.)

## Changing Body Chemistry with TIP Skills

Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Week Starting: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the situation you were in when you chose to practice each skill. Rate both your emotional arousal and distress tolerance before and after using the TIP skill. Describe what you actually did. Use the back of this sheet if necessary.

### **CHANGING MY FACIAL TEMPERATURE**

Used cold water to change emotions

Situation: \_\_\_\_\_

Arousal (0–100) Before: \_\_\_\_\_ After: \_\_\_\_\_

Distress tolerance (0 = I can't stand it; 100 = I can definitely survive) Before: \_\_\_\_\_ After: \_\_\_\_\_

What I did (describe): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **INTENSE EXERCISE**

Situation: \_\_\_\_\_

Arousal (0–100) Before: \_\_\_\_\_ After: \_\_\_\_\_

Distress tolerance (0 = I can't stand it; 100 = I can definitely survive) Before: \_\_\_\_\_ After: \_\_\_\_\_

What I did (describe): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **PACED BREATHING**

Situation: \_\_\_\_\_

Arousal (0–100) Before: \_\_\_\_\_ After: \_\_\_\_\_

Distress tolerance (0 = I can't stand it; 100 = I can definitely survive) Before: \_\_\_\_\_ After: \_\_\_\_\_

What I did (describe): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **PAIRED MUSCLE RELAXATION**

Situation: \_\_\_\_\_

Arousal (0–100) Before: \_\_\_\_\_ After: \_\_\_\_\_

Distress tolerance (0 = I can't stand it; 100 = I can definitely survive) Before: \_\_\_\_\_ After: \_\_\_\_\_

What I did (describe): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## Improving the Moment

A way to remember these skills is the word **IMPROVE**.

### With Imagery:

- Imagine very relaxing scenes.
- Imagine a secret room within yourself. Furnish it the way you like. Close and lock the door on anything that can hurt you.
- Imagine everything going well.
- Make up a calming fantasy world.
- Imagine hurtful emotions draining out of you like water out of a pipe.
- Remember a happy time and imagine yourself in it again; play out the time in your mind again.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### With Meaning:

- Find purpose or meaning in a painful situation.
- Focus on whatever positive aspects of a painful situation you can find.
- Repeat these positive aspects in your mind.
- Remember, listen to, or read about spiritual values.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### With Prayer:

- Open your heart to a supreme being, God, or your own Wise Mind.
- Ask for strength to bear the pain.
- Turn things over to God or a higher being.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### With Relaxing actions:

- Take a hot bath or sit in a hot tub.
- Drink hot milk.
- Massage your neck and scalp.
- Practice yoga or other stretching.
- Breathe deeply.
- Change your facial expression.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### With One thing in the moment:

- Focus your entire attention on just what you are doing.
- Keep yourself in the moment.
- Put your mind in the present.
- Focus your entire attention on the physical
- Listen to a sensory awareness recording (or use Distress Tolerance Handout 9a)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### With a brief Vacation:

- Give yourself a brief vacation.
- Get in bed; pull the covers up over your head.
- Go to the beach or the woods for the day.
- Get a magazine and read it with chocolates.
- Turn off your phone for a day.
- Take a blanket to the park and sit on it for a whole afternoon.
- Take a 1-hour breather from hard work.
- Take a brief vacation from responsibility.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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

- Cheerlead yourself: "You go, girl!" "You da man!"
- "I will make it out of this."
- "I'm doing the best I can."
- Repeat over and over: "I can stand it."
- "This too shall pass."
- "I will be OK."
- "It won't last forever."
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

List (and then practice) rethoughts that are particularly important in your crisis situations (e.g., "The fact that he did not pick me up doesn't mean he doesn't love me"):

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# DISTRESS TOLERANCE WORKSHEET 7 (Distress Tolerance Handout 9)

## IMPROVE the Moment

Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Week Starting: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe two crisis situations that happened to you. Then describe your use of the IMPROVE skills.

**CRISIS EVENT 1:** Rate level of distress (0–100) Before: \_\_\_\_\_ After: \_\_\_\_\_

**Prompting event** for my distress (who, what, when, where): What triggered the state of crisis?

- I**magery
- M**eaning
- P**rayer
- R**elaxation
- O**ne thing
- V**acation
- E**ncouragement

At left, check the skills you used, and describe here:

Describe the outcome of using skills:

Circle a number to indicate how effective the skills were in helping you tolerate the distress and cope with the situation (keeping you from doing something to make the situation worse). Use the following scale:

*I still couldn't stand  
the situation, even  
for one more minute.*  
1

2

*I was able to cope somewhat,  
at least for a little while.  
It helped somewhat.*  
3

4

*I could use skills,  
tolerated distress, and  
resisted problem urges.*  
5

**CRISIS EVENT 2:** Rate level of distress (0–100) Before: \_\_\_\_\_ After: \_\_\_\_\_

**Prompting event** for my distress (who, what, when, where): What triggered the state of crisis?

- I**magery
- M**eaning
- P**rayer
- R**elaxation
- O**ne thing
- V**acation
- E**ncouragement

At left, check the skills you used, and describe here:

Describe the outcome of using skills:

Circle effectiveness of skills:

*I still couldn't stand  
the situation, even  
for one more minute.*  
1

2

*I was able to cope somewhat,  
at least for a little while.  
It helped somewhat.*  
3

4

*I could use skills,  
tolerated distress, and  
resisted problem urges.*  
5