



NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

SOS FOR EMOTIONS

TOOLS FOR
EMOTIONAL HEALTH

NYUStudentHealthCenter

BE WELL. CARE FOR YOUR EMOTIONAL HEALTH!

The one thing we all have in common as people is that we are emotional creatures. This is both a gift and sometimes a curse.



The good news is that we can be active in maintaining and fostering our emotional health in good times and bad through a variety of practical strategies. It may seem like a lot of effort at first, but with time and effort it can be enjoyable and a big confidence booster!

WHAT DO YOU NEED HELP WITH IN MANAGING EMOTIONS?

Set a GOAL!

- **PREVENTION:** Preparing and anticipating difficult times with better coping skills
- **REGULATION:** Learning how to use less harmful coping strategies when upset
- **POST-RECOVERY:** Learning to learn from bad experiences and improve coping
- **WELLNESS SKILLS:** Learning how to improve your emotional resilience



FLIGHT OR FIGHT RESPONSE

What can makes things even more complicated in managing our emotions is that when our balance gets thrown off, it can trigger a secondary stress reaction... a fear response.

- **FIGHT**
- **FLIGHT**
- **FREEZE**



EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE CYCLE

Negative Cycles - Positive Cycles

With Emotional Regulation Skills, you can change a negative emotional cycle into a positive one... step by step... skill by skill.



CONNECTING THE EMOTIONAL DYSREGULATION DOTS

Take the mystery out of your emotions!



TIPS

To manage our emotions we can:



1. Improve and strengthen our coping
2. Change our thinking
3. Engage in positive behaviors
4. Respond to and care for our emotions
5. Reduce stress as well as improve our stress tolerance

CBT TOOLS



BEHAVIORAL TOOLS

Behavioral techniques are all about taking action. Here are some common ideas:

- *Take a time out when overwhelmed*
- *Pace yourself when feeling stressed*
- *Ask for help when stuck*
- *Use problem-solving techniques when in a corner*

The idea is: *To feel different, you have to do different.*



COGNITIVE TRAINING

Ask New Questions

Cognitive Techniques: Managing our self-talk gives us options when upset. Here's what a balanced conversation would sound like...

- **What am I reacting to?**
- **What is it that's really pushing my buttons here?**
- **Am I jumping to conclusions?**
- **Is there another way of dealing with this?**
- **Is it fact or opinion?**
- **We all give situations and see things from our point of view. Broaden your perspective and consider the bigger picture.**
- **What meaning am I giving this situation?**
- **How important will this be 6 months from now?**



COGNITIVE TRAINING: STOPP TECHNIQUE

When feeling overwhelmed try STOPP!



- **S Stop.** Don't act immediately.
- **T Take** a deep breath.
- **O Observe.** What am I thinking right now?
- **P Pull** back. Zoom out. See the bigger picture.
- **P Practice** your skills.

DBT TOOLS



MINDFULNESS

Most people miss out on paying attention to moments in the course of the day, which could provide stress relief, rest, or renewal.

Learn how to tap into mindfulness skills to manage tough days.



INTERPERSONAL SKILLS TRAINING

Our relationships are a common source of emotional stress. It's easy to get into ruts on how we relate to others. Being more aware of how we relate and trying new things can be a great way to manage our needs and subsequent emotions. Here are some common DBT pointers...



- **Ask for what you want**
- **Clarify what you need**
- **Learn the difference between being assertive versus aggressive**

DISTRESS TOLERANCE

Managing and tolerating stress is an ongoing daily requirement.

- **Riding the subway**
- **Taking a test**
- **Waiting to hear from a job application**

All require varying degrees of stress tolerance.



IMPROVE THE MOMENT

A good coping tool is to remember to improve the moment. Let's see how DBT defines this coping tool.

I **IMAGERY**

M Find **MEANING** in the situation

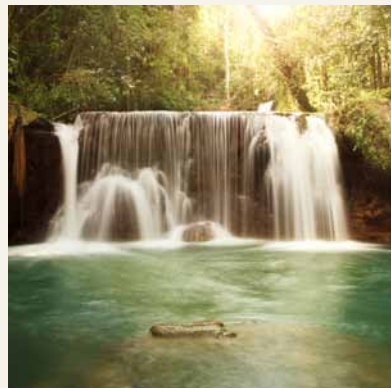
P Engage in **PRAYER** or Meditation

R **RELAXATION**

O Take **ONE** thing at a time

V Take a **VACATION**

E **ENCOURAGE** through positive self-statements



SELF-SOOTHING TOOLS

Soothing through the senses can often provide immediate comfort and distraction.



- ✓ **Sounds:** Listening to or playing music
- ✓ **Smells:** Aromatherapy or a relaxing bath
- ✓ **Sights:** Spending time outdoors
- ✓ **Tastes:** A pleasurable meal
- ✓ **Activity:** A positive, absorbing activity: arts & crafts or attending a performance
- ✓ **Guided Imagery:** Visualizing a safe place

EMOTIONAL REGULATION

Anyone can feel many emotions in the course of any given day. Emotional Regulation teaches you how to smooth out the emotional roller coasters of difficult moments.

EMOTIONAL TOOLS

A Feelings Journal

A direct way to keep our emotions in check is to keep a feelings journal. Using a feelings list such as the one below can help us give a name to a sensation we may be stuck in. Using a feelings list can also help expand our emotional vocabulary for what we are going through.



Anger

bothered
annoyed
bitter
angry
irritated
disgusted
frustrated
exasperated
furious



Joy

content
peaceful
relaxed
cheerful
satisfied
joyous
excited
ecstatic
happy



Sadness

sad
depressed
distraught
despair
melancholy
grief
helpless
hopeless
miserable



Hurt

lonely
homesick
abandoned
embarrassed
shame
guilt
foolish
humiliated
hurt



Fear

uncertain
worried
anxious
frightened
scared
nervous
afraid
terrified
overwhelmed

SKILL COPING OPTIONS

When distressed, it can be helpful to remind ourselves of our options.

CHANGE

ACCEPT

LET GO

CHANGE OPTIONS

What can I change?

- **Environment**
- **Situation**
- **My Reactions**

How can I make the changes?

What resources do I need?

When can I do it?

What do I do first?



ACCEPT OPTIONS



- It is as it is.
- I don't have to agree with it or judge it as good or bad.
- I can always come back to it later.
- I can keep my options open.
- This is a normal body reaction.
- I don't have to fight it or try to stop it.
- It will pass.

LETTING GO OPTIONS



Ask yourself:

Is it worth it?

Is this something I can leave or let go of and move on from this experience?

Can I learn from this experience?

What would I want to do differently next time?

RADICAL ACCEPTANCE

In DBT, we learn that to improve our emotional health, it is critical to both accept where we are at the moment and also take a step towards change.



WELLNESS TOOLS



STRESS MANAGEMENT

Active vs. Reactive

AVOID CRASH - BURN - RECOVERY!

Effective Stress Management includes:

- **Inside-Out**
 - **Ex: Walking**
- **Outside-In**
 - **Ex: Meditation**
- **Low-Moderate-High Energy exertion**

Pick stress management activities that are doable and accessible.



STRESS MANAGEMENT TOOLS

Relaxation Response

Why is it important to relax and how does it help emotional health?



- **Reduces emotional fatigue**
- **Improves your ability to think clearly**
- **Helps with the energy reserve that problems require when trying to solve them**

BREATHE



Remember - coping can always start with taking a deep breath. It can be a simple yet powerful step to start your journey.

CBT COACHING

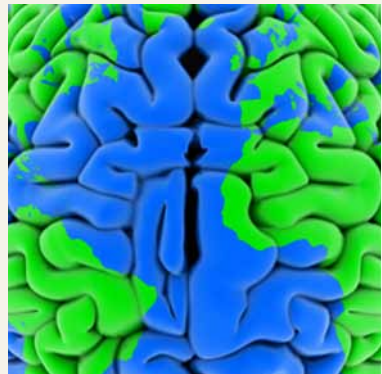
Memory Tools

How can you remember to use your skills?

- **Use a memory tool.**

Memory Tools:

- **Associations**
- **Carrying notes with you**
- **Email reminders**
 - **Ex: Use your phone!**
- **Enlisting support**



POSITIVE ACTIVITIES

In Positive Psychology, they promote an idea that we don't have to wait for life to get better to feel better.

Make a commitment to try something new each week.

Don't leave your mood to chance. Schedule positive activities.

Be Creative - Dabble in a hobby!



Quick Tip: NYU has over 200 clubs!

MEDITATION:

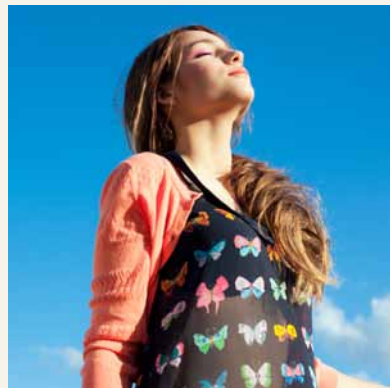
Take a time out! Give your brain a break.

Formal Meditation

- **Mindfulness**
- **Focusing - "Felt Sense"**
- **Prayer**
- **Time Out**

Meditative Activity

- **Cleaning**
- **Painting**
- **Playing Music**
- **"In the Zone"**



FINDING YOUR OWN FORMULA:

Emotional Safety Crisis Plan



FINDING YOUR FORMULA: Emotional Safety Plan

What would your emotional safety plan look like?

- **Warning Signs (Red Flags)**
- **Internal Coping Strategies**
- **External Social Support**
- **Making your environment safe**



LIFE LONG LEARNING: Relapse-Prevention

Building healthy coping skills takes TIME and PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!



- **Lapse...Relapse...Collapse**
- **Remember that once you commit to skills training...relapse is part of learning and it is also a way of falling forward, not backward.**

NYU – CWS Resources

- **Relaxation Oasis**

www.nyu.edu/shc/relax

- **Toolkits**

- **Groups**

- **Yoga Resources**

- **Wellness Exchange Hotline**

To speak with a counselor over the phone 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, please call **(212) 443-9999**.

- **Wellness Exchange Walk-in**

(no appointment necessary)

If you would like to be seen immediately, you can attend Counseling walk-in hours. For times and locations, please view our website at www.nyu.edu/999/counseling.



212-443-9999

www.nyu.edu/999

**We're here
to listen.**

The background of the entire page is a pattern of overlapping circles in shades of yellow and purple. Several of these circles contain simple line drawings of faces with different expressions: some are smiling broadly with their tongues sticking out, some have their eyes closed in a happy expression, and one in the top left has a surprised or worried expression with wide eyes and a small open mouth.

Student Health Center

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