

# ACCEPTS DBT

*In the moment, distressing emotions may seem impossible to overcome. However, over time, these emotions will lessen in intensity, and eventually fade away. The acronym ACCEPTS outlines seven techniques for distracting yourself from distressing emotions until they pass.*

## **Activities**

*Do an activity that requires thought and concentration.*

- **Read a book**
- **Write in a journal**
- **Do a work project or school assignment**
- **Play a sport**

## **Contributing**

*Do something that allows you to focus on another person.*

- **Ask a friend about their day**
- **Make a gift for a loved one**
- **Volunteer**
- **Send a thoughtful card**

## **Emotions**

*Do something to create a new emotion that will compete with your distressing emotion.*

- **Sad? Watch a happy movie**
- **Anxious? Practice deep breathing**
- **Angry? Go for a walk**

## **Pushing Away**

*Avoid a painful situation or block it from your mind using a technique such as imagery.*

- **Try to delay harmful urges for one hour. If the urge doesn't pass, put it off for another hour**
- **Imagine putting your negative thoughts in a box, taping it shut, and putting it in the back of your closet.**

## Thoughts

*Use a mental strategy or an activity to shift your thoughts to something neutral.*

- **Starting with the letter “A,” name objects around you that start with each letter of the alphabet.**
- **Count a specific object around you (e.g. bricks, trees...)**
- **Sing a song out loud or recite it in your head.**

## Sensations

*Find safe physical sensations to distract you from distressing emotions.*

- **Hold an ice cube in your hand**
- **Eat something sour or spicy**
- **Take a cold shower**

# ACCEPTS

*Instructions:* Respond to the following prompts to create your own ACCEPTS plan for tolerating distress. Give responses that you would be likely to use.

What is a distressing emotion you would like to manage with ACCEPTS? \_\_\_\_\_

**Activities:** List activities requiring concentration that would distract from your distressing emotion.

---

---

---

**Contributing:** List activities that allow you to focus on others instead of your distressing emotion.

---

---

---

**Comparisons:** Describe when you struggled with your distressing emotion but showed resilience. Recall this experience when faced with the same feeling again.

---

---

---

**Emotions:** How can you create a new feeling that competes with your distressing emotion?

---

---

---

**Pushing Away:** What can you do to avoid thoughts and situations that create distressing emotions?

---

---

---

**Thoughts:** List mental strategies or activities that would distract you from your distressing emotion.

---

---

---

**Sensations:** How can you create a safe physical sensation to distract from your distressing emotion?

---

---

---