

DISTRESS TOLERANCE HANDOUT 6



(Distress Tolerance Worksheet 4; p. 376)

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.

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