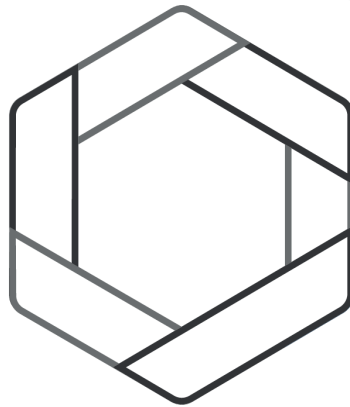


RADICALLY TRANSFORM HOW YOU RESPOND
TO SETBACKS, CHALLENGE AND TRANSITION



THE **RESILIENT** ADULT

SIX STEPS TO BEND WITHOUT BREAKING

| PARTICIPANT GUIDE |



ADULT PARTICIPANT GUIDE TABLE OF CONTENTS

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WHY RESILIENCE?

WHY THE RESILIENCE PROJECT?

There are an enormous number of challenges that can occur in life. No one is left unscathed. These challenges can range from seemingly tiny—like the frustration of being stuck in traffic—to soul-crushingly overwhelming—like the loss of a child.

How do we balance the things that need to be done when difficulty strikes with the thoughts and feelings that inevitably come along with these kinds of events? And the way that we approach these hurdles can have a long-lasting impact on how we proceed through future life events. At times, this may seem like an insurmountable challenge.

Wouldn't it be nice if all this felt... "surmountable" instead?

Resilience is the ability to recover easily from difficulties. It's a quality that allows a person to spring back into action faster and with more positivity even in the face of some of the most daunting circumstances. With Christ as our cornerstone, we can respond to these challenges with resilience. We can learn to bend, not break, when encountering hurdles, transition, broken relationships, crisis and more.

WHO IS THIS PROGRAM FOR?

EVERYONE CAN LEARN FROM THIS COURSE, AND IT IS DESIGNED TO BE APPLICABLE IN ALL SITUATIONS.

Resilience is something that every individual can improve upon, and situations occur daily for all of us that we could handle more effectively. The continuum of mental wellness includes all people, and we are all moving up and down that spectrum throughout our lives.

What you learn here may seem like common sense to you now, but later it may turn out to be a foundational tool to address challenges to your mental wellbeing that you could not have envisioned. Even if you feel these skills may not apply to you, there most likely is someone in your life who could benefit from your knowledge and advice on how to use them.

This system is designed to provide a specific set of steps to follow in order to sort out difficulties, use effective tools to cope with them, and put into perspective those things that seem unmanageable. Through a series of 6 one-hour lessons, you will gain insight into how to “bounce back” better and improve your mental wellness so that when challenges do occur, as they have or will, you will be equipped to feel confident and more fully move forward.

And this process will continue to shape your perspective throughout your entire journey here on earth – that’s why we call it **The Resilience Project – because you’re never done growing.**

STRUCTURE & GUIDELINES

THE RESILIENCE PROJECT CURRICULUM IS DESIGNED TO BE DELIVERED IN SIX SESSIONS OF ONE HOUR EACH, PREFERABLY WEEKLY.

This structure provides the best possible learning environment, practice, and recollection of the skills as well as gives opportunity for real-world practice and feedback. Skills build on each other, so it is most beneficial to commit to all 6 weeks. This also ensures that individuals feel cohesion and the ability to speak up in the group as they apply the skills to their unique situation.

THIS SYSTEM IS FOUNDED ON THE PRINCIPLE THAT MENTAL WELLNESS TOOLS HELP INDIVIDUALS FIND A FOUNDATION OF PEACE AND THAT HAVING THE UNIQUE PEACE FOUND IN SCRIPTURE IS A GAME-CHANGER.

It is our belief that how and when Scripture is integrated with the curriculum is an individual decision to be made by the hosting entity. As such, you may encounter this program as a standalone program or in conjunction with other programming. Please contact your host group leader for more information on how the program is designed.

THERE IS NOT A REQUIREMENT TO SHARE PERSONAL INFORMATION DURING YOUR ATTENDANCE IN THE RESILIENCE PROJECT PROGRAM.

However, speaking about your application or understanding of the skills may increase your ability to apply them and give others more ways to also improve. Participation is encouraged but not required.

PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT THIS IS NOT A MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT OR THERAPY GROUP.

Your host group leaders are not equipped to counsel or advise in a therapeutic way in this setting. They are here to teach and encourage. Sharing of very personal information should be limited. Should there be a concern you have that supersedes their role, they will ensure you are given the proper direction and resources. Understand, however, that they will limit the extent to which individuals contribute if necessary.

continue ➔

**SOMETIMES, WHEN THINKING ABOUT LIFE'S DIFFICULTIES,
A PERSON CAN BECOME OVERWHELMED.**

Your leader will review with you how they would like to proceed in this case. Often, this will mean an open invitation to excuse yourself from the room for some time to a specific location in the building, with the understanding that you will speak with your host group leader privately afterward to ensure that you are well or for them to provide additional assistance if necessary.

RESPECT FOR OTHERS IS PARAMOUNT.

As members of this group, individuals may share personal information. Respect means that things shared in the group need to remain in the group. Do not share with others the specifics of what is discussed or who is in the group with you. For the comfort of all involved, it is important that this be respected at all times.



MODULE ONE RESILIENCE THE FOUNDATION OF MENTAL WELLNESS

OVERVIEW OF RESILIENCE:

Resilience is the idea that individuals can be built up in such a way that they will “bounce back” from difficulty. Those with higher resilience would recover better than those with lower resilience. There are many views of this concept, but the overall common themes include some basic elements, the viewpoint of the individual, and some protective factors instilled through learning.



THINK ABOUT IT:

Irene is 86 now. When she was 20 years old, she was struck with a terrible illness called polio. She was rushed to a care facility and quickly learned that her illness was potentially lethal. Immediately, she evaluated the situation and determined that she would rise to the occasion. She asked nurses and staff for exercises she could do and did them daily. She asked her brother to come to the hospital to help her keep that commitment. Irene will tell you that she believed that she would not go into an iron lung—a death sentence, by most accounts. She was sure that although things were bad, they would not be permanently this bad. She had a teaching career to get back to, and this would not stand in the way. Feeling bad for herself was useless...she didn't cause this situation, and she would not be crushed by it. While Irene did feel sad for those who were in a similar situation to her in the hospital, she did not allow this to determine how she would proceed. There was so much to live for, and she needed to work hard to get it. She relied on her faith as she had been taught to do.

Over 66 years later, Irene still does 45 minutes of exercises daily as well as a workout routine three times per week. She is convinced that this has saved her mobility, and no one can talk her out of continuing to work at it. She was able to build that life worth living that she imagined. She had help along the way, she will tell you, and she is a cheerleader and encourager for all those around her who question their abilities.

PRACTICING RESILIENCE SKILL

ELEMENTS OF RESILIENCE

CHALLENGE:

Resilient individuals view difficulty as a challenge, not a paralyzing event. They see mistakes as lessons to be learned from and opportunities for growth. Difficulties have no negative reflection on their ability or worth.

☑ Example:

COMMITMENT:

Resilient individuals commit to life and daily goals and are compelled to live life accordingly. They are committed despite feelings about those commitments.

☑ Example:

PERSONAL CONTROL:

Resilient individuals spend time and energy on situations that can be influenced, which increases confidence. They spend little to no time worrying about uncontrollable events, which reduces helplessness.

☑ Example:

VIEW OF SETBACKS

PERMANENCE:

Resilient individuals see the effects of bad events as temporary rather than permanent. They expect that the difficulties of this time will resolve or be handled in such a way that they will not continue to affect one negatively.

☑ Example:

PERVASIVENESS:

Resilient individuals deal with setbacks or bad events in relation to only that particular part of their daily life. They are unwilling to let a difficulty in one area affect other unrelated areas.

☑ Example:

PERSONALIZATION:

Resilient individuals do not exclusively blame themselves when external negative events occur. They ensure that the full picture of how causes interact is considered.

☑ Example:

LEARNED ATTRIBUTES

POSITIVE IMAGE OF THE FUTURE:

Resilient individuals can envision brighter days ahead and see past the difficulty of the present. They have the ability to look over what is current and to paint a picture of what will be.

☑ Example:

EMPATHETIC & COMPASSIONATE:

Resilient individuals do not waste time worrying about what others think of them. They feel for others but not with them. They encourage and support but don't bow to peer pressure, and they enforce limits and boundaries.

☑ Example:

LACK OF VICTIM MENTALITY:

Resilient individuals discern the difference between being a victim and being victimized. They focus time and energy on changing things that they have control over and letting go of those things they do not have control over.

☑ Example:



FOR DISCUSSION

Talk with a fellow participant about the areas of resilience you feel you are strongest in and about the areas in which you feel you need to grow. Listen as they share the same and give examples.

My two STRONGEST Resilience Characteristics Are...

- Challenge
- Commitment
- Personal control
- Permanence
- Pervasiveness
- Personalization
- Positive image of the future
- Empathy & compassion
- Lack of victim mentality

My two GROWTH Resilience Characteristics Are...

- Challenge
- Commitment
- Personal control
- Permanence
- Pervasiveness
- Personalization
- Positive image of the future
- Empathy & compassion
- Lack of victim mentality

Notes:

MY RESILIENCE-BUILDING PLAN

HOMEWORK

Spend some time thinking about your two personal strength and growth areas of resilience on the previous page. What are two specific ways you could continue to improve them? Write them below.

STRENGTH CHARACTERISTICS	I could increase my STRENGTH in the _____ characteristic by...
	I could increase my STRENGTH in the _____ characteristic by...
GROWTH CHARACTERISTICS	I could increase my GROWTH in the _____ characteristic by...
	I could increase my GROWTH in the _____ characteristic by...

ENCOURAGEMENT:

Resilience is not inherited—it is grown. No matter how resilient you may feel today, you can and will improve when you pay attention and make a plan!

➡ NEXT TIME: CRISIS SURVIVAL SKILLS—getting through difficulties without making things worse.

RESOURCES:

Adapted from the works of: Kobasa, Susan et. al. (1982). Hardiness and health: A prospective study. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 42(1), 168-177. The collected works of Cal Crow, Program Director, Center for Learning and Connections. The collected works of Martin Seligman, University of Pennsylvania, 2001-2011.



MODULE TWO

CRISIS SURVIVAL

THE SKILL FOR ROCK PROBLEMS

REVIEW OF RESILIENCE:

How did your resilience-building plan work out? What are some successes and challenges?

OVERVIEW OF CRISIS SURVIVAL:

Sometimes there are moments in life that cannot be corrected or even worked on—they are just difficult. The best one can hope for is to get through them and do so as gracefully as possible to avoid more damage. Being able to know when to do that and how to accomplish it is crucial. Also, knowing the difference between survival and avoidance is mandatory.



THINK ABOUT IT:

James has encountered a crisis. His girlfriend of several years has told him that she does not want to marry him [contrary to what he had hoped and planned]. He feels sad, angry and overwhelmed. He just wants the situation to go back to the way it was in his mind — a perfect relationship headed for marriage. When James had this conversation with his now ex-girlfriend several days ago, and she had made it clear that she has nothing more to say on the matter. Now he finds himself lying awake at night, thinking through all the things he could have done differently. He can't stop coming up with the million and one reasons why her feelings might have changed and how he might fix this problem. James feels completely abandoned. He starts the next day tired and groggy and overwhelmed...and so it goes on.

PRACTICING CRISIS SURVIVAL SKILLS

BREAKDOWN OF CRISIS

WHAT IS A CRISIS?

- Highly stressful life event or traumatic moment
- You want it resolved now; urgent
- Short-term (long-term is a life problem)

TYPES OF RESPONSES TO CRISIS:

- SOLVE the crisis
- SURVIVE the crisis
- ACCEPT the crisis
- STAY miserable

RULES TO DETERMINE WHEN TO USE CRISIS SURVIVAL SKILLS:

(a.k.a. sort out "rocks" and "play-dough")

- 1 - Can I solve this?
- 2 - Is now a good time?
- 3 - If yes, go to PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS (play-dough);
If no to either, go to CRISIS SURVIVAL SKILLS (rocks)

GOAL: IF YOU GET THROUGH A CRISIS WITHOUT MAKING IT WORSE, THEN YOU HAVE SUCCEEDED!

USING THE "THINK ABOUT IT" CRISIS, WORK THROUGH THE PROCESS FOR JAMES.

Crisis: _____

1. Can I solve this? (check one) YES NO

2. Is now a good time? (check one) YES NO

3. Follow Rule #3 from above:

James needs to use _____ skills, not _____ skills.

DISTRACT SKILLS

Divert your mind from a crisis you cannot solve by keeping your mind and/or body occupied.

ACTIVITIES:

CONTRIBUTING:

COMPARISON:

EMOTION (OPPOSITE):

PUSHING AWAY:

THOUGHTS:

SENSATIONS:

IMPROVE THE MOMENT SKILLS:

Improve the crisis moment in your mind without the need for outside support.

IMAGERY:

MEANING:

PRAYER:

RELAXATION:

ONE THING IN THE MOMENT:

VACATION:

ENCOURAGEMENT:

PROS & CONS:

Weigh the pros (pluses) and cons (minuses) of problem behaviors in order to determine what you would choose "in your better moments" when you are more able to see the full picture.

The situation or behavior I am working on:

	PROS	CONS
DOING IT		
NOT DOING IT		

CONCLUSION:

My chart tells me:

SELF-SOOTHING SKILLS:

Use your senses to reduce reactivity either during a crisis or as part of mental wellness practice.

VISION:

HEARING:

SMELL:

TASTE:

TOUCH:

MY CRISIS SURVIVAL INSIGHTS

HOMEWORK

Continue to fill in your personal ideas for each of the skills for IMPROVE, ACCEPTS, PROS & CONS, and SELF- SOOTHING. Consult your growing list each time you experience those crisis moments. Write down one particular crisis moment from the week and how you dealt with it below.

My crisis was:

I survived it by:

ENCOURAGEMENT:

Remember to use the correct tool for the moment. If you determine that you are experiencing a crisis—don't panic. Remember to just survive! It may take practice to reduce the over-thinking that sometimes happens in problem-solving to get you to just survive. Remember—this is a rock problem. It cannot be solved, so you need to stop attempting to solve it.

➔ **NEXT TIME:** REALITY ACCEPTANCE—getting past things while being in survival mode forever is not an option.

RESOURCES: Adapted from DBT Skills Training Manual, 2nd Edition, Marsha M. Linehan, Published by Guilford Press, 2015.



MODULE THREE

REALITY ACCEPTANCE

THE SKILL FOR GETTING THROUGH THE BIG STUFF

REVIEW OF CRISIS SURVIVAL:

What crisis did you survive using your skills, and how did you do that differently than in the past?

OVERVIEW OF REALITY ACCEPTANCE?

There are times when something that appears to be a crisis enters our lives, and then we realize that it is not going anywhere, and it is not short-term. This is now a life problem. While it is tempting to continue to want to solve unsolvable life problems or to avoid them by distracting and simply surviving, it is often not in one's best interest to do so. Some difficulties need to be accepted for what they are—but not in just any way—fully and totally accepted. Reality acceptance is the way to get pain and suffering down to just ordinary pain.



THINK ABOUT IT:

Maybe you or a friend or relative has experienced it—most of us have—the moment when the devastating health news hits. Jennifer was a 34-year-old mom of two. What seemed like an unusual mole on her skin turned into malignant melanoma, a devastating cancer diagnosis. What happened next was remarkable—at least to those who were watching the Facebook posts. Jennifer seemingly embraced this. She shared her thoughts about how the diagnosis was made and what the next step was for the appointment the following week. She commented about how this had not been something expected but that she was sure it was meant to be a blessing to her and those around her. She rallied the troops and spent time with others who were struggling with a cancer diagnosis. It looked like she was sailing through with flying colors. True—some moments went well, but truthfully, she was struggling. Her method of getting through was to accept things. By continually harnessing her thoughts and directing them where she wanted, it somehow made this sad, inevitable truth bearable and maybe even OK in some ways.

PRACTICING REALITY ACCEPTANCE SKILLS

BREAKDOWN OF CRISIS

REVIEW: WHAT IS A CRISIS VS. LIFE PROBLEM?

- Stressful
- Urgent
- Short-term—CRISIS SURVIVAL
- **Long-term—REALITY ACCEPTANCE**

FOUR WAYS TO RESPOND:

- SOLVE the crisis (play-dough)
- SURVIVE the crisis (rock)
- **ACCEPT the problem**
- STAY miserable

PAIN + NON-ACCEPTANCE = SUFFERING

RADICAL ACCEPTANCE

Reality is what it is. ~~should~~

Everything has a cause. ~~why~~

Life is worth living. ~~try~~

WHAT GETS IN THE WAY OF RADICAL ACCEPTANCE

ACCEPTANCE IS NOT APPROVAL.

ACCEPTANCE IS NOT RESIGNATION.

TURNING THE MIND: CHOOSING TO ACCEPT

NOTICE YOU ARE NOT ACCEPTING.

MAKE AN INNER COMMITMENT TO ACCEPTING.

DO IT OVER AND OVER AGAIN.

WILLINGNESS VS. WILLFULNESS

Realize you are a part of the world and connected to life.



Commit to active participation in the world just as it is.

HOMEWORK

Spend some time writing down ways to rephrase the skills you have learned on reality acceptance. Choose a particularly difficult reality that is in your life now or was in the past, and write down how you would think differently about it.


What would be some ways to phrase your thoughts to become more accepting?

How would you act differently to increase your ability to accept this difficulty?

What might it feel like when you do or did accept things fully?

ENCOURAGEMENT:

Reduce your suffering by accepting just the pain. There is freedom and release in the peace of knowing all things are as they are supposed to be.

 **NEXT TIME:** MINDFULNESS—learning to attend to reality as it is by processing information in a more focused way.

RESOURCES: Adapted from DBT Skills Training Manual, 2nd Edition, Marsha M. Linehan, Published by Guilford Press, 2015.



MODULE FOUR MINDFULNESS

THE WAY TO FOCUS ON THE REALITY OF THE MOMENT

REVIEW OF REALITY ACCEPTANCE:

Review the thoughts you wrote down in regard to a difficult reality in your life. Describe the feeling you have or hope to have as you continue to become more accepting.

OVERVIEW OF MINDFULNESS?

Mindfulness is a term used in many different circles. For purposes of this program, we will look at mindfulness as six specific skills that help individuals delve into the world around them in the most honest and complete way. This type of mindfulness is helpful in dealing with reality as it is and eliminating additional items that might confound the thoughts or complicate the emotions. Mindfulness in this sense is the part of the resilience system that allows individuals to deal with the basics in order to determine how to proceed.



THINK ABOUT IT:

Karen comes home to find that her husband, Jon, has bought a new grill and is assembling it on the kitchen floor three hours before friends are coming for dinner. Immediately her anger boils over and Karen says, "What are you doing?! I just cleaned that floor. Our friends are coming soon and I have food to make and we were going to grill and NOW you decide to do this! This is really dumb. I feel like you do this all the time—last-minute things that get in my way!" Jon becomes irritated, because he thought he was being helpful in getting the new grill before company was coming. Karen storms out of the house to "cool off," and Jon feels defeated. If Karen had been mindful, she might have noticed that she was getting angry and fearful. She could have chosen a different way to act or to not say anything at all. Maybe the whole situation could have been avoided had she stayed on topic and not been so hard on Jon. As it turns out, Jon had good reasons for what he did and had even thought not to put the grill together on the deck for fear that the parts would fall through the slats. At this point, though, it was too late.

PRACTICING MINDFULNESS SKILLS

BREAKDOWN OF MINDFULNESS

WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

There is nothing mystical or mysterious about mindfulness. It refers to the process of attending to one's experience in the present moment, rather than attending to the thoughts running through one's mind. This may involve attending to colors, shapes, and other sights that one sees; sounds one hears; odors one smells; and textures one touches.

- It involves noticing thoughts or feelings (then maybe choosing to focus on something else). It is not about blocking or pushing away thoughts or feelings.
- It is a part of living an effective life and is often a first step in using other skills.
- It is a skill that requires much practice. It is not something that is learned all at once in an "a-ha!" moment.
- It involves choosing to keep your focus on the present moment even though distractions may arise again and again. Mindfulness involves noticing the wandering
- of your mind and gently guiding your attention back to your chosen focus. No one can maintain a perfect focus at all times.
- It is an exercise that involves participation and acceptance of "what is," which at any given time could be a state of tension. It involves a nonjudgmental acceptance of reality (even though it may lead you to make changes).

WHY MINDFULNESS SKILLS ARE IMPORTANT

- Learning to focus on one thing at a time in the present moment can help you to gain better control over your behavior and soothe yourself when experiencing overwhelming emotions.
- Being mindful will increase the likelihood that you will choose the correct skill to use in crisis moments in order to function most effectively for the situation.

MINDFULNESS—WHAT SKILLS

OBSERVE: Notice and control your attention.

DESCRIBE: Add words to label your experience factually.

PARTICIPATE: Throw yourself into the current moment. Flow.

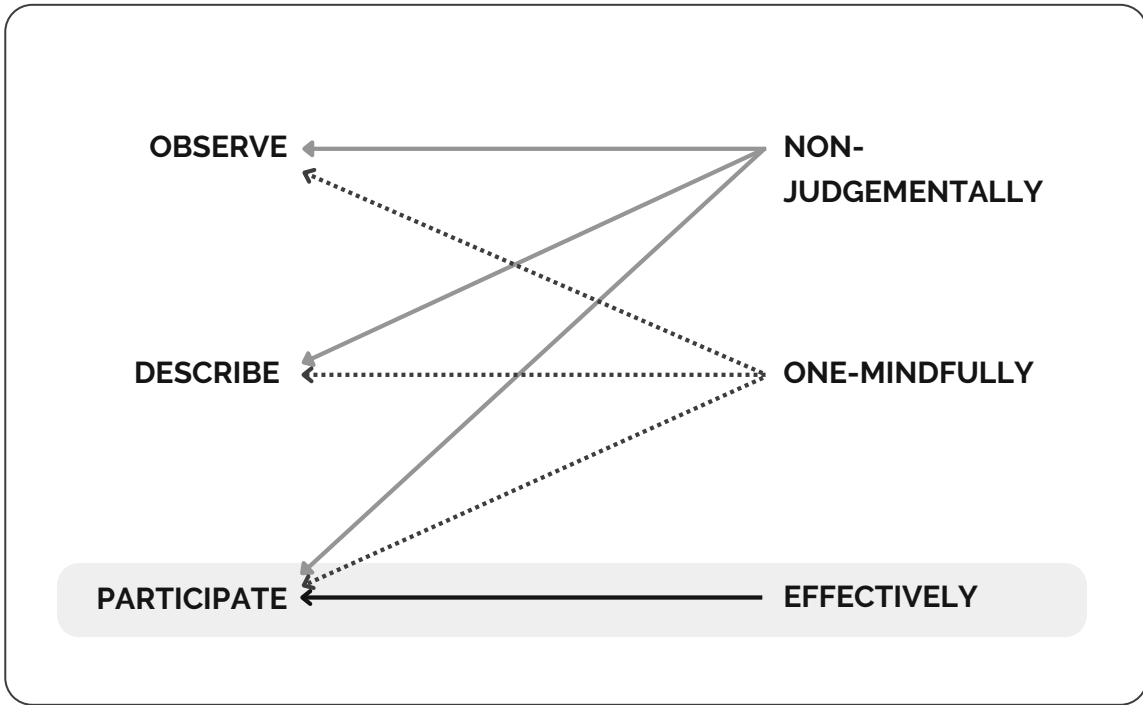
MINDFULNESS—HOW SKILLS

NON-JUDGMENTALLY: See, but don't evaluate as good or bad.

ONE-MINDFULLY: Stay in the present moment; do one thing at a time.

EFFECTIVELY: Do what works for your goal.

PRACTICING MINDFULNESS SKILLS



GOAL: EFFECTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN REALITY.

MY MINDFULNESS SKILLS

HOMEWORK

Take a moment to practice intentionally being mindful about an object outside of yourself—like a candle. See how long you can keep your focus on the candle, and use your skills to attend to it. If you veer off, that is fine—just try refocusing again. Also reflect on a situation where mindfulness might have been helpful in how you were thinking about something: maybe there was an argument or a time that you might have jumped to conclusions. Work backwards through the six skills of mindfulness and see how you could have approached the situation differently.

OBSERVE:

DESCRIBE:

PARTICIPATE:

NON-JUDGEMENTALLY:

ONE-MINDFULLY:

EFFECTIVELY:

ENCOURAGEMENT:

Mindfulness is extremely difficult. Keep at it. Be sure to measure what **did not** happen. Sometimes that is the biggest success of all.

➔ **NEXT TIME:** EMOTION REGULATION—a strategy that makes it possible for you to be the boss —not your emotions.

RESOURCES: Adapted from DBT Skills Training Manual, 2nd Edition, Marsha M. Linehan. Published by Guilford Press, 2015.



MODULE FIVE EMOTION REGULATION THE SKILL OF CONTROLLING YOUR EMOTIONS

REVIEW OF MINDFULNESS:

How did you practice external mindfulness? What did you notice as you practiced? Have you been able to at least catch—if not reduce or eliminate—judgments? How has that changed your interactions with others or with your own thoughts?

OVERVIEW OF EMOTION REGULATION?

Emotion regulation is the skill and practice of determining how to interact with emotions as they come up. Emotions are very valuable because they tell us things about ourselves and our environment that we might not comprehend otherwise. Sometimes we do a good job noticing them and determining how to proceed. Other times it is difficult to reign them in, even if we want to. While it might seem that our emotions are controlling how we behave, emotion regulation is the way to set it up so that there is always a choice.



THINK ABOUT IT:

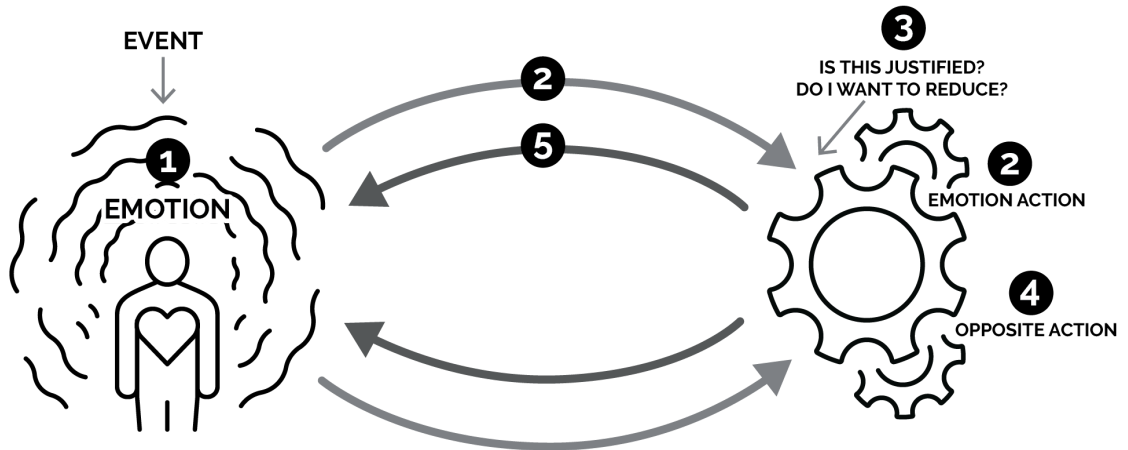
Jane and her son, Tyler, are having a talk. Despite the house rules, he has chosen to stay out past curfew two nights this weekend. As they are talking, Tyler is becoming increasingly defensive of his behavior. Finally, he says, "You're the worst mom ever! I'm moving out when I turn 18 in nine months." Jane has had it, and she is angry with his disrespect, manipulation, and defensiveness. She yells, "Fine. Until then you can enjoy your room because you won't be leaving it, and you can figure out how to buy a car without a job because you won't be using mine." Then both Jane and Tyler storm off to their separate corners of the house. Now, Jane has calmed down and realizes that although she might have had a right to be that angry with Tyler, she has now lost the ability to really talk with him. She feels angry with him and with herself for how she acted.

PRACTICING EMOTION REGULATION SKILL

BREAKDOWN OF EMOTION REGULATION

OPPOSITE ACTION

UNDERSTANDING THAT EMOTIONS "CAUSE" ACTIONS



EMOTION REGULATION: STEPS TO REDUCING EMOTIONS YOU DON'T WANT TO HAVE:

1. Figure out what emotion you are experiencing.
2. Determine the emotion's action urge.
3. Ask, "Is this justified, or do I want it down?"
4. Figure out the emotion's opposite action.
5. Do that action all the way.

TYPICAL EMOTIONS, ACTION URGES, & OPPOSITE ACTIONS

EMOTION	ACTION URGE	OPPOSITE ACTION
FEAR	RUN/AVOID	GENTLY APPROACH
ANGER	ATTACK	BE DECENT AND A LITTLE KIND
SADNESS	WITHDRAW	GET ACTIVE
SHAME/GUILT	PUNISH/HIDE	FORGIVE.APPROACH & REPEAT/REPENT

MY MINDFULNESS SKILLS

HOMEWORK

Follow the five steps or the diagram and write out a time an emotion got the better of you. Be sure to list the urges of the emotion (what was it trying to get you to do) as well as all the potential opposite actions you could have taken.

Next write down what happened with the emotion. Did it get bigger or smaller? What would a benefit of choosing an opposite action potentially have been? If there is an opportunity, go through this process in real time with an event and its emotional response. See if it will direct you to do something different than you are feeling compelled to do.

1. FIGURE OUT WHAT EMOTION YOU ARE EXPERIENCING.
2. DETERMINE THE EMOTION'S ACTION URGE.
3. ASK, "IS THIS JUSTIFIED, OR DO I WANT IT DOWN?"
4. FIGURE OUT THE EMOTION'S OPPOSITE ACTION.
5. DO THAT ACTION ALL THE WAY.

ENCOURAGEMENT:

Emotions can be very powerful things, and sometimes we allow them to dictate our actions for awhile without realizing it. In order to get opposite action to work, we have to keep at it. Keep trying to reverse the circle, and at the very least you should see the emotion go down and be more in your control.

➔ **NEXT TIME:** THOUGHT DISTORTIONS—tweaks in how we label the world can make a big impact on how we engage with it.

RESOURCES: Adapted from DBT Skills Training Manual, 2nd Edition, Marsha M. Linehan, Published by Guilford Press, 2015.

**MODULE SIX****THOUGHT DISTORTIONS**

THE SKILL OF SEEING THE WORLD AS IT REALLY IS

REVIEW OF EMOTION REGULATION:

Review your steps on opposite action. Were you able to find a place where you could control what your emotions were trying to get you to do? How did that feel?

OVERVIEW OF THOUGHT DISTORTIONS:

Thought distortions are particular ways of thinking in which people often become stuck in what they believe to be the truth, but which are actually untruthful. There are many ways that people can bend or twist reality in their heads with or without realizing what they are doing. This becomes a problem when those distortions affect their feelings, thoughts, and actions because they will be participating in life in a way that is not based on facts. Living this way can be very difficult for them and others. Learning to catch these distortions and rephrase them can have enormous positive impact on the situations and outcomes.

**THINK ABOUT IT:**

Michael is headed to work on a Monday morning. As he drives, he realizes he is running a little late. Suddenly, all the traffic on the freeway has stopped. An accident has occurred, and no one is going anywhere quickly. He thinks to himself, "Ugh! Why can't people drive better? I swear this always happens on Mondays. They are never going to get done with this construction. I bet that's why there was an accident. This is exactly what I thought would happen—a bad week right out of the gate. There are just so many idiots on the road. I should have taken a different way to work. My day is totally ruined. I'm so mad!" Michael honks his horn, trying to switch lanes. Now he has turned down the radio and is yelling in his car about the other people on the road.

PRACTICING THOUGHT DISTORTIONS SKILL

BREAKDOWN OF THOUGHT DISTORTIONS

DEFINITION OF COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS

A cognitive distortion is a thought that does not match reality. It is a way of thinking that changes what is really happening by adding to or subtracting from the event.

WHY ARE COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS A PROBLEM?

- They don't allow you to react to the world the way it really is.
- They add to emotional upheaval.
- They create problems that otherwise would not exist.
- Maybe your mind can't be trusted right now.

A TOP TEN LIST OF DISTORTIONS

- 1. All or nothing:** Seeing things in black and white categories with no room for gray areas; never-ending.
- 2. Over-generalization:** Seeing a single negative event as an unending pattern of defeat.
- 3. Mental filter:** Picking out a single negative detail to dwell on exclusively.
- 4. Discounting the positive:** Rejecting positive experiences by insisting they don't count.
- 5. Jumping to conclusions/mind reading:** Concluding things about circumstances or the thoughts of others even though there are not definite facts that convincingly support your conclusion, or you have not clarified their position.
- 6. Magnification/minimization:** Exaggerating/discounting the importance of statements or events.
- 7. Emotional reasoning:** Assuming that your negative feelings are a representation of the way things really are.
- 8. "Should" statements:** Trying to motivate yourself using words like should, shouldn't, must, or ought.
- 9. Labeling:** Attaching labels to people or events unfairly.
- 10. Personalization:** Seeing yourself as the cause of an external negative event that in fact you are not responsible for.

“UNTWIST MY THINKING” 3-COLUMN TECHNIQUE

EVENT SUMMARY:

THOUGHT	DISTORTION	REPLACEMENT
What I think and feel is...	What this really is...	A better way to look at this is...

MY THOUGHT DISTORTION SKILLS

HOMEWORK

Using the 3-column technique, review an emotion-producing event or use the skill in real time as the event is occurring to untwist your thoughts about it. Notice and label those distortions where they occur and replace those thoughts.

Look back, and read through the left column. Now read through the right column.

Which one feels better to say out loud? Is it also more accurate?

ENCOURAGEMENT:

Untwisting your thoughts can be a lengthy process because individuals typically have thought like this for a very long time and never realized how distorted their thinking was or how it influenced them. You might have more success if you pick out one distortion you often use and work on reducing just that one.

RESOURCES: Adapted from Feeling Good: The New Mood Therapy, David D. Burns, M.D., William Morrow Publishing, 1980.

CONGRATULATIONS!

You've put a lot of work into building a foundation for mental wellness.

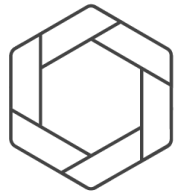
We hope The Resilience Project has increased your ability to sort out crises, choose the correct tool for improving your ability to handle them, and lessen suffering in the moments that can only be accepted.

We also pray that the foundation of peace in the never-ending love of Christ will continue to grow.

**For more information, please contact:
ChristianFamilySolutions.org**



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THE RESILIENCE PROJECT

BY CHRISTIAN FAMILY SOLUTIONS

Thank you for investing your time in this ministry. The Resilience Project simply meets the mental wellness needs of the community by teaching a system of resilience.

We use our gifts and talents as Christians in service to others in the name of our gracious God, and we appreciate you sharing your gifts through The Resilience Project.

Blessings on your work!

**Learn more at
ChristianFamilySolutions.org**

