SKILLS

In the moment: Stay in the moment by letting go of the past and future. Find one thing to do and focus your entire self to that task. A one-track mind helps emotions feel less overwhelming.

Distraction: When you can’t deal with something just yet, it’s okay to push the problem out of your mind temporarily. You can push away by distracting yourself with other activities, thoughts, or mindfulness. You can set a time to come back to the issue. You know that it will be addressed, and you can relax in the interim.

Contributing: Do something kind for another person. Giving service can help you relieve emotional distress in a couple ways. An act of service is also an activity that will help get your mind off of the problem at hand. Additionally, we feel good about ourselves when we help someone else, and that in itself can help you deal with stress.

Thought record: A thought record is a way of putting your thoughts to the test.

It's designed to help you change your moods by finding a more balanced way of thinking about things. In short, you identify thoughts and "put it on trial." The end result of a thought record is a more balanced view.

Self -Soothing: We tense up during stressful situations due to our fight or flight instinct. Engage in relaxing activities to calm the psychological distress you're experiencing. These activities can include deep breathing, yoga, a hot bath, and a relaxing walk.

Temperature: Changing your body temperature will help you cool down—both physically and emotionally. Try splashing your face with cold water, hold an ice cube, or let the car’s AC blow on your face.

Intense exercise: Do intense exercise to match your intense emotion. Sprint down to the end of the street, jump in the pool for a few laps, or do jumping jacks until you’ve tired yourself out. Increasing oxygen flow helps decrease stress levels.

Paced Breathing: Even something as simple as controlling your breath can have a profound impact on reducing emotional pain. Try a technique called “box breathing”. Each breath interval will be four seconds long. Take in air four seconds, hold it in four seconds, breathe out four, and hold four. And then start again. Continue to focus on this breathing pattern until you feel calmer. Steady breathing reduces your body’s fight or flight response.

4-7-8 Breath Relaxation: Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound. Close your mouth and inhale quietly through your nose to a mental count of 4. Hold your breath for a count of 7. Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound to a count of 8. This is one breath. Now inhale again and repeat the cycle three more times for a total of four breaths.

Paired muscle relaxation: When you tighten a voluntary muscle, relax it, and allow it to rest, the muscle will become more relaxed than it was before it was tightened. Relaxed muscles require less oxygen so your breath and heart rate will slow down. Try this technique by focusing on a group of muscles, such as the muscles in your arms. Tighten the muscles as much as you can for five seconds. Then let go of the tension. Let the muscles relax, and you’ll begin to relax, as well.

Opposite Action: Identify the emotion; next identify the action urge that accompanies the emotion. Do you want to punch a person or an object? Isolate yourself? Seek support and call a friend? Identify whether the action urge fits the facts of the situation (not the facts of the emotion). If your emotions and their urges don’t fit the situation, then do the opposite of what the urge wants you to do. Continue to do opposite action until you notice a decrease in your distressing emotions.

Countering Catastrophic Thinking: Putting a stop to this type of distorted thinking by first becoming aware that you’re engaged in it, and then countering that thinking by adopting a reasonable perspective on what’s going on.

Mindfulness: The practice of maintaining a nonjudgmental state of awareness of one's thoughts, emotions, or experiences on a moment-to-moment basis.

Cope ahead: Cope ahead guides you through a rehearsal in your mind. If you can anticipate a hard situation, cope ahead allows you, in advance, to practice what to do in that situation.

DEAR MAN/Communication: Utilizing assertive communication; describe, express, assert, reinforce, mindful, appear confident, and negotiate.

Check the facts: Pause and check the facts before taking action. This means being willing and able to explore whether you’re your emotional reactions fit the facts of the actual situation. Checking the facts also means being willing and able to actively modify your beliefs and assumptions in order to fit the facts. Try to be willing to consider alternative interpretations or explanations for distressing events.

Body Scan: The aim is to be aware of the different regions of your body, and allow yourself to experience how each part feels, without trying to change anything.

5-4-3-2-1 Coping: Use your five senses during times of distress.

Acknowledge **5** things you see around you. Acknowledge **4** things you can touch around you. Acknowledge **3** things you hear. Acknowledge **2** things you can smell. Acknowledge **1** thing you can taste.

Radical Acceptance: Radical acceptance acknowledges that we all have choices, and it sometimes comes down to choosing whether or not we are going to accept the reality of our situation. Sometimes you will have an undesirable situation that won’t change. You may not like it or approve of it, but acceptance will allow you to feel peace and provide you with the space to move on.

Wise Mind: Wise mind is the meeting of emotional mind and reasonable mind. It is the combination of considering both emotions and rationality. The more we reflect on what wise mind has to say, the more likely we are to do what works, and be willing to tolerate any difficulties that arise along the way.

