

Distracting

A way to remember these skills is the phrase “**Wise Mind ACCEPTS.**”

With **A**ctivities:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Focus attention on a task you need to get done. | <input type="checkbox"/> Go out for a meal or eat a favorite food. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rent movies; watch TV. | <input type="checkbox"/> Call or go out with a friend. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clean a room in your house. | <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to your iPod; download music. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Find an event to go to. | <input type="checkbox"/> Build something. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play computer games. | <input type="checkbox"/> Spend time with your children. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go walking. Exercise. | <input type="checkbox"/> Play cards. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Surf the Internet. Write e-mails. | <input type="checkbox"/> Read magazines, books, comics. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play sports. | <input type="checkbox"/> Do crossword puzzles or Sudoku. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

With **C**ontributing:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Find volunteer work to do. | <input type="checkbox"/> Call or send an instant message encouraging someone or just saying hi. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help a friend or family member. | <input type="checkbox"/> Make something nice for someone else. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Surprise someone with something nice (a card, a favor, a hug). | <input type="checkbox"/> Do something thoughtful. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Give away things you don't need. | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

With **C**omparisons:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Compare how you are feeling now to a time when you felt different. | <input type="checkbox"/> Compare yourself to those less fortunate. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Think about people coping the same as you or less well than you. | <input type="checkbox"/> Watch reality shows about others' troubles; read about disasters, others' suffering. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

With different **E**motions:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Read emotional books or stories, old letters. | <i>Ideas:</i> Scary movies, joke books, comedies, funny records, religious music, soothing music or music that fires you up, going to a store and reading funny greeting cards. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Watch emotional TV shows; go to emotional movies. | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to emotional music.
<i>(Be sure the event creates different emotions.)</i> | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

With **P**ushing away:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Push the situation away by leaving it for a while. | <input type="checkbox"/> Notice ruminating: Yell “No!” |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leave the situation mentally. | <input type="checkbox"/> Refuse to think about the painful situations. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Build an imaginary wall between yourself and the situation. | <input type="checkbox"/> Put the pain on a shelf. Box it up and put it away for a while. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Block thoughts and images from your mind. | <input type="checkbox"/> Deny the problem for the moment. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

With other **T**houghts:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Count to 10; count colors in a painting or poster or out the window; count anything. | <input type="checkbox"/> Work puzzles. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Repeat words to a song in your mind. | <input type="checkbox"/> Watch TV or read. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

With other **S**ensations:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Squeeze a rubber ball very hard. | <input type="checkbox"/> Go out in the rain or snow. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to very loud music. | <input type="checkbox"/> Take a hot or cold shower. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hold ice in your hand or mouth. | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Self-Soothing

A way to remember these skills is to think of soothing each of your **FIVE SENSES**.

With Vision:

- Look at the stars at night.
- Look at pictures you like in a book.
- Buy one beautiful flower.
- Make one space in a room pleasing to look at.
- Light a candle and watch the flame.
- Set a pretty place at the table using your best things.
- Go people-watching or window-shopping.
- Go to a museum or poster shop with beautiful art.
- Sit in the lobby of a beautiful old hotel.
- Look at nature around you.
- Walk in a pretty part of town.
- Watch a sunrise or a sunset.
- Go to a dance performance, or watch it on TV.
- Be mindful of each sight that passes in front of you.
- Take a walk in a park or a scenic hike.
- Browse through stores looking at things.
- Other: _____

With Hearing:

- Listen to soothing or invigorating music.
- Pay attention to sounds of nature (waves, birds, rainfall, leaves rustling).
- Pay attention to the sounds of the city (traffic, horns, city music).
- Sing to your favorite songs.
- Hum a soothing tune.
- Learn to play an instrument.
- Burn a CD or make an iPod mix with music that will get you through tough times. Turn it on.
- Be mindful of any sounds that come your way, letting them go in one ear and out the other.
- Turn on the radio.
- Other: _____

With Smell:

- Use your favorite soap, shampoo, aftershave, cologne, or lotions, or try them on in the store.
- Burn incense or light a scented candle.
- Open a package of coffee and inhale the aroma.
- Put lemon oil on your furniture.
- Put potpourri or eucalyptus oil in a bowl in your room.
- Sit in a new car and breathe the aroma.
- Boil cinnamon. Make cookies, bread, or popcorn.
- Smell the roses.
- Walk in a wooded area and mindfully breathe in the fresh smells of nature.
- Open the window and smell the air.
- Other: _____

With Taste:

- Eat some of your favorite foods.
- Drink your favorite soothing drink, such as herbal tea, hot chocolate, a latté, or a smoothie.
- Treat yourself to a dessert.
- Eat macaroni and cheese or another favorite childhood food.
- Sample flavors in an ice cream store.
- Suck on a piece of peppermint candy.
- Chew your favorite gum.
- Get a little bit of a special food you don't usually spend the money on, such as fresh-squeezed orange juice or your favorite candy.
- Really taste the food you eat. Eat one thing mindfully.
- Other: _____

With Touch:

- Take a long hot bath or shower.
- Pet your dog or cat.
- Have a massage. Soak your feet.
- Put creamy lotion on your whole body.
- Put a cold compress on your forehead.
- Sink into a comfortable chair in your home.
- Put on a blouse or shirt that has a pleasant feel.
- Take a drive with the car windows rolled down.
- Run your hand along smooth wood or leather.
- Hug someone.
- Put clean sheets on the bed.
- Wrap up in a blanket.
- Notice touch that is soothing.
- Other: _____

Body Scan Meditation Step by Step

Sit on a chair, or lie on your back on the floor with legs uncrossed. Put your arms in a comfortable position by your side, on your abdomen, or (if sitting) put them on your thighs palms up. Open your eyes partially to let light in. If you are lying on the floor, put a cushion under your knees if need be. Imagine your breath flowing to each part of your body as your attention gently moves up your body. Adopt a mind of curiosity and interest as you focus on each part of your body.

Focus on your breathing. Notice how the air moves in and out of your body.

- Take several deep breaths until you begin to feel comfortable and relaxed.
- Direct your attention to the *toes* of your left foot.
- Notice the sensations in that part of your body while remaining aware of your breathing.
- Imagine each breath flowing to your *toes*.
- Looking with curiosity, ask, “What am I feeling in this part of my body?”
- Focus on your left *toes* for several minutes.

- Then move your focus to the *arch* and *heel* of your left foot, and hold it there for a minute or two while continuing to pay attention to your breathing.
- Notice the sensations on your skin of warmth or coldness; notice the weight of your foot on the floor.
- Imagine your breath flowing to the *arch* and *heel* of your left foot.
- Ask, “What are the feelings in the *arch* and *heel* of my left foot?”

- Follow the same procedure as you move to your left *ankle, calf, knee, upper legs, and thigh*.
- Repeat with the right leg, starting with your *toes*.
- Then move through your *pelvis, and lower back, and around to your stomach*.
- Focus on the rising and falling of your belly as your breath goes in and out.
- Then go on to your *chest; left hand, arm, and shoulder; right hand, arm, and shoulder; neck, chin, tongue, mouth, lips, and lower face; and nose*.
- Notice your breath as it comes in and out of your nostrils.
- Then focus on your upper cheeks, eyes, forehead, and scalp.

- Finally, focus on the very top of your hair.
- Then let go of your body altogether.

Don't worry if you notice that thoughts, sounds, or other sensations come into your awareness. Just notice them and then gently refocus your mind. Don't worry if your mind has been drawn away from the object of your attention and you find yourself thinking about something else (it nearly always happens). Just calmly, gently, but with resolution, turn your mind back to the part of the body you've reached. You may need to bring your attention back over and over. You are not alone in this. It is this bringing of your attention back over and over and over, without judgment or harshness, that is the essential element of the meditation.



Improving the Moment

A way to remember these skills is the word **IMPROVE**.

With Imagery:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Imagine very relaxing scenes. | <input type="checkbox"/> Imagine hurtful emotions draining out of you like water out of a pipe. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Imagine a secret room within yourself. Furnish it the way you like. Close and lock the door on anything that can hurt you. | <input type="checkbox"/> Remember a happy time and imagine yourself in it again; play out the time in your mind again. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Imagine everything going well. | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Make up a calming fantasy world. | |

With Meaning:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Find purpose or meaning in a painful situation. | <input type="checkbox"/> Remember, listen to, or read about spiritual values. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Focus on whatever positive aspects of a painful situation you can find. | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Repeat these positive aspects in your mind. | |

With Prayer:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Open your heart to a supreme being, God, or your own Wise Mind. | <input type="checkbox"/> Turn things over to God or a higher being. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for strength to bear the pain. | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

With Relaxing actions:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Take a hot bath or sit in a hot tub. | <input type="checkbox"/> Breathe deeply. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drink hot milk. | <input type="checkbox"/> Change your facial expression. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Massage your neck and scalp. | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Practice yoga or other stretching. | |

With One thing in the moment:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Focus your entire attention on just what you are doing. | <input type="checkbox"/> Focus your entire attention on the physical |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Keep yourself in the moment. | <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to a sensory awareness recording (or use Distress Tolerance Handout 9a) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Put your mind in the present. | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

With a brief Vacation:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Give yourself a brief vacation. | <input type="checkbox"/> Take a blanket to the park and sit on it for a whole afternoon. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Get in bed; pull the covers up over your head. | <input type="checkbox"/> Take a 1-hour breather from hard work. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go to the beach or the woods for the day. | <input type="checkbox"/> Take a brief vacation from responsibility. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Get a magazine and read it with chocolates. | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Turn off your phone for a day. | |

With self-Encouragement and rethinking the situation:

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|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cheerlead yourself: “You go, girl!” “You da man!” | <input type="checkbox"/> “This too shall pass.” |
| <input type="checkbox"/> “I will make it out of this.” | <input type="checkbox"/> “I will be OK.” |
| <input type="checkbox"/> “I’m doing the best I can.” | <input type="checkbox"/> “It won’t last forever.” |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Repeat over and over: “I can stand it.” | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

List (and then practice) rethoughts that are particularly important in your crisis situations (e.g., “The fact that he did not pick me up doesn’t mean he doesn’t love me”):

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|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|

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Sensory Awareness, Step by Step

Find a comfortable position. Staying in this position, listen to the questions below, listening for your response after each question. If you do not have a recording of these questions, you can make one for yourself (or ask a friend to make one), recording each question with about 5 seconds between each question.

1. Can you feel your hair touching your head?
2. Can you feel your belly rising and falling as you breathe?
3. Can you feel the space between your eyes?
4. Can you feel the distance between your ears?
5. Can you feel your breath touching the back of your eyes while you inhale?
6. Can you picture something far away?
7. Can you notice your arms touching your body?
8. Can you feel the bottoms of your feet?
9. Can you imagine a beautiful day at the beach?
10. Can you notice the space within your mouth?
11. Can you notice the position of your tongue in your mouth?
12. Can you feel a breeze against your cheek?
13. Can you feel how one arm is heavier than the other?
14. Can you feel a tingling or numbness in one hand?
15. Can you feel how one arm is more relaxed than the other?
16. Can you feel a change in the temperature in the air around you?
17. Can you feel how your left arm is warmer than the right?
18. Can you imagine how it would feel to be a rag doll?
19. Can you notice any tightness in your left forearm?
20. Can you imagine something very pleasant?
21. Can you imagine what it would feel like to float on a cloud?
22. Can you imagine what it would feel like to be stuck in molasses?
23. Can you picture something far away?
24. Can you feel a heaviness in your legs?
25. Can you imagine floating in warm water?
26. Can you notice your body hanging on your bones?
27. Can you allow yourself to drift lazily?
28. Can you feel your face getting soft?
29. Can you imagine a beautiful flower?
30. Can you feel how one arm and leg are heavier than the other?

Note. Items 29 and 30 are adapted from Goldfried, M. R., & Davison, G. C. (1976). *Clinical behavior therapy*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston. Copyright 1976 by Marvin R. Goldfried and Gerald C. Davison. Adapted by permission of the authors.

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