

# EMOTION REGULATION HANDOUT 20B

(Emotion Regulation Worksheet 14b)

## Sleep Hygiene Protocol

### When You Can't Sleep, What to Do Instead of Ruminating

#### TO INCREASE THE LIKELIHOOD OF RESTFULNESS/SLEEP:

1. **Develop and follow a consistent sleep schedule even on weekends.** Go to bed and get up at the same times each day, and avoid anything longer than a 10-minute nap during the day.
2. **Do not use your bed in the daytime** for things like watching TV, talking on the phone, or reading.
3. **Avoid** caffeine, nicotine, alcohol, heavy meals, and exercise late in the day before going to sleep.
4. **When prepared to sleep, turn off the light, and keep the room quiet and the temperature comfortable and relatively cool.** Try an electric blanket if you are cold; putting your feet outside of the blanket or turning on a fan directed toward your bed if you are hot; or wearing a sleeping mask, using earplugs, or turning on a “white noise” machine if needed.
5. **Give yourself half an hour to at most an hour to fall asleep.** If it doesn't work, evaluate whether you are calm, or anxious (even if only “background anxiety”), or ruminating.
6. **DO NOT CATASTROPHIZE.** Remind yourself that you need rest, and aim for reverie (i.e., dreaminess) and resting your brain. Sell yourself on the idea that staying awake is not a catastrophe. Do not decide to give up on sleeping for the night and get up for the “day.”

#### IF YOU ARE CALM BUT WIDE AWAKE:

7. **Get out of bed; go to another room and read a book** or do some other activity that will not wake you up further. As you begin to get tired and/or sleepy, go back to bed.
8. **Try a light snack** (e.g., an apple).

#### IF YOU ARE ANXIOUS OR RUMINATING

9. **Use the cold water TIP skill. Get right back in bed and do the paced breathing TIP skill.**

*(See Distress Tolerance Handout 6: TIP Skills: Changing Your Body Chemistry.)*

Remember, if you have any medical condition, get medical approval before using cold water.

10. **Try the 9–0 meditation practice.** Breathe in deeply and breathe out slowly, saying in your mind the number 9. On the next breath out, say 8; then say 7; and so on until you breathe out saying 0. Then start over, but this time start with 8 (instead of 9) as you breathe out, followed by 7, and so on until you reach 0. Next start with 6 as you breathe out, and so on to 0. Then start with 5, then with 4, and so on until you have gone all the way down to starting with 1. (If you get lost, start over with the last number you remember.) Continue until you fall asleep.
11. **Focus on the bodily sensation** of the rumination (rumination is often escape from difficult emotional sensations).
12. **Reassure yourself** that worries in the middle of the night are just “middle-of-the-night-thinking,” and that in the morning you will think and feel differently.
13. **Read an emotionally engrossing novel** for a few minutes until you feel somewhat tired. Then stop reading, close your eyes, and try to continue the novel in your head.
14. **If rumination doesn't stop,** follow these guidelines: “If it's solvable, solve it. If it is insolvable, go deep into the worry all the way to the “catastrophe”—the very worst outcome you can imagine—and then imagine coping ahead with the catastrophe.

*(See Emotion Regulation Handout 19: Build Mastery and Cope Ahead.)*

**If nothing else works, with eyes closed, listen to public radio (BBC, NPR, etc.)** at low volume (use headphones if necessary). Public radio is a good choice for this, because there is little fluctuation in voice tone or volume.

# DISTRESS TOLERANCE HANDOUT 15



(Distress Tolerance Worksheets 8, 8a, 12)

## Mindfulness of Current Thoughts

### 1. OBSERVE YOUR THOUGHTS.

- As waves, coming and going.
- Not suppressing thoughts.
- Not judging thoughts.
- Acknowledging their presence.
- Not keeping thoughts around.
- Not analyzing thoughts.
- Practicing willingness.
- Stepping back and observing thoughts as they run in and out of your mind.

### 2. ADOPT A CURIOUS MIND.

- Ask, "Where do my thoughts come from?" Watch and see.
- Notice that every thought that comes also goes out of your mind.
- Observe but do not evaluate your thoughts. Let go of judgments.

### 3. REMEMBER: YOU ARE NOT YOUR THOUGHTS.

- Do not necessarily act on thoughts.
- Remember times when you have had very different thoughts.
- Remind yourself that catastrophic thinking is "emotion mind."
- Remember how you think when you are not feeling such intense suffering and pain.

### 4. DON'T BLOCK OR SUPPRESS THOUGHTS.

- Ask, "What sensations are these thoughts trying to avoid?" Turn your mind to the sensation. Then come back to the thought. Repeat several times.
- Step back; allow your thoughts to come and go as you observe your breath.
- Play with your thoughts: Repeat them out loud over and over as fast as you can. Sing them. Imagine the thoughts as the words of a clown, as recordings getting all tangled up; as cute animals you can cuddle up to; as bright colors running through your mind; as only sounds.
- Try loving your thoughts.

## **Practicing Mindfulness of Thoughts**

### **PRACTICE MINDFULNESS OF THOUGHTS BY OBSERVING THEM**

- 1. Notice thoughts as they come into your mind. As a thought comes into your mind, say “a thought has entered my mind.” Label the thought as a thought, saying, “The thought [describe thought] arose in my mind.” Use a gentle voice tone.
- 2. As you notice thoughts in your mind, ask, “Where did the thought come from?” Then watch your mind to see if you can see where it came from.
- 3. Step back from your mind, as if you are on top of a mountain and your mind is just a boulder down below. Gaze at your mind, watching what thoughts come up when you are watching it. Come back into your mind before you stop.
- 4. Close your eyes and scan your body for the first physical sensation that you notice. Then scan your mind for the first thought you notice. Shuttle back and forth between scanning for physical sensations and scanning for thoughts. Another time, replace scanning your body for physical sensations to scanning yourself for any emotional feelings. Then shuttle back and forth between an emotional feeling and a thought.

### **PRACTICE MINDFULNESS OF THOUGHTS BY USING WORDS AND VOICE TONE**

- 5. Verbalize thoughts or beliefs out loud, using a nonjudgmental voice tone, over and over and over:
  - As fast as you can until the thoughts make no sense.
  - Very, very slowly (one syllable or word per breath).
  - In a different voice from yours (high- or low-pitched, like a cartoon character or celebrity).
  - As a dialogue on a TV comedy show (“You’ll never believe what thought went through my mind. I was thinking, ‘I’m a jerk.’ Can you believe that?”).
  - As songs, sung wholeheartedly and dramatically, in a tune that fits the thoughts.

### **PRACTICE MINDFULNESS OF THOUGHTS WITH OPPOSITE ACTION**

- 6. Relax your face and body while imagining accepting your thoughts as only thoughts—sensations of the brain.
- 7. Imagine things you would do if you stopped believing everything you think.
- 8. Rehearse in your mind the things that you would do if you did not view your thoughts as facts.
- 9. Practice loving your thoughts as they go through your mind.

***(continued on next page)***

**PRACTICE MINDFULNESS OF THOUGHTS BY IMAGINING THAT YOUR MIND IS:**

- 10. A conveyor belt, and that thoughts and feelings are coming down the belt. Put each thought or feeling in a box labeled with the type of thought that it is (e.g., worry thoughts, thoughts about my past, thoughts about my mother, planning what to do thoughts). Just keep observing and sorting thoughts into the labeled boxes.
- 11. A river, and that thoughts and feelings are boats going down the river. Imagine sitting on the grass, watching the boats go by. Try not to jump on the boat.
- 12. A railroad track, and that thoughts and feelings are train cars going by. Try not to jump on the train.
- 13. A leaf that has dropped off a tree into a beautiful creek flowing by you as you sit on the grass. Each time a thought or image comes into your mind, imagine that it is written or pictured on the leaf floating by. Let each leaf go by, watching as it goes out of sight.
- 14. The sky, and thoughts have wings and can fly through the sky. Watch as each flies out of sight.
- 15. The sky, and thoughts are clouds. Notice each thought-cloud as it drifts by, letting it drift out of your mind.
- 16. A white room with two doors. Through one door, thoughts come in; through the other, thoughts go out. Watch each thought with attention and curiosity until it leaves. Let go of judgments. Let go of analyzing thoughts and of figuring out if they fit the facts. As a thought comes into your mind, say, "A thought has entered my mind."

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

# DISTRESS TOLERANCE HANDOUT 6



(Distress Tolerance Worksheet 4)

## 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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# DISTRESS TOLERANCE HANDOUT 6A

(Distress Tolerance Worksheet 4)

## Using Cold Water, Step by Step

### COLD WATER CAN WORK WONDERS\*

When you put your full face into cold water . . . **or** you put a zip-lock bag with cold water on your eyes and upper cheeks, and **hold your breath**, it tells your brain you are diving underwater.

This causes the “**dive response**” to occur. (It may take 15–30 seconds to start.)

Your heart slows down, blood flow to nonessential organs is reduced, and blood flow is redirected to the brain and heart.

This response can actually help **regulate your emotions**.

This will be useful as a **distress tolerance strategy** when you are having a very **strong, distressing emotion**, or when you are having very **strong urges to engage in dangerous behaviors**.

(This strategy works best when you are sitting quietly—activity and distraction may make it less effective.)

**TRY IT OUT!**

**\*Caution:** Very cold water decreases your heart rate. If you have any heart or medical condition, have a lowered base heart rate due to medications, or are on a beta-blocker, consult your health care provider before using these skills. Avoid ice water if you are allergic to the cold.

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