

Dialectical Behavior Therapy – Emotion Regulation Skills

Guided Mindfulness Practice

Practicing Mindfulness to Current Emotion

- ★ Mindfulness to current emotion is about observing your own emotions non-judgmentally and without reacting to them. The goal is to become more aware of the intensity, duration, and sensations emotions cause, which are elements that help you to better understand your emotional experience.

Getting ready to practice mindfulness

- ★ Get seated comfortably with feet flat on ground, back straight, body relaxed, eyes open and looking slightly downward on a single spot
- ★ As you breathe, rather than drawing your breath into your chest and hunching up your shoulders. I want you to inhale the air into your stomach, letting the air fill your stomach like a balloon, and then as you breathe out flatten your stomach as you would if you were trying to suck in your gut, using your stomach muscles to push the breath slowly and controlled out of your stomach until it is completely empty.
- ★ Before you actually practice. Read the script to get familiar with the practice if you are doing the practice alone or if you are leading the practice, you can read the script aloud while those you are guiding follow along.
- ★ If you are guiding others, use a mindfulness bell or mindfulness bell app to signify the beginning and end of the practice. Ring it 3 times to start and 1 time to end the practice. If you do not have a mindfulness bell or smartphone to download an app, you can use any sound you wish like snapping your fingers, for example, to signal beginning and end of the practice.

Guided Script

First I want you to take a breath as deeply and slowly as possible in through your nose and as you get your lungs as full as possible, pause for a moment, then breathe out as slowly and controlled as you can also out your nose pausing slightly before inhaling again. Now, as you take a second breath, I want you to notice the emotion you are experiencing right now. Now Label that emotion by its name as you exhale. For me the emotion I notice is anxiety. Now as you continue to breathe in and out as deeply and as slowly as possible, I want you to imagine that your emotion is an ocean wave rolling in from sea and you are sitting upon the shore watching the wave of emotion, just observing it. As you watch the wave of emotion, notice the intensity of the wave of emotion. Is it like an incoming tide, full and intense or is it a low tide wave gently lapping upon the shore? Just notice its intensity without judging it or losing sight of your breathe. You are simply an observer. If you have an urge to respond or react to the emotion, that is okay. Just notice the urge and try to turn your mind back toward observing your emotion. Now turn your mind toward your body, what does it feel like in your body as you observe your emotion. Are your muscles tense or relaxed, and if so which muscles are they? Just notice the sensations the emotion causes, again without either judging or responding to any urges the emotion may cause, you are just observing. Continue breathing deeply and slowly until I ring the mindfulness bell once.