

Managing Big Emotions and Behavioral Activation

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Coping Skills for Stress and Anxiety

Our thoughts play a big role in the feelings that we have - a lot of times, they're responsible for us getting stuck in a feeling. For example, when we continue to think about a future situation that's causing us anxiety, we will continue to feel anxious. Doing something different can help you get your mind off the triggering situation and will help the intensity of your emotion to go down. Pay attention to the things you enjoy instead of what is causing the intense emotion.

Directions: Check off all of the skills below that you find helpful when you are stressed or anxious. Consider posting this list somewhere visible or keeping it with you to refer to when needed. It can be hard to remember these when we are feeling these emotions most intensely.

- Listen to your favorite playlist
- Watch a funny video
- Draw, paint or sketch
- Write in your journal
- Read for fun or to learn something new
- Visualize a calm, relaxing place in your mind
- Take a walk outside
- Meditate or practice other forms of Mindfulness
- Splash cold water on your face
- Take a hot or cold shower
- Do something nice for someone else
- Challenge your brain with a puzzle or wordsearch
- Exercise: go for a jog, play basketball, do jumping jacks, dance, or practice yoga
- Stretch your body
- Light a candle or incense
- Take a warm bath
- Listen to calming music
- Play with clay or slime
- Talk to a friend
- Play an instrument
- Close your eyes and feel the sun on your face
- Sing
- Drink a cold glass of water
- Drink a warm cup of tea
- Ride a bike, scooter or skateboard
- What others can you think of?

Reflection: Write about or discuss the coping skills you are planning to use this week when you are feeling stressed or anxious. What can you do to help yourself remember to use them?

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Behavioral Activation Activity List

Below are some ideas for fun activities to boost your mood. Check off the ones you think you might enjoy. Then, schedule time for an enjoyable activity each day. Complete the tracker to monitor your mood changes pre- and post-activity. Remember positive behaviors lead to positive emotions.

- Read a book
- Go on a walk
- Play a musical instrument
- Draw a picture
- Exercise
- Do a word search
- Watch a movie
- Listen to music
- Do a virtual museum tour
- Have a dance party
- Do a body scan
- Do yoga
- Practice mindfulness
- Look at pictures
- Bake
- Write a story
- Make a collage
- Practice mindful eating
- Play a board game
- Text or call a friend
- Make a card for someone
- Go for a bike ride
- Write in your journal
- Play video games
- Go to the park
- Cook
- Take a bath
- Paint a picture
- Sing
- Make a gift for someone
- Do a guided meditation
- Write a poem
- Play with a pet
- Play a game online with friends
- What others can you add?

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My Daily Activity Schedule Template

Refer to your Behavioral Activation Activity List then schedule time for enjoyable activities each day. Then schedule time for an enjoyable activity each day. Complete the tracker to monitor your mood changes pre- and post-activity. Remember positive behaviors lead to positive emotions.

What's the day of the week?	
What's the time of day?	
What activity did I choose?	
What am I feeling and how intensely pre-activity?	How Do I feel? Rate intensity 1-10
What am I feeling and how intensely post-activity?	How Do I feel? Rate intensity 1-10

Cycle of an Emotion

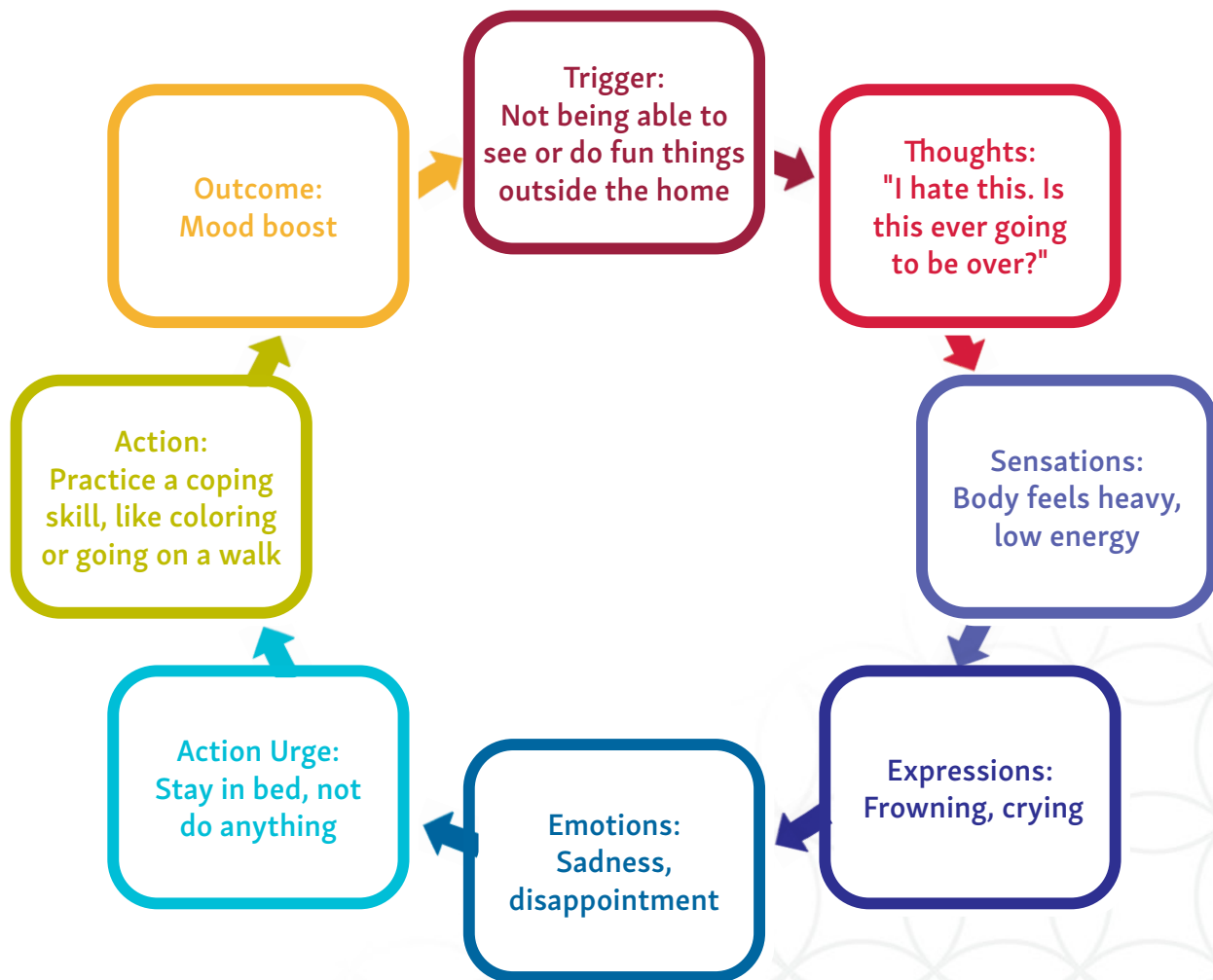


Adapted from Rathus, J. H., & Miller, A. L. (2014). DBT Skills Manual for Adolescents. Guilford Publications.

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Cycle of an Emotion

Example: Sadness



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