

Self-Soothing

DBT: Distress Tolerance Skills

When you're feeling overwhelmed or distressed, the Self-Soothing skill offers ways to calm down using your five senses. This worksheet helps you plan and practice effective ways to self-soothe during difficult times. When calm, circle or highlight any ideas you think might help when you are very distressed. When you are very distressed, try one or more selected skills and check them off. Use the next page to reflect on how well they worked for you when the crisis has passed.



Vision

- Walk somewhere you find beautiful, like a park or your favorite neighborhood
- Watch a sunrise or sunset
- Look at pictures that you find meaningful
- Watch the birds or squirrels nearby
- Go people-watching or window shopping
- Go to a museum or shop with beautiful art
- Watch a nature video or livestream
- Look around the lobby or facade of a beautiful building
- Make part of your home lovely to look at
- Watch a video of athletes or dancers
- Watch a campfire (or video of one)
- Light a candle and see the glowing flame



Hearing

- Make a playlist of music that soothes you, energizes you, or helps you stay strong
- Close your eyes and identify as many sounds as you can
- Sing or hum songs that you love
- Play an instrument
- Listen to a genre of music new to you
- Listen for birdsong, rustling leaves, etc.
- Listen to a nature video or livestream
- Listen to a guided meditation or mantras
- Listen to the radio or podcasts
- Go to a busy place and eavesdrop
- Listen to your favorite movie score or videogame background music



Smell

- Smell your favorite soap, shampoo, perfume, cologne, lotion, etc.
- Burn a candle or incense
- Smell flowers, herbs, pine trees, etc.
- Smell your favorite essential oils
- Do your laundry and enjoy the fresh smell
- Brew coffee or tea
- Make a simmer pot on the stove
- Bake something and enjoy the aroma
- Clean with pleasant-smelling products



Taste

- Eat or drink your favorite things
- Eat a favorite food from your childhood
- Enjoy a mint, gum, or sour candy
- Eat something spicy
- Try a food completely unfamiliar to you
- Eat frozen berries or grapes



Touch

- Take a hot bath or shower
- Put clean sheets on your bed or put on clean pajamas or loungewear
- Curl up with a cozy blanket on the couch
- Put on clothes that feel good on your skin
- Get a hug or pet your dog or cat
- Use a weighted blanket
- Feel wind, rain, or sunlight on your face
- Exfoliate, shave, use lotion or aftershave, do your skincare routine, etc.
- Get a massage, manicure, or pedicure
- Put an icepack or heat on tired muscles
- Use a head scratcher
- Do crafts (clay, wood carving, knitting, etc.)



Use this page to record your practice of the Self-Soothing Skill.

Describe the stressful situation. What happened and how are you feeling?	Which Self-Soothing skill did you try?	Rate the effectiveness of the skill	Notes
	<input type="checkbox"/> Vision <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing <input type="checkbox"/> Smell <input type="checkbox"/> Taste <input type="checkbox"/> Touch	☆☆☆☆☆	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Vision <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing <input type="checkbox"/> Smell <input type="checkbox"/> Taste <input type="checkbox"/> Touch	☆☆☆☆☆	
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	<input type="checkbox"/> Vision <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing <input type="checkbox"/> Smell <input type="checkbox"/> Taste <input type="checkbox"/> Touch	☆☆☆☆☆	



Scan or [click here](#) to learn more about DBT:

*This worksheet provides information but is not a substitute for therapy. It works best with guidance from a professional.

Additional Resources to Support Your Mental Health Journey

It can be hard to know where to begin looking for support in your mental health journey. Getting a referral from a primary care physician is a reliable first step. Also, sometimes family and friends have experienced similar issues and have professionals they would recommend. The experts at ChoosingTherapy.com are here to help as well, with resources we have reviewed and recommend. Our [strict editorial standards](#) ensure our reviews are fair, honest, thorough, and based on firsthand experience.

You Can Trust ChoosingTherapy.com



325+
Companies Reviewed



3,625+
Hours of Firsthand Experience



1,545+
Data Points Analyzed



[Best Online Therapy](#)

Online therapy is a convenient way to connect with a licensed therapist to address mental health issues, reduce unhealthy behaviors, develop effective coping skills, and get more satisfaction out of life. Many companies accept insurance and most have next-day appointments available.

[Best Online Psychiatry](#)

Online psychiatry providers enable patients to consult with licensed psychiatrists and other mental health professionals. They can evaluate, diagnose, and prescribe medication to help manage mental health issues. Many companies accept insurance and most have next-day appointments available.



[Best Mental Health Apps](#)

Apps can be great way to monitor mood, track sleep, journal, and practice healthy coping skills like mindfulness and meditation. There are apps specifically designed to help people reduce the symptoms of depression, anxiety, ADHD, chronic stress, and burnout.

[Therapist Directory](#)

When you're looking for a mental health provider with a very particular skill set, level of experience, or personality type, a therapist directory can be very helpful. Using the filters, you can refine your search until you find a therapist who feels like a perfect fit.





Tools for Self-Assessment and Psychoeducation

Figuring out the next step in your mental health journey can be overwhelming. Developed by psychologists, the tools at [ChoosingTherapy.com](https://choosingtherapy.com) can help. Our mental health self-assessment quizzes can help you explore common symptoms of mental health concerns, as well as find the best therapy style for you. Our mental health worksheets can guide you through therapy concepts and how to use them in your life.

[Learn More with Mental Health Quizzes](#)

Our collection of psychologist-developed mental health quizzes can help you learn if you are experiencing mild, moderate, or concerning levels of anxiety, depression, stress, burnout, and more. Each quiz also provides targeted resources based on your answers. These self-assessments are designed to offer insight, not diagnoses, and can be a helpful first step in recognizing symptoms and deciding whether to seek further support. If you have concerns about your mental health or your quiz results, we recommend you reach out to a licensed mental health professional.



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