WORKSHEET 75 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Naming my emotion

Breaking an emotion down to understand it better

AIM

Help the person observe and describe an emotion in parts (trigger, interpretation, sensations, urge, action, consequences), to recognise it sooner and name it precisely.

WHO IT IS FOR

Intense or confusing emotions, difficulty identifying what you feel. Adults and adolescents.

DURATION

15 min in session; after emotional moments

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Start from a recent emotional moment.
2. Break it down: trigger, interpretation, sensations, urge, what was done, consequences.
3. Look for the most precise word for the emotion (and its intensity).
4. Repeat with several situations to spot patterns.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Naming an emotion validates it; avoid judging it as “good” or “bad”. With very overwhelmed people, start with emotions of moderate intensity.

REFERENCES

Linehan, M. M. (2015). DBT Skills Training Manual (2nd ed.). Guilford.

Linehan, M. M. (1993). Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment of Borderline Personality Disorder. Guilford.

PSYCHOLOGIST’S NOTES

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WORKSHEET 75 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Naming my emotion

An emotion is a whole chain: something happens, we interpret it, the body reacts and we feel like acting. Breaking it down helps you recognise it sooner and choose better what to do.

1. What happened (the trigger).
2. What I thought and what I felt in my body.
3. What I felt like doing, and what I did.
4. The most precise name for my emotion and its intensity (0 to 10).

Trigger	Thought	Body	Urge	Emotion /10

Which emotions come up most, and with which triggers?

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WORKSHEET 76 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

What are my emotions for?

Understanding the message of each emotion

AIM

Present the functions of emotions (communicating, preparing for action, giving information about oneself) to reduce judgement of them and encourage listening to them.

WHO IT IS FOR

People who judge or fear their emotions, or believe they are useless.

DURATION

15 min in session

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Introduce three functions: emotions communicate to others, prepare us to act and tell us what matters.
2. For a few emotions (fear, anger, sadness, shame, joy), look for their message together.
3. Apply it to a recent emotion of the person's.
4. Distinguish listening to the message from obeying the urge.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Listening to an emotion doesn't mean its message is always correct: worksheet 84 (checking the facts) complements this one.

REFERENCES

Linehan, M. M. (2015). DBT Skills Training Manual (2nd ed.). Guilford.

Barlow, D. H., Sauer-Zavala, S., Farchione, T. J. et al. (2018). Unified Protocol for Transdiagnostic Treatment of Emotional Disorders: Therapist Guide (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

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WORKSHEET 76 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

What are my emotions for?

Emotions are not enemies. They have functions: alerting others, preparing us to act, telling us what matters. Understanding their message helps you fight them less.

1. Fear protects from a danger; anger defends a limit; sadness signals a loss; joy shows what does you good.
2. Choose a recent emotion.
3. What was its message?
4. Was that message correct? What do I want to do with it?

Emotion	Its message	Correct? (yes/no/partly)	What I do with it

Which emotion do I find hardest to accept, and what does it tell me?

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WORKSHEET 77 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Looking after my body to be overwhelmed less

Reducing emotional vulnerability in daily life

AIM

Help the person spot the physical factors that make them more vulnerable to intense emotions (sleep, food, illness, substances, physical activity) and put small protective habits in place.

WHO IT IS FOR

Intense, changeable emotions, irritability, frequent crises.

DURATION

15 min in session; follow-up over two weeks

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Explain that a tired, hungry or ill body reacts more strongly to emotions.
2. Review five areas: health, food, alcohol and drugs, sleep, physical activity.
3. Choose one or two small, realistic changes.
4. Track them every day with the table on page 2.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Don’t present these habits as the answer to everything or make the person feel guilty. If there is significant substance use or an eating disorder, refer to appropriate help.

REFERENCES

Linehan, M. M. (2015). DBT Skills Training Manual (2nd ed.). Guilford.

Harvey, A. G. (2002). A cognitive model of insomnia. Behaviour Research and Therapy, 40(8), 869-893.

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WORKSHEET 77 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Looking after my body to be overwhelmed less

When we sleep badly, skip meals or are ill, emotions overflow more quickly. Looking after your body is a simple way of protecting your emotional balance.

1. Health: I look after what needs looking after (doctor, treatment).
2. Food: regular meals.
3. Alcohol and drugs: I limit what destabilises my emotions.
4. Sleep and movement: regular times and some activity every day.

Day	Sleep (h)	Regular meals? (yes/no)	Physical activity	Emotions /10

Which small change helps my mood most?

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WORKSHEET 78 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Building up positive moments

Creating pleasant emotions in daily life and a life that matters

AIM

Increase pleasant experiences in the short term and values-based activities in the long term, to reduce vulnerability to painful emotions.

WHO IT IS FOR

Frequent difficult emotions, life centred on managing crises.

DURATION

15 min in session; daily

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Distinguish the short term (one pleasant activity every day) from the long term (moving towards values).
2. List accessible pleasant activities.
3. Plan at least one a day and a small step towards a value each week.
4. Practise being present during the activity, without ruminating.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Pleasant activities must not become yet another obligation. Adjust if mood is very low (small steps).

REFERENCES

Linehan, M. M. (2015). DBT Skills Training Manual (2nd ed.). Guilford.

Martell, C. R., Dimidjian, S. & Herman-Dunn, R. (2010). Behavioral Activation for Depression: A Clinician's Guide. Guilford.

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WORKSHEET 78 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Building up positive moments

When life revolves around crises, pleasant moments get forgotten. Adding them deliberately, every day, makes you stronger in the face of difficult emotions.

1. A list of small, accessible pleasures (some music, a walk, a coffee with someone).
2. At least one pleasant moment a day, planned in advance.
3. During that moment, I stay present: I notice what is pleasant.
4. Every week, a small step towards something that matters to me.

Day	Planned pleasant moment	Done? (yes/no)	Pleasure /10

Which pleasant moments do I want to keep?

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WORKSHEET 79 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Bringing the body's intensity down (TIP)

Acting quickly on the body when emotion is extreme

AIM

Offer quick techniques that act on physiology when emotion is extreme: temperature (cold water on the face), brief intense exercise, slow breathing, muscle relaxation.

WHO IT IS FOR

Intense emotional crises, urges to act impulsively or dangerously.

DURATION

A few minutes, during the crisis; prior practice in session

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Check medical contraindications before suggesting cold or intense exercise (heart problems, eating disorders, pregnancy, etc.).
2. Introduce the four techniques and practise them in session when the person is calm.
3. Help them choose the one that works best and prepare what they need (a bowl of cold water, a place to move).
4. Remind them that the aim is to bring the intensity down so that other skills can be used afterwards.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Cold water on the face slows the heart rate: ask for a medical opinion if there are heart problems, treatments acting on the heart or an eating disorder. Never use cold for long or in a dangerous way.

REFERENCES

Linehan, M. M. (2015). DBT Skills Training Manual (2nd ed.). Guilford.

Linehan, M. M. (2015). DBT Skills Training Handouts and Worksheets (2nd ed.). Guilford.

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WORKSHEET 79 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Bringing the body's intensity down

Best done with your psychologist

When an emotion is extreme, thinking becomes almost impossible. Acting on the body first can bring the intensity down within a few minutes. Practise when you are calm, and check with your psychologist or your doctor that these techniques are suitable for you.

1. Cold: cold water on your face (20 to 30 seconds), holding your breath a little. Not if you have heart problems.
2. Movement: a few minutes of intense effort (walking fast, stairs), if your health allows.
3. Slow breathing: breathing out for longer than you breathe in.
4. Releasing the muscles: tensing and letting go, from head to toe.

Situation	Technique used	Emotion before /10	Emotion after /10

Which technique helps me most to come down?

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WORKSHEET 80 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Distracting myself on purpose

Getting through an emotional peak without making things worse

AIM

Build a list of useful distraction activities (activities, helping others, comparisons, opposite emotions, pushing away, thoughts, sensations) to get through an emotional peak without acting impulsively.

WHO IT IS FOR

Emotional crises, urges, moments when the problem can't be solved straight away.

DURATION

15 min in session to prepare the list

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Explain the difference between lasting avoidance and distracting yourself while a wave passes.
2. Build a personal, varied, concrete list, to keep on the phone.
3. Plan options for different places (home, work, outside).
4. After the crisis, go back to the problem once the intensity has dropped.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Distraction is a crisis tool, not a permanent strategy: if it becomes the only way of handling emotions, it maintains avoidance.

REFERENCES

Linehan, M. M. (2015). DBT Skills Training Manual (2nd ed.). Guilford.

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WORKSHEET 80 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Distracting myself on purpose

When an emotion is too strong and you can't solve anything at that moment, distracting yourself on purpose helps you let the wave pass without making things worse. Prepare your list in advance.

1. Activities that absorb your attention (tidying, drawing, a series, a game).
2. Doing something for someone (helping, sending a kind message).
3. Changing emotion (a funny video, energetic music).
4. Changing thoughts or sensations (counting, reading, a shower, holding an ice cube).

My list: at home	At work or in class	Outside

What helped me most to let the wave pass?

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WORKSHEET 81 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Soothing myself with the five senses

Comforting yourself with pleasant sensations

AIM

Help the person build a sensory “calm kit” (sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch) to soothe themselves gently during a difficult moment.

WHO IT IS FOR

Emotional distress, difficulty comforting oneself.

DURATION

15 min in session; use when needed

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Explore what soothes the person through each sense.
2. Build a list or a real box (objects, photos, smells, music).
3. Practise using one sense mindfully for 2-3 minutes.
4. Plan when to use it.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Some people find it hard to allow themselves comfort: explore the beliefs (“I don’t deserve it”) kindly. Avoid forms of comfort that become harmful (excessive food, alcohol).

REFERENCES

Linehan, M. M. (2015). DBT Skills Training Manual (2nd ed.). Guilford.

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WORKSHEET 81 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Soothing myself with the five senses

When things go badly, we often forget to comfort ourselves. Your senses can help: a smell, some music, a soft texture. Prepare your “calm kit” in advance.

1. Sight and hearing: a photo, a landscape, some music, a calm sound.
2. Smell and taste: a smell you like, a hot drink sipped slowly.
3. Touch: a blanket, an animal, a hot shower, a cream.
4. I choose one and give it my full attention for a few minutes.

Sense	What soothes me	Where to find it

What soothes me fastest?

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WORKSHEET 82 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Radical acceptance

Fully accepting what cannot be changed

AIM

Help the person fully accept a reality that cannot be changed (the past, a loss, a situation), to reduce the suffering added by refusal, without approving or resigning themselves.

WHO IT IS FOR

Persistent refusal of a painful reality ("it isn't fair", "it shouldn't have happened"), rumination about the past.

DURATION

15-20 min in session; repeated practice

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Distinguish what can be changed (to be solved) from what cannot (to be accepted).
2. Show how refusal ("it shouldn't be like this") adds suffering to pain.
3. Offer concrete ways of accepting: saying it to oneself, adopting an open posture, noticing the resistance in the body.
4. Explain that acceptance is repeated: you "turn the mind" towards acceptance each time it goes back to refusal.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Accepting doesn't mean approving, forgiving or staying in a dangerous situation. With trauma or serious injustice, go slowly and validate the anger.

REFERENCES

Linehan, M. M. (2015). DBT Skills Training Manual (2nd ed.). Guilford.

Hayes, S. C., Strosahl, K. D. & Wilson, K. G. (2012). Acceptance and Commitment Therapy: The Process and Practice of Mindful Change (2nd ed.). Guilford.

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WORKSHEET 82 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Radical acceptance

Some things can't be changed: the past, a loss, a decision that doesn't depend on you. Refusing reality ("it shouldn't have happened") adds suffering. Accepting it fully, without approving of it, can be freeing.

1. What I refuse to accept: _____
2. Can I change it? If so: I look for a solution. If not: I work on acceptance.
3. I tell myself: "It is what it is. I don't like it, and it is what it is."
4. I notice the resistance in my body and let it go a little.

What I refuse	Can it change? (yes/no)	Suffering from refusing /10	After accepting /10

What would become possible if I accepted this?

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WORKSHEET 83 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

For and against the urge

Thinking about the consequences before acting in the heat of the moment

AIM

Prepare in advance, in a calm state, an analysis of the pros and cons of acting on an urge (and of resisting it), to consult during a crisis.

WHO IT IS FOR

Repeated impulsive behaviours (anger outbursts, shopping, substance use, risky behaviour, self-harm).

DURATION

15 min in session; rereading in the situation

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Choose an urge that keeps coming back.
2. Fill in the four boxes while calm: acting / not acting, pros / cons, short and long term.
3. Make the long-term consequences visible, as they get forgotten in the heat of emotion.
4. Keep the worksheet to hand and reread it when the urge appears.

POINTS TO WATCH

> If there is self-harm or dangerous behaviour, this worksheet complements but does not replace a safety plan (worksheet 89) and follow-up.

REFERENCES

Linehan, M. M. (2015). DBT Skills Training Manual (2nd ed.). Guilford.

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WORKSHEET 83 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

For and against the urge

In the heat of emotion we only see the immediate relief. Preparing a list of pros and cons when calm helps you remember the long term when the urge comes.

1. The urge that keeps coming back: _____
2. Fill in the four boxes, calmly.
3. Circle what matters most to you in the long term.
4. Carry the worksheet with you and reread it when the urge comes.

Acting: pros	Acting: cons	Resisting: pros	Resisting: cons

What I want to remind myself when the urge comes:

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WORKSHEET 84 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Checking the facts

Does my emotion fit the situation?

AIM

Help the person check whether the emotion and its intensity fit the facts of the situation, distinguishing facts from interpretations, so as to adjust their response.

WHO IT IS FOR

Intense emotions triggered by interpretations (rejection, threat, injustice).

DURATION

15 min

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Describe the event, keeping only the observable facts.
2. Identify the interpretations and assumptions added.
3. Ask: is there a real threat? How likely is it? What would be the worst consequence, and could I cope with it?
4. Conclude: does the emotion fit the facts? If so, solve the problem; if not, try opposite action (worksheet 21).

POINTS TO WATCH

> Don’t invalidate: an emotion can fit the facts. In that case, the priority is solving the problem or protecting oneself.

REFERENCES

Linehan, M. M. (2015). DBT Skills Training Manual (2nd ed.). Guilford.

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WORKSHEET 84 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Checking the facts

Sometimes an emotion fits perfectly with what is happening. At other times it reacts mainly to our interpretation. Checking the facts helps you know whether the emotion is a real alarm or a false alarm.

1. What happened, just the facts (what a camera would have recorded).
2. What I interpreted or assumed.
3. Is there a real threat? Is it likely? Could I cope with it?
4. Does my emotion fit the facts? If so: I solve the problem. If not: I try opposite action (worksheet 21).

Facts	Interpretation	Does the emotion fit? (yes/no/partly)	What I do

Which interpretations come up most often for me?

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WORKSHEET 85 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Understanding a behaviour link by link

Chain analysis

AIM

Analyse in detail the chain of events, thoughts, emotions and sensations that led to a problem behaviour, to identify the points at which a different response was possible.

WHO IT IS FOR

Repeated problem behaviours (self-harm, anger outbursts, substance use, risky behaviour). With a psychologist.

DURATION

30-45 min in session

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Define the problem behaviour precisely.
2. Identify the vulnerability factors (sleep, conflicts, substances) and the trigger.
3. Reconstruct each link: thought, emotion, sensation, action, up to the behaviour and its consequences.
4. Identify at each link a skill that could have changed what followed, and prepare a plan for next time.

POINTS TO WATCH

> The analysis is done with curiosity and without judgement; it can be painful. It belongs within structured follow-up, especially if there is self-harm or suicide risk.

REFERENCES

Linehan, M. M. (2015). DBT Skills Training Manual (2nd ed.). Guilford.

Rizvi, S. L. & Ritschel, L. A. (2014). Mastering the art of chain analysis in dialectical behavior therapy. Cognitive and Behavioral Practice, 21(3), 335-349.

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WORKSHEET 85 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Understanding a behaviour link by link

Best done with your psychologist

A behaviour you regret doesn't appear "out of the blue": it is the last link in a chain. Reconstructing the chain, with your psychologist, helps you find where you can act differently next time.

1. The behaviour I want to understand: _____
2. What made me more fragile that day, and the trigger.
3. Each link: what I thought, felt and did.
4. Where I could have done things differently, and how, next time.

Link (thought, emotion, sensation, action)	What happened	What I could have done instead

My plan for next time:

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WORKSHEET 86 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Asking for what I need

A clear request in four steps, while standing firm

AIM

Structure an effective request or refusal: describing the situation, expressing what one feels, asserting clearly and reinforcing (saying what the other person gains), while staying focused, appearing confident and open to negotiation.

WHO IT IS FOR

Difficulty getting what one needs, conflictual relationships. A complement to worksheet 74.

DURATION

20 min in session; role plays

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Choose a specific situation and the person's goal.
2. Prepare the four steps: describe, express, assert, reinforce.
3. Add: staying focused (calmly repeating), appearing confident, negotiating if needed.
4. Rehearse with a role play and plan a real situation.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Also help the person clarify what matters to them about the relationship and their self-respect (worksheet 87). In a violent relationship, safety comes first.

REFERENCES

Linehan, M. M. (2015). DBT Skills Training Manual (2nd ed.). Guilford.

Speed, B. C., Goldstein, B. L. & Goldfried, M. R. (2018). Assertiveness training: A forgotten evidence-based treatment. Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice, 25(1), e12216.

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WORKSHEET 86 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Asking for what I need

To ask for something or say no, a simple structure helps you be clear, even when emotional. Prepare it in advance.

1. Describe: the facts, without judging.
2. Express: what I feel or think.
3. Assert: what I am asking for or refusing, clearly.
4. Reinforce: what the other person gains. I stay focused, calm and open to negotiating.

Describe	Express	Assert	Reinforce

How did it go, and what would I do the same or differently?

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WORKSHEET 87 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Looking after the relationship and my self-respect

Being kind to the other person and true to yourself

AIM

Complement effective requests with two goals: looking after the relationship (kindness, interest, validation, an easy manner) and looking after self-respect (fairness, not over-apologising, sticking to values, honesty).

WHO IT IS FOR

Conflictual relationships, fear of abandonment, a tendency to give in or explode.

DURATION

20 min in session

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Before a difficult interaction, clarify the three priorities: getting what I want, looking after the relationship, keeping my self-respect.
2. For the relationship: be kind, show interest, validate the other person's point of view, keep an easy manner.
3. For self-respect: be fair to yourself and the other person, don't over-apologise, stick to your values, be honest.
4. Rehearse with a role play.

POINTS TO WATCH

> These skills assume a relationship without danger. If there is violence or control, protection comes first.

REFERENCES

Linehan, M. M. (2015). DBT Skills Training Manual (2nd ed.). Guilford.

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WORKSHEET 87 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Looking after the relationship and my self-respect

In a difficult conversation we can be looking for three things: getting what we want, keeping a good relationship and still being proud of ourselves afterwards. Knowing which matters most helps you choose how to speak.

1. My priority in this situation: what I want, the relationship or my self-respect?
2. For the relationship: I am kind, I show interest, I acknowledge the other person's point of view.
3. For my self-respect: I am fair, I don't over-apologise, I stay true to my values.
4. Afterwards I ask myself: am I proud of how I behaved?

Situation	My priority	What I did for the relationship	What I did for myself

In which situations do I forget myself, or forget the other person?

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WORKSHEET 88 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Observing, describing, participating

DBT mindfulness

AIM

Practise the core DBT mindfulness skills: observing without reacting, describing without judging, participating fully in the activity, one thing at a time, effectively.

WHO IT IS FOR

Intense emotions, impulsivity, self-judgement; the basis of all the other DBT skills.

DURATION

10 min in session; a few minutes a day

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Introduce the three “what” skills: observe, describe, participate.
2. Introduce the three “how” skills: non-judgementally, one thing at a time, effectively (doing what works).
3. Practise a short exercise (observing an object, describing an emotion in terms of facts).
4. Suggest a short daily practice.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Practices should be short at first, especially with very overwhelmed people or those with traumatic experiences.

REFERENCES

Linehan, M. M. (2015). DBT Skills Training Manual (2nd ed.). Guilford.

Kabat-Zinn, J. (1990). Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness. Delacorte.

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WORKSHEET 88 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Observing, describing, participating

DBT mindfulness fits into a few simple gestures: observing what is happening, putting it into words and taking part fully in what you are doing, without judging, one thing at a time.

1. Observe: I notice, without reacting (a sound, a sensation, a thought).
2. Describe: I put words to the facts ("I notice a lump in my throat").
3. Participate: I get fully involved in what I am doing.
4. How: without judging, one thing at a time, doing what works.

Day	What I practised	Duration	What I noticed

Which "how" do I find hardest: not judging, one thing at a time, or doing what works?

These exercises do not replace therapy. If you are in distress or having suicidal thoughts: 112 (European Union), 3114 (France) or the emergency number of the country where you live.

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WORKSHEET 89 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

My safety plan for crises

Knowing what to do, step by step, when a situation becomes dangerous

AIM

Build a written, personalised safety plan with the person: warning signs, personal coping strategies, people and places for distraction, people to ask for help, professionals and emergency services, and steps towards a safer environment.

WHO IT IS FOR

Suicidal thoughts, self-harm, serious crises. To be built with a professional.

DURATION

30-45 min in session; review regularly

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Identify the warning signs of a crisis (thoughts, emotions, situations).
2. List the strategies the person can use alone, and the people and places that help them think about something else.
3. Write down the people to ask for help, the professionals and the emergency numbers.
4. Work on making the environment safer (removing means of harm) and check the person knows where to find their plan.

POINTS TO WATCH

> This plan is part of suicide risk assessment and follow-up. It does not replace emergency care if there is imminent danger.

REFERENCES

Stanley, B. & Brown, G. K. (2012). Safety planning intervention: A brief intervention to mitigate suicide risk. Cognitive and Behavioral Practice, 19(2), 256-264.

Linehan, M. M. (2015). DBT Skills Training Manual (2nd ed.). Guilford.

PSYCHOLOGIST'S NOTES

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WORKSHEET 89 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

My safety plan

Best done with your psychologist

When a crisis comes, it is hard to think. This plan, prepared in advance with your psychologist, guides you step by step. Keep it on your phone and on paper.

1. My warning signs: _____
2. What I can do on my own to calm down: _____
3. The people and places that help me think about something else: _____
4. If that isn't enough: who I call (someone close, a professional) and emergency services: 112 (Europe), 3114 (France), 116 123 (Samaritans, UK and Ireland) or your local number.

Step	Person, place or service	Number

What I do to make my surroundings safer:

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