

Stress Killers comprehensive skills list

A selection of DBT Skills

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Disclaimer - Important Notice:

The comprehensive Stress-Killers Skills List is a collection of selected DBT skills, which was compiled by affected persons, volunteers and helpers. Under no circumstances does the information replace professional advice or treatment by trained and recognized doctors. We do not offer medical, legal or psychological advice. Our compilation and information are based on personal experience, personal assessments and internet research. The skills presented are intended to help you and support you in your everyday high-stress situations and/or dangerous self-harming situations. Further, the DBT skills list shall encourage you to practice and find your personal skills - you are not alone!

The contents of stress-killers.com cannot and may not be used to make diagnoses or start treatments on your own.

Stress-Killers Skills List - Content

Content:

The comprehensive Stress-Killers Skills List is a compilation of so-called skills or capabilities to be able to cope with strong stress in everyday high-stress situations or dangerous self-harming situations. This skills list was compiled by affected persons, volunteers and helpers. We have summarised our knowledge, which we have gained from various DBT therapy phases, personal experiences, books and various internet resources (please refer to Resources).

The listed ideas have been tested by people with borderline personality disorder and people living with depression.

The information and skills presented are intended to help you and support you in high-stress or dangerous situations in your day-to-day life. Of course, not every skill will do everyone the same good. The comprehensive Stress-Killers Skills List is rather a collection of ideas and suggestions, just something to try out. Especially when you have no more ideas or do not know what could help you, you can look here.

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Skills List - Emergency Skills

Note:

Not all DBT skills are suitable for everyone or every stressful situation, the use of certain skills or helpers depends on each individual emotional crisis and stress level. In order to assess which DBT skill, you can use for which stress level; we included a stress level indication in % in the overview below. Note: The indicated stress level is based on our personal experience and is only a general indication.

It is important that you find and apply the right skills for yourself and always practice, practice and practice again - so that the DBT skills become a natural habit and you can handle the stressful situation and overreactions, dissociation, or panic attacks more quickly.

If you have an acute problem and are looking for a counseling center or would like to speak to someone anonymously, please get help under 1-800-273-8255 (National Suicide Prevention Lifeline).

Stress-level: +70-100%

- Smelling ammonia sticks
- Put on pain-relieving patches/ heat plaster
- Suck/chew sour or spicy candies
- Boxing into a punching bag, punching ball, in the pillow, etc.
- Suck/chew Center shocks long and slowly
- Press a cool pack/ ice bag (or frozen vegetables) - in a towel - on your neck
- Put pressure on acupuncture points/ pain points/ emergency point
- Eat extreme spicy food - Depending on your personal taste and tolerance, you can chew chili peppers, eat spicy gummi bears, chili chocolate, etc:
 - Habanero chili
 - (green) horseradish
 - Sambal Olek
 - Eat/ smell hot spices
 - Eat hot mustard
 - Drink tabasco
 - Eat wasabi
- Apply Finalgon ointment/ Horse heat ointment/ Elacur Hot Ointment to your skin and apply gauze bandages with fixing strips or wrap in cling film for an even stronger effect
- Put an elastic band around your wrist and let it snap
- Do intensive rope skipping
- Do Intensive push-ups / sit-ups / burpees / star jumps
- Chewing gums with an intense flavor
- Put cherry stones or small pebbles into your shoes and go for a walk
- Smell lavender or drink lavender syrup
- Put vitamin or effervescent tablets directly into the mouth and suck them
- Do toe stand as long as you can
- Drink lemon juice concentrate

Stress-level: +30-70%

- "Koush-Ball" a kind of super-soft hedgehog ball (you can get it in toy shops)
- "Kinder JOY Eggs"
- Listen to mindfulness meditation, YouTube or TED talk
- Use acupuncture ring to your skin, fingers, legs, toes, etc.
- Tearing up old catalogs or telephone books
- Squeeze anti-stress balls
- Read encouraging / supporting posts or quotes
- Scream loudly from the bottom of your heart (in the woods, underwater, into a cushion or in a closed room to the wall, etc.)
- Name 5 things you hear - 4 things you see - 3 things you feel
- Special tissues (e.g. with funny designs or smell)
- Crawl under your blanket and simulate mother's stomach
- Feel brushes (rough or soft) to sensitize the skin
- Wear a clown's nose
- Prepare your pro and contra list for the situation
- Feel a spelt or cherry pit pillow
- Smell aromatic oils
- Melt ice cubes in your mouth
- Holding ice cubes in your hand
- Suck ice cubes
- Take a relaxing foam bath with fragrant additives
- Take a relaxing bubble bath
- Running up and down floors in the stairwell
- Jump around
- Play with a fidget spinner
- Suck Fisherman's Friends or other cough drops in different flavors
- Write down your thoughts
- Write poems/texts about your emotional situation
- Talk to a close friend, close family member, carer, therapist/telephone contact, ...
- Massage your skin/ old scars
- Chopping wood, breaking branches
- Roll the hedgehog ball on your skin
- Chewing fresh ginger
- Put Japanese mint oil, tiger balm, tea tree oil on your skin and smell
- Go jogging (and run away from the thought)
- Juggling balls or juggling scarves
- Take a cold shower or let cold water flow over your hands and forearms
- Warm up the cherry pit cushion and place on the skin
- Stick plasters on your skin and rip them off again
- Play small games of dexterity and/or concentration
- Play with small cuddly toys/ soft toys
- Play with a clay ball
- Play with dough
- Colouring in creative blocks
- Place the cool pack on the skin (wrapped in a towel)
- Listen to music or your favorite songs loudly
- Put on a lavender relaxation mask
- Learn exotic capitals, poems or anything else by heart
- Lipsticks with different tastes
- Balloons (inflate until it bursts; to inflate as a breathing exercise, play with the balloon as a mindfulness exercise)
- Painting mandalas
- Knead the massage ball
- Play with a metal hedgehog ball, other hard hedgehog balls
- Poking the skin with a folded out paper clip
- Making music (e.g. playing guitar, piano, flute, singing, drums, etc.)
- Lay down on a nail board
- Smell perfume (perfume tests) or favorite scent
- Solve a riddle
- Roll the soles of your feet over a massage stick
- Play with soap bubbles
- Play musical box
- Do sports (e.g. jogging, walking, cycling, skating, swimming, dancing, riding, weight training, boxing...)
- Search around you as fast as possible 5-times the color red, 5-times the color blue, 5-times the color yellow, etc.
- Change your viewing direction: look up if you are looking at the floor
- Change your body position: stand up and walk around when you are sitting in the moment
- Knot a cord in a complicated way and unknot it again later
- Use a vibrator or massager
- Writing angry letters and tearing/burning them
- Count backward from 300 in steps of 7
- Read a note from a close person

Skills List - Emergency Skills

Stress-level: 0-30%

- Read a good book
- Smell and feel a refreshing towel
- Look at photos
- Smell coffee beans or espresso beans
- Wet face cold
- Hear and smell thunderstorms
- Standing in the summer rain (as an alternative, stand under the warm shower)
- Cooking, searching, planning and shopping for recipes
- Listen to nature sounds
- Maintain social contacts (SMS, chat, telephone, social media, going out)
- Go for a walk

Skills List - Distress Tolerance Skills

Overview:

The following group of DBT Skills can be described as distress tolerance skills, which cause distraction from the situation by applying the acronym ACCEPT:

- A - Activities
- C - Contributing
- C - Comparisons
- E - Emotions
- P - Pushing Away
- T - Thoughts

Distraction through Activities - Get yourself moving:

- Watch the lights of the city in the evening - from far away, reflected on the water and above you the stars
- Mindfulness exercises
- Watch old movies / watch black and white movies
- Sitting by the water, going for a walk and letting your thoughts drift away
- Play video games
- Watch Anime movies
- Go to the sea
- Do breathing exercises (e.g. conscious slow and deep breathing, Wim Hof Method)
- Go to a fair
- Clean up
- Play Sudoku
- Memorize
- Drive around in your car - just driving and listening to music
- Autoogenic training
- Baking and Cooking
- Walk barefoot in the woods
- Tinkering
- Begler (Greek game of skill)
- Prepare gifts for close people
- Boxing
- Write a letter / e-mail
- Read books in the library
- Ironing
- Stroll around your city
- Chat with your loved ones
- Sing in a choir
- Play computer games
- Looking out the window to the sky and count clouds
- Consciously listening to the sounds of nature
- Feeling nature with all senses
- Use the advantages and disadvantages of the weather (heat, cold etc.)
- Walking through vineyards
- Playing an instrument (piano, drums, guitar, ...)
- Do an activity that you enjoy or have always wanted to do (e.g. going to a trampoline hall, stand-up-paddling, etc.)
- Draw any route on the city map and then walk, jog, cycle along this route.
- Learning a foreign language
- Take a trip
- Hug a tree
- Thoroughly clean up, rearrange or muck out a particular room
- Shopping
- Play or watch football, basketball, soccer, rugby, ice hockey, etc.
- Drink an Energy Drink
- Practice relaxation exercises
- Cook your favorite dish
- Look at something (looking into the washing machine, into the wood-burning stove, into an aquarium, out of the window or into the sky...)
- Decorate something
- Wear something comfortable
- Plan something (an excursion, a trip, a special hour in which you only take time for yourself, a party, a surprise...)
- Repair something
- Write something (letter, diary, poem, history, pro and contra list, shopping list...)
- Do something crazy
- Ride a bike
- Watch TV
- Play fidget spinner
- Watch movies (nothing sad)
- Pinball
- Photograph something interesting
- View photos
- Breathe fresh air or sea air consciously
- Drink cappuccino or coffee in peace
- Write down feelings, thoughts and feelings like a kind of poem
- Crochet
- Handwork
- Handcraft projects
- Housework (ironing, cleaning, washing dishes, chopping wood, doing some repairs, cleaning up, washing clothes, cooking...)
- Hot/cold showers
- Chop wood
- Listen to audio books
- Playing online games
- Walking in the rain
- Walking in the forest, pausing and taking a deep breath
- Walking in nature, looking, letting your eyes wander, looking for sunlight
- Go to a nice café
- Go to an amusement park, the movies, the theatre
- Viewing candlelights
- Put on your favorite clothes
- Play the piano
- Puzzle books: crossword puzzles, Sudoku
- Put headphones on and listen to music really loud
- Strength training, abdominal muscle exercises, push-ups, Thera-band, knee bends, self-defence techniques, boxing
- Doodle around on a piece of paper
- Baking cakes or cookies - regardless of the season
- Click pen
- Let yourself be massaged
- Learning for school or work
- Read a book
- Watch people in a park walking by
- Write songs
- Dance
- Maintain a list of beautiful moments
- Read funny paperbacks
- Watch funny videos on Youtube or movies on Netflix
- Make yourself pretty, put on make-up, do your hair
- Painting
- Painting - Adult coloring pages
- Paint - Coloring Pages
- Paint - Coloring pages for kids and adults
- Paint - point to point
- Paint - Connecting points
- Painting (with colored pencils, pencils, finger paints, pastel chalks, chalk, acrylic paints, emulsion paints...)

Skills List - Distress Tolerance Skills

- Painting by numbers
- Painting Mandala
- Meditation in completely darkened rooms without external stimuli
- Walking the dog
- Playing with a pet or cuddling
- Talking to someone, fooling around, just being there, playing, sports,
- Playing with a child, doing handicrafts, having fun
- Assemble furniture
- Moorland and mudflat walks
- Go out into the fresh air at sunrise in the morning
- Ride a motorbike
- Listen to music and sing along
- Make music
- Sewing / Tailoring
- Nordic walking
- Online Sudoku
- Crumple/tear paper
- Prepare and read pros and cons lists
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Cleaning, tidying, arranging and thus making and keeping the home beautiful
- Puzzles, counting puzzle pieces
- Renovation (e.g. repainting a room, sanding down a table)
- Read schmaltzy novels
- Go for a walk (alone or not alone) and listening to music
- Play parlor games
- Sports/training (badminton, table football, table tennis, volleyball, football, jogging, boxing, swimming, running, walking, cycling, skating, dancing, horse riding, weight training, hiking, aerobics, Zumba, yoga,
- Petting enclosures in the zoo
- Knitting
- Writing a diary
- Dancing, Zumba or Baillaro
- Go for a cup of tea
- Phoning with friends/family
- Deep breathing in rhythm 3-3-6
- Watch an animal documentary
- Spend an evening together with good friends
- Washing or folding laundry
- Watch wrestling (distraction)
- Yoga
- Drawing
- Zen and Anti-stress coloring pages for adults
- Go to the lake, look at the water and let your thoughts drift

Distraction through Contributing - Support others to distract yourself. For example, you can offer help or prepare a surprise:

- Encourage other people when they do something that makes sense and is positive for yourself
- Recognize and praise the achievements of others
- Helping to wash the dishes
- Helping to put on and take off the laundry, ironing
- Chatting, writing in a forum
- Making or wrapping a gift
- Talk to close friends
- Talk to parents/ mother/ father
- Plan or give away a joint activity
- Write a letter/ e-mail or SMS/ WhatsApp
- Visit or call a friend
- Getting hugged without having to talk
- Give someone a present (e.g. handicraft, paint, buy flowers)
- Send a card to someone
- Encourage someone
- Listening to / encouraging someone
- Doing someone a favor
- Mending clothes or darning socks
- Meet people who are good for you, who understand you
- Cuddle with your partner and hold him tight
- Cuddling with the kids
- Doing something with the family
- Talk to former fellow patients from the medical center
- Play something with a friend (e.g. board games)
- Self-help groups
- Ask for something or help
- Embrace loving people
- Going among people
- Query vocabulary or have it queried

Distraction through Comparisons - Think of people who are worse off. For example, read the BILD newspaper, deal with misfortunes and famines or think about how bad things used to be ("Today I have a nice apartment, in the past ...")

- Others feel sorry for me - I do something to make me feel better!
- They have the same chances as me, but don't take it!
- Reality check
- What do I have that others don't?
- What else could be worse?
- I have something that others don't have (e.g. a job, a nice apartment...)
- Compared to the past, I have achieved a lot today (e.g. I have completed an apprenticeship, I have some good friends...)

Distraction through Emotions - You can "replace" a painful situation by consciously leaving the situation inwardly for a while and creating situations for yourself which can create a pleasant feeling. It is important that you promise yourself to come back to the distressed situation at a later time and deal with it:

- Act contrary to the feeling
- Changing the moment
- Watching schmaltzy movies or soap operas
- Watch a funny movie
- Read a novel
- Write something (e.g. diary, letter, poem)
- Listen to happy music
- Write down thoughts/feelings and put them away until the next conversation with a friend or until the next therapy - distract yourself until then or maybe put them in the safe
- Keeping a feelings log
- Children's program, funny series, watch a funny movie
- Light smiling
- Do something good for yourself (drink something warm in a café, take a warm bath, give yourself a flower, go to sleep, get a massage, buy a new diary, put yourself under the tanning bed, etc.)
- Let a friend cheer you up
- When I have negative feelings, I consciously try to create more pleasant feelings...

Distraction through Push Away:

- Build a wall between you and the situation in your imagination (Important! Deal with the situation at a later time)
- Push it aside (not too long, otherwise the displacement mechanism becomes like a "ball that you want to hold under water and which then pushes up all the more violently!)

Skills List - Distress Tolerance Skills

Distraction through Thoughts (Mental-Flick-Flacks) - Distract yourself through thought games and thus step out of the emotional crisis:

- "Thinking around the corner"
- Diving into my fantasy world
- Accepting the situation
- Reduce to a minimum everything that needs to be done
- Get everything off my chest
- Working with skills... mindfulness, dealing with emotions and self-esteem
- Saying no sometimes
- Unconditional love
- Push it aside (not too long)
- Paint any points on a sheet of paper and try to draw a figure by connecting them
- Pray
- Hang paper clips together and take them apart again as quickly as possible
- Allow the bad day to pass by, it will pass and the next one has a chance to get better
- Build up the willpower to say "No, I never want to fall back into that deep black hole!"
- Just cry - frees the soul
- Letting go of emotional suffering
- Search for something on the Internet (or do puzzles or skill games)
- Count backwards in steps of 7
- IQ tests
- Juggling (with balls, with silk scarves)
- Set small goals that you can achieve and then be happy about them - no matter how small they are e.g. watering flowers, making beds
- Concentration or skill games
- Solve crossword puzzles or Sudoku
- Create your own crossword puzzle
- Light smiling
- Allow lethargy
- Solve math problems
- Name 10 female names beginning with the letter "A"
- Don't be too hard on yourself
- Switch off your guilty conscience, let yourself drift and let go
- Taking pleasure in little things
- Become aware that you are loved - by family, friends, animals - even when you are ill
- Just keep telling yourself I'm fine
- Accepting yourself as you are - and that is good as you are
- Be happy about everything you have achieved
- Writing a diary
- Translate texts from a different language
- Writing texts with the other hand or foot
- Dreaming
- Cry and then go out strengthened

Skills List - Body perceptions

Body perceptions - You can reduce high stress (+70% stress level) by exposing yourself to strong, non-harming stimuli. Below you will find sensory awareness skills:

- Eat sour or spicy candies
- Chewing "airwaves" or other gum
- Eat "crunchy chocolate" very slowly
- Run as fast as possible for 5 minutes
- Smelling ammonia inhalant/ sticks
- Cuddle up on warm heating or feel a warm hot water bottle
- Walk on gravel,, small stones, pebbles, clay balls or cat litter
- Balancing on little marbles
- Feel bath massage gloves on your skin
- Take a bath while listening to music
- Walk barefoot (outside)
- Eat chili
- Feel an ice-pack (wrapped in a towel) on your skin
- Dip the head into a pool of cold water or run cold water over the face
- Massage the chewing muscles
- Feel the different tensions of rubber bands and hair bands on your skin/ wrist
- Roll a hedgehog ball over your arms
- Feel crushed ice or snow in your hands
- Melt ice cubes in your hand or in your mouth
- Carry something heavy
- Smell eucalyptus refreshing tissues (from the pharmacy)
- Drink fresh lemon juice
- Bathing your feet
- Getting a foot massage
- Use a hand trainer for guitarists or or tennis player
- Walk in the rain and feel the raindrops on your skin/ face
- Going outdoors or walk through a forest
- Going to the sauna
- Swimming in a cold lake (cold pond or swimming pool)
- Smell Japanese healing oil or tiger balm
- Take a cold/warm shower
- Feel candle wax on the skin
- Eat garlic
- Do sports (try trainonly one muscle group as long as you can)
- Listen to loud music
- Get a massage or massage yourself: use massage equipment
- Rolling your bare feet over a wooden stick
- Standing with bare feet in a stream
- Take a midday nap
- Smelling essential oils
- Eat spicy food
- Put sandbags on your stomach
- Press pain points firmly: Muscle attachment at collarbone, area between thumb and index finger
- Lean against a wall with your back against the wall and put your knees at a 90° angle; grab a tennis ball behind your back and roll it up and down
- Hug yourself
- Get someone to hug you, hold you, squeeze you
- Put a vitamin effervescent tablet in your mouth and let it melt slowly
- Feel a toothbrush on your skin
- Play with sensory toys (chewing necklace, figets, balls, etc.)

Skills List - Calm down with the help of your 5 senses ("Sensory Play"):

Sensory Play (useful websites) - Calm down and at the same time do something mindfully and consciously:

- Online Flash games
- <https://childhood101.com/sensory-play-ideas/>
- <https://www.learning4kids.net/list-of-sensory-play-ideas/>
- <https://www.pinterest.de/cmarashian/sensory-play-ideas/?lp=true>
- Calming Lavender Soap Foam Sensory Play
- Draw something on your desktop
- Listen to the sound of rain
- Selection of useful sensory play websites

Seeing - at something mindful and consciously:

- Look at postcards
- photos with a beautiful memory
- View fishes in an aquarium
- Watch a recorded video with a beautiful memory
- Look at images with vibrant colors
- Look through an illustrated book
- Looking at flowers
- Fix your gaze and move your head back and forth
- Observe the pointer of a metronome
- Photography
- Going to a museum
- Go to a zoo
- Looking into a fire
- Paint or draw (on large format, with flowing ink on damp paper, thick wax crayon, emulsion paint, ...)
- Look up and move your eyes rhythmically to the left and right
- Snow globe
- View a washing machine in motion
- Drive to a view point and enjoy the landscape
- Take a train ride

Listen - to something mindful and consciously:

- Audio file with recorded one-to-one conversation
- Put on the headphones and listen to encouraging, rhythmic music
- Listening to noises in the flat / house
- Thunderstorm
- Listen-Memory (fill 2 black film cans with something, e.g. sand, paper clips, gravel, water, corn, nails... then mix the cans and listen to which ones belong together or sort them by volume...)
- Listen to loud music (with headphones)
- Make loud, popping or whistling noises directly at your ear
- Live concert
- Meditation Music
- Music (favourite music, positive playlist)
- Sounds of nature
- Make popcorn in a pot with a lid
- Intoxicating mussels
- Listen to raindrops
- Make music yourself
- Singing
- Drums
- Birdsong
- Wave noise

Smell - something mindful and consciously:

- Ammonia
- Essential oils (in scented lamp or on scented stone)
- Flowers
- Cream
- Scented candles
- Eating/ Cooking
- Smell eucalyptus refreshing wipes
- Freshly cut fruit/ vegetables
- Fresh bed linen
- Freshly mowed meadow, grass, hay, straw
- Freshly sawn piece of wood or tree resin
- Fresh clothes
- Fruits
- Face cream, Body cream, Skincare
- Spices, herbs
- Smell Japanese medicinal oil
- Coffee
- Garlic
- Favourite person
- Favourite perfume
- The sea
- Nature
- Cleaning products
- Smell Sambal Olek
- Sauna infusion
- Soap
- Tea
- Tiger balm
- Wood
- WC spray
- What does it smell like outside? Early in the morning? After the rain?

Skills List - Calm down with the help of your 5 senses ("Sensory Play"):**Tasting - something mindful and consciously:**

- chew or melt "sour candy
- Aniseed (possibly with some sugar is popular with the Indians)
- Sweets
- Suck fizzy tablet
- Chill pepper
- Ice cream flavors
- Exotic fruits
- Freshly squeezed juice
- Freshly prepared food
- Fresh strong herbs
- Drink fresh lemon juice
- Spices, pepper, salt
- Bite into fresh horseradish
- Coffee
- Chewing gums
- cakes, tarts
- Sucking hot peppermint sweets
- Put spicy sushi sauces in your mouth
- Put hot toothpaste in your mouth
- Snow, ice cubes
- Chocolate (let it melt on the tongue for a long time)
- Homemade Popcorn
- Tea (weak or strong)

Feel - something mindful and consciously:

- Walk in the rain
- Acupressure rings
- Bathing
- run barefoot
- Feel the foam bubbles when washing the dishes
- Fluffy blanket
- rubber ball/ anti-stress ball/ hedgehog ball/ metal ball
- Pets
- Cold / warm water
- Cherry pit cushion
- Body
- Love
- Favourite trousers
- Lotus Blossom
- Magnetic dough
- Massage, massage device
- Horse
- Qi-Gong balls
- Velvet
- Sand bags
- Snow
- Try on shoes
- Silk
- Sex
- Tap one's fingertips
- Massage yourself or others
- Soft toy

- Dreamcatcher
- Vibrator
- Bird feather
- Hot water bottle
- Washcloth
- Soft or hard brush
- Root brush
- Toothbrush
- Zahnbürste

Skills List - Change the moment:**Imagination Use your imagination and create positive experiences/feelings**

- View (memory) photos
- "Safe place"
- illustrated books
- Memories of good memories
- Fantasy journeys
- View travel guide books
- Imagine the enemy in "pierced underpants"

Meaning Every fearful situation that you overcome will strengthen you!

- "Everything has a meaning, even if I don't see it right now."
- If I hadn't done that, then...
- In retrospect, it is easier to see a meaning; remember it and recall it at the next difficult situation (write it down in your diary)

Prayer, Meditation Open your heart to a higher being, greater wisdom or deity and ask for strength and confidence:

- <http://www.pixelthoughts.co>
- Be grateful
- Prayer
- Go to church and light a candle
- Rituals, developing mantra
- Sit on the floor, light a candle and try not to think about anything

Relaxation Relax through positive rituals or gifts to yourself:

- Take a "short vacation": take a quarter of an hour off and drink a tea thoughtfully.
- 10 minutes to solve a crossword puzzle
- Changing the moment
- Take a bath
- Listen to a short radio play
- Let a piece of cake or yoghurt melt on your tongue
- Calling a friend
- Footbath
- Go to a café
- Focus on the moment
- Lava lamp
- Read
- Massage
- Tense and relax muscles (e.g. according to Jacobsen)
- Take a rest
- Sauna
- Sleep
- Sport
- Take a vacation
- Hot water bottle

Skills List - Mindfulness

What skills

Consciously perceiving certain situations:

- Breathing feet: feeling your way forward. Close your eyes and walk barefoot, try to perceive what your feet feel (e.g. grass, stones, pavement, carpet, tiles, etc.)
- The nose animal - try to smell something (e.g. flowers, essences, spices, fruits, essential oils, when eating and drinking, perfume in a drugstore, tea/coffee shop, body cream, fresh baths, when walking, etc.)
- Feel your own breath: observe how the breath flows in, spreads and flows out..., inhale and exhale attentively and consciously, count the breaths while jogging and try to prolong the exhalation, do the same while walking or even at rest, take a deep breath, hold it, count to 4, then exhale very slowly, connect the deep inhalation and exhalation with a word or mantra, e.g. with the words of relaxation, falling asleep (the word should have at least two syllables), going down with the upper part of the body when breathing out, counting breaths (always count up to 10, then start at 1 again, exhale through the mouth into a balloon or a small plastic bag (especially if you tend to hyperventilate).
- The recording device: listening carefully to something around you..., sounds from outside..., what sounds are around me at this moment (15 seconds to 30 minutes long). Only pay attention to a certain sound, if you feel overwhelmed with all of them at the same time, e.g. only cars, only people, only hearing birdsongs, pay attention to the sounds in a certain situation (when showering, cooking, falling asleep, riding the tram), etc.
- Feel your own limits: asking oneself - how am I actually doing, how do my muscles feel, am I under stress, how much strength do I still have, what needs do I have?
- The camera: try to capture the moment with your eyes or things around you... to be aware of what is happening around me at that moment (choose what I want to be aware of) e.g. in the train station, in a café, in the botanical garden, in my own garden, when walking, from the balcony..., postcard/poster, washing machine, clouds in the sky, water, waves, outdoors, trees, flowers, insects, animals, aquarium, children or other people...
- The master chef: perceive something in your mouth ..., melt chocolate, chew a piece of apple, something sour, something sweet, something bitter, something spicy, lunch, cold drinks, hot drinks, carbonated drinks, etc..
- Feel things inside and around you: e.g. how do I sit on the chair, how do I hold my head, how do I move, what happens when I change my position?
- Thoughts: Perceive thoughts like clouds in the sky or like a wave, like the water in a river, but do not stick to them, let them go.
- Listen to stories: Listening to a story and observing which thoughts and feelings arise, allowing the feelings to move on.
- Touching hands: touching objects with closed eyes (e.g. a stone, a shell, a hedgehog ball), perceiving what the hands feel; e.g. when gardening (flowers, plants, earth, sand), in the forest or on a meadow (roots, trees, grass, stones, animals), different brushes, blind games (putting things into a bag and later feel and touch them with one hand), bags of sand or cherry stones (warmed up, or cooled), various fabrics, groping around the room in the dark, feeling your own body, massaging your own or other people's feet, shoulders, arms, footbath, touch book (children's book or self-made), etc..

Describe consciously certain situations:

- Reporter: Describe with many adjectives - if possible without judgement - what you see, as if you were a tourist from outer space and did not know life on earth at all. (e.g. a room, what happens on the street, people you meet, nature, a market place, objects)
- Blind art: Describe an image (picture, photo) so that someone who is blind could get a clear idea of what it looks like.
- Inner reporter: Describing what you feel inside yourself (e.g. your thoughts, emotions or physical reactions).
- Mirror: Stand in front of a mirror and describe loudly what you see in the third person. For example: "I see a young woman..." (use a lot of adjectives, if possible without judgement).

Participate consciously certain situations:

- The raw egg: place an egg on the table with the bulbous side down without breaking the egg. Observe your thoughts as you do so. With a lot of patience you will succeed.
- Do something mindful: realize what you do at the moment, don't think about the before or after, stay concentrated (e.g. brushing teeth, making coffee, going for a walk, walking backwards, dancing, brushing, juggling, being with a child, petting an animal, reading poetry, reading, doing household, doing dishes in a concentrated way, playing an instrument in a concentrated way, etc.
- Mikado: throw a complicated pattern and pull out the sticks without moving anything.
- Counting: count from 1 to 10 in a concentrated way in the rhythm of your breath, then start again from 1. If you are distracted by thoughts and feelings, let them go and start counting again at 1.

How skills:

- Accept: to accept the situation as it is.
- Concentrate: concentrate on one thing only, concentrate on the moment.
- Be effective: do what is necessary for the situation (e.g. when it starts to rain, find a dry shelter; when being tired, take a rest, etc.)

Dealing with emotions:

- Being mindful of positive experiences (perceiving and accepting them)
- Describe good feelings
- Put emotional myths into perspective (e.g. such myths: "To show feelings means that I am weak; feelings are stupid; others can judge how I am better)
- Reducing emotional vulnerability: having illnesses examined and treated, going to the doctor, getting information about them, eating a balanced diet, drinking regularly, drinking enough water every day, avoiding drugs, regular exercise to become strong and stay healthy, exercising in moderation, getting enough sleep: making sure you get enough sleep, self-discipline: doing something every day and getting it done to get a feeling of competence and control.
- Letting go of emotional suffering
- To make this difference clear to yourself: My thoughts are products of my mind. The thought "the situation is threatening" is only my thought. When I do a reality check, I see if a danger is actually present.
- Write an emotional protocol (describe the situation, thoughts, physiology, emotions, impulses for action and actual actions taken)
- Gather positive experiences and enjoyable activities: Consciously plan daily activities that could be delightful.
- Remember times when you felt different (photos, diary)
- Thinking about the meaning and effects of emotions
- Describe uncomfortable feelings

Take the opposite action against the direction of the emotion:

- Fear: Stay in the situation and fight the fear actively!
- Anger and rage: Relax your shoulder and chin muscles, take a deep breath, count slowly to 5 before you respond, put a "mild smile" on your lips, put yourself in the other person's position, say something friendly
- Depressive mood: Stay active.
- Jealousy: Recognise and accept jealousy: actively try to maintain a friendly relationship with the supposed competitor (except: Couple relationships demand a confrontation).
- Disgust: Expose yourself to the disgusting smell, taste or skin perception and get used to it.
- Make up for something (with yourself or with others).
- Envy: Perceive the feeling as such, name and accept it; collect arguments why the other person "deserves" to own their desired object.
- Shame: Stay in the situation, show yourself in public, show an upright posture, make it clear that the shame is only in your head, make sure of your strengths and advantages.
- Guilt: Stay in the situation, don't apologize, accept that things can happen uncontrollably.
- Grief: The funeral process should be completed, it then dissolves by itself. In the case of excessive mourning, it is recommended to limit the mourning to certain places and times. Mourning rituals serve this purpose.

Skills List - Other useful thoughts

Miscellaneous

- Say "no"
- Recognize, be proud of yourself
- Expressing the feeling in the situation
- Decision for a new path: "I make a conscious decision that this time I will act differently than before or than I usually do. I try to go a new way, even though it is partly unknown. I have to make this decision again and again."
- Stay friendly, no justification, no judgments
- Write down thoughts, hang on a balloon, let it fly away
- Humor
- Inner readiness: Replace immobility with inner readiness, i.e. listen attentively to your own inner voice, stay awake and open and act from this attitude (do what is necessary).
- Slowly and attentively take a deep breath in and out
- Light smile: "Smiling changes my body condition, positive reaction and relaxation can begin. I smile only for myself, it is not a social smile and has nothing to do with other people!". So: take your head up, sit straight, take a deep breath.
- Only pay attention to certain sounds when everything is too loud
- Only talk about yourself and do not generalize
- Radical acceptance: "At the moment I cannot act, I have to endure the situation as much as possible until I can intervene..." a profound acceptance of what is let go.
- To ask for something
- Negotiate

Skills List - Resources and useful Links

English resources with information on stress relief skills

Dialectical Behavior Therapy Books:

[The Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills Workbook: Practical DBT Exercises](#)

[DBT@ Skills Training Handouts and Worksheets, Second Edition](#)

[The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma](#)

Websites:

<https://www.bpdworld.org/>

<http://www.tara4bpd.org/>

<https://behavioraltech.org/>

<https://behavioraltech.org/resources/resources-for-clients-families/>

<https://behavioraltech.org/resources/faqs/dialectical-behavior-therapy-dbt/>

<https://www.verywellmind.com/borderline-personality-disorder-4157266>

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/mental-disorders/borderline-personality-disorder.htm>

<https://www.borderlinepersonalitydisorder.org/>

<https://www.verywellmind.com/coping-skills-borderline-personality-disorder-425412>

<https://www.nlm.nih.gov/health/topics/borderline-personality-disorder/index.shtml>

https://www.dbtselfhelp.com/html/connecting_skills.html

<https://www.my-borderline-personality-disorder.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/HealingFromBorderlinePersonalityDisorderbpd>

<https://positivepsychology.com/coping-skills-worksheets/>

German resources with information on stress relief skills

Websites:

<https://stress-skills.de/borderline-skills>

<http://borderline-selbsthilfe.org/notfallkoffer.html>

<http://mein-leben-auf-der-grenzlinie.blogspot.com/p/notfallkoffer-und-skill-liste.html>

<http://wegedeslebens.forumieren.de>

<http://www.blumenwiesen.org/notfallkoffer.html>

<http://www.borderline-plattform.de/index.php/notfallkoffer>

<http://www.borderline-selbsthilfe-schwerte.de>

<http://www.grenzlinie.at/>

<http://www.grenzwandlerin.de/skills-liste-fertigkeiten-sammlung/>

<http://www.traumaforum.org>

<http://zwerqenstuebchen.forumprofi.de/>

<https://blutgraeftin.limdo.com/psychischen-erkrankungen-therapie/notfallkoffer/>

<https://bordis-online.de/skills/>

<https://depressionende.de/tut-mir-qt-liste-depressionen/>

<https://meinwegmitborderline.wordpress.com/dbt/modul-stresstoleranz/notfallkoffer/>

<https://trauma-und-dissoziation.com>

<https://www.daslebenmitborderline.ch/skills/>

<https://www.klinikum-westmuensterland.de/rhede/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/04/Konkrete-Skillsammlung.pdf>

<https://www.klinikum-westmuensterland.de/rhede/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/04/Basisgruppe-skillstraining.pdf>

<https://www.seelenwelten.de/>

<https://www.skills-box.ch/pages/skills-liste>

<https://www.sorgen-tagebuch.de/soforthilfe/skills-sofortmassnahmen>

<https://www.borderline-netzwerk.info>



www.stress-killers.com