

# DISTRESS TOLERANCE HANDOUT 9



(Distress Tolerance Worksheets 7, 7a, 7b; pp. 386–388)

## Improving the Moment

A way to remember these skills is the word **IMPROVE**.

### With **I**magery:

- Imagine very relaxing scenes.
- Imagine a secret room within yourself. Furnish it the way you like. Close and lock the door on anything that can hurt you.
- Imagine everything going well.
- Make up a calming fantasy world.
- Imagine hurtful emotions draining out of you like water out of a pipe.
- Remember a happy time and imagine yourself in it again; play out the time in your mind again.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### With **M**eaning:

- Find purpose or meaning in a painful situation.
- Focus on whatever positive aspects of a painful situation you can find.
- Repeat these positive aspects in your mind.
- Remember, listen to, or read about spiritual values.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### With **P**rayer:

- Open your heart to a supreme being, God, or your own Wise Mind.
- Ask for strength to bear the pain.
- Turn things over to God or a higher being.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### With **R**elaxing actions:

- Take a hot bath or sit in a hot tub.
- Drink hot milk.
- Massage your neck and scalp.
- Practice yoga or other stretching.
- Breathe deeply.
- Change your facial expression.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### With **O**ne thing in the moment:

- Focus your entire attention on just what you are doing.
- Keep yourself in the moment.
- Put your mind in the present.
- Focus your entire attention on the physical.
- Listen to a sensory awareness recording (or use Distress Tolerance Handout 9a)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### With a brief **V**acation:

- Give yourself a brief vacation.
- Get in bed; pull the covers up over your head.
- Go to the beach or the woods for the day.
- Get a magazine and read it with chocolates.
- Turn off your phone for a day.
- Take a blanket to the park and sit on it for a whole afternoon.
- Take a 1-hour breather from hard work.
- Take a brief vacation from responsibility.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### With self-**E**ncouragement and rethinking the situation:

- Cheerlead yourself: "You go, girl!" "You da man!"
- "I will make it out of this."
- "I'm doing the best I can."
- Repeat over and over: "I can stand it."
- "This too shall pass."
- "I will be OK."
- "It won't last forever."
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

List (and then practice) rethoughts that are particularly important in your crisis situations (e.g., "The fact that he did not pick me up doesn't mean he doesn't love me"):

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

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