

DBT TIP Skills Card

Four fast-acting tools for moments of overwhelming distress.

When emotions are at a 9 or 10 and you can't think clearly, TIP skills (Temperature, Intense exercise, Paced breathing, Paired relaxation) help your body and mind down-regulate quickly. Use this card as a quick reference — and a record of what works for you.

NAME (OPTIONAL)

DATE

T — Temperature

Splash cold water on your face for 30 seconds, or hold an ice pack on your cheekbones. Activates the mammalian dive reflex and slows heart rate. Which version worked for you?

I — Intense exercise

20–30 seconds of all-out movement: jumping jacks, sprints, push-ups, dance. Burns off the stress-hormone surge. What did you do, and for how long?

P — Paced breathing

Breathe out longer than you breathe in. Try 4 in, 6–8 out. Repeat for 1–2 minutes. What did you notice?

P — Paired muscle relaxation

Tense a muscle group for 5 seconds, then release while exhaling. Move from feet ' calves ' thighs ' belly ' hands ' shoulders ' face. Which areas held the most tension?

After: what changed?

Distress level before (0–10) ' distress level after (0–10). What might you try again?
