

DBT Skills: Mindfulness

What & How Skills

What does it mean to be mindful? How do you practice it?

What

Observe

- Sensing and experiencing without describing or labeling the experience
- Don't react and get caught in rumination, preoccupation, or obsession - Take a step back
- Unpleasant emotions may come up, experience the moment without judging it good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant, let the thoughts go by
- Reduce intensity of thoughts/emotions by learning that they come and go

Describe

- Label the experience without judgment
- Statements of what you observe
- Clarifies the connections between yourself and the environment
- Helps you stay in the present and focus on what you can do to make the situation better
- Label emotions, increase awareness, and communication of feelings to manage them
- Thoughts and emotions are valid, but not facts

Participate

- Enter wholly into an activity - throw yourself into it
- Let yourself go, be totally present, into the moment
- Participating with awareness - take a step back in your life and be aware that you are alive right now in the moment
- Do what is needed in the moment - actively practice DBT skills

vs

How

One-Mindfully

- Do one thing at a time and give it your full attention - be present
- Requires practice and willingness - let go of distractions, refocus yourself when needed.

Non-judgmentally

- Be open to thinking in different ways
- Judgment can create a hostile, negative environment leading to shame, sadness, and guilt
- Simply observe it, note it, and let it move away
- What is judgment? An opinion or qualifier on an observation. Eg, Sadness is a bad emotion vs sadness is not bad or good, it simply is, it's ok to feel sad.

Effectively

- Focus on doing what works, rather than what's right/wrong/fair/unfair
- Allow yourself to let go of being right
- Utilizes radical acceptance, a distress tolerance skill to tolerate being effective.