

PRACTICING RADICAL ACCEPTANCE

Many times bad things happen and we have no control over the situation. We can't change people's behaviors or the reality of what is happening, and these experiences are painful. Radical acceptance is a practice that helps us evaluate situations and work to reduce the emotional burden of the reality of the situation like resentment, anger, hatred, or shame. Use the following prompts to help you practice radical acceptance.

WHAT'S BOTHERING YOU? Use the following lines to write down your thoughts.

UNDERSTANDING REALITY

1. Look at the above statements. Is there something here that is a reality you *have to* accept (vs a judgement or opinion)? For instance - "It shouldn't be this way." Write it here.

2. Think about this reality and just sit with it. For instance - "This is what happened. It can't change. It is what it is."

3. What happened, or what events led to this reality? ("This is how things happened").

ACCEPTING REALITY

1. Think about this reality. Can you accept it in your thoughts? What can you tell yourself to help you accept this reality? Imagine what it feels like to accept it.

2. Imagine how you'd change your behaviors or actions if you accepted this reality? Imagine how the world would feel if you could let go.

3. Think about this reality. Can you accept it in your body? Where are you carrying the resistance to accept this reality? Do you carry that weight in your shoulders or your back? Is there tension or physical pain? Can you practice feeling your emotions in your body and then practice releasing them from your body?

4. Do you feel disappointment, sadness, or grief right now? Sit with that, acknowledge it, allow yourself to feel these feelings and understand it is ok and expected to feel disappointment, sadness, or grief. Write down anything specific about these thoughts and feelings.

5. Despite the pain of this reality, what makes life worth living? Remind yourself of those things here.

6. If you find yourself struggling at this point, write down some pros and cons of accepting or not accepting this reality. Then start back at #1 above for your next troubling situation.

Disclaimer: This worksheet is adapted from *DBT Skills Training Handouts and Worksheets, Second Edition*, by Marsha M. Linehan. Copyright 2015 by Marsha M. Linehan. See page 344 for original checklist.

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