

## Distress Tolerance Handout

Consider, is this a crisis: a short-term problem that cannot be solved right now? If no, focus on problem-solving. If yes, try distress tolerance skills.

Distress tolerance skills will help you survive a crisis without making the situation worse, minimizing suffering. You will not necessarily feel better. The goal to focus on is getting through the crisis without making things worse.

1. Consider:
  - a. What triggers the distress?
  
  - b. How did you respond?
  
  - c. How did your response make things worse for you?
  
2. What have you found helps you to get through the crisis or other distressing situations?
  
3. What skill would you like to try to do more of to get through the crisis? Or, what new skill would you like to test out?  
Consider: Distract (Wise Mind ACCEPTS: Activities, Contributing, Comparisons, opposite Emotions, Pushing Away, other Thoughts, Sensations), Self-soothe (the five senses), IMPROVE the Moment (Imagery, Meaning, Prayer, Relaxation, One thing in the moment, Vacation, Encouragement).
  
4. Make a plan about when and what you will do. Think about the date or days of the week, time, for how long, with whom, and a plan b. How confident are you that you can implement this plan (0-10)?
  
5. Try out your plan and then consider:
  - a. Were you able to try all or part of your plan? What, if anything, got in the way? What might you want to change about your plan for the future to help you get through the crisis without making the situation worse?