**DBT Worksheet: Managing Intense Emotions – Building Emotional Resilience**

**Purpose:**

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) helps you manage and navigate difficult emotions in a healthy way, so you don’t get overwhelmed or react in ways you’ll regret. Sometimes, those emotions can feel like they control you, but DBT teaches you that you have the power to control how you respond. This worksheet will help you learn how to build emotional resilience and manage intense emotions like anger, sadness, or frustration without letting them take over.

Learning how to handle strong emotions can make you feel more in control of your life and relationships. This worksheet focuses on skills you can use in the moment to calm yourself down, manage big feelings, and make better choices. By practicing these techniques regularly, you’ll become better at responding to challenges in a way that helps you feel more balanced and in control.

**Instructions:**

1. **Identify the Emotion**  
   Think about a recent situation where you felt overwhelmed by your emotions. What happened, and what emotion(s) did you experience? Be specific and think about how it felt physically (e.g., tight chest, shaking, etc.).

**Situation:**

**Emotion(s):**

**Physical Sensations:**

1. **Intensity Rating**  
   On a scale of 1-10, rate the intensity of the emotion you were feeling in the situation (1 = barely noticeable, 10 = overwhelming). This will help you understand how big the emotion felt and whether it was something you could handle or if it got too intense.

**Emotion Intensity (1-10):**

1. **What Urges Came Up?**  
   When we feel strong emotions, our brain often sends us signals to act in certain ways. For example, you might feel the urge to yell, shut down, or leave the situation. Think about what you wanted to do in this situation. Were there urges to act impulsively?

**Urges:**

**Why do you think you felt this way?**

1. **Choosing a DBT Skill to Use**  
   Now, let’s think about how you could respond differently by using DBT skills. Below are some DBT skills you can use to manage intense emotions. These are called **Distress Tolerance Skills**—skills that help you get through a tough moment without making things worse.

**Distress Tolerance Skills:**

* + **TIPP (Temperature, Intense Exercise, Paced Breathing, Progressive Muscle Relaxation):** These are physical skills that can help calm your nervous system and bring you back to a calmer state.
    - **Temperature:** Splash cold water on your face or hold an ice cube. This shocks your system and helps you calm down quickly.
    - **Intense Exercise:** Do something physical like running in place, jumping jacks, or even dancing. This helps release built-up energy and emotion.
    - **Paced Breathing:** Slow down your breath to calm yourself. Breathe in for 4 seconds, hold for 4, and breathe out for 4.
    - **Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR):** Tense and relax different muscle groups in your body, starting from your feet and moving up to your head. This helps release physical tension.
  + **Self-Soothing with the Five Senses:**
    - **Sight:** Look at something peaceful or calming (a favorite picture or nature outside).
    - **Sound:** Listen to music that makes you feel calm or relaxed.
    - **Touch:** Hold something comforting, like a soft blanket or a stuffed animal.
    - **Taste:** Savor something you enjoy, like a sweet treat or a favorite drink.
    - **Smell:** Inhale something calming like lavender, or your favorite scent.
  + **Radical Acceptance:** Sometimes, we have to accept that certain situations are just what they are, and there's nothing we can change in that moment. Instead of resisting, try to breathe through the discomfort and accept it.
  + **Distracting:** Get your mind off the emotion by doing something completely different. Try drawing, reading, or playing a game to give yourself a break.

**Which Skill Will You Use?**

**Why did you choose this skill?**

1. **Action Plan**  
   When you’re in the moment, sometimes it’s hard to think clearly. But having a plan can help you respond more effectively. Write down how you will use the skill(s) above in future situations. This way, you’ll be prepared the next time you’re overwhelmed.

**Plan for the Future:**

1. **Reflection on the Outcome**  
   After using the skill, take a moment to reflect on how it worked. Did it help you manage the emotion? Did you feel more in control afterward? If you didn’t use the skill yet, think about how it might have helped you.

**How did the skill help?**

**What could you improve next time?**

**Summary:**

Emotional regulation doesn’t happen overnight, but with practice, you can learn to manage your emotions more effectively. DBT skills like distress tolerance and self-soothing are powerful tools that help you stay grounded during moments of emotional intensity. Remember, your emotions are valid, but how you respond to them is what truly matters. Keep practicing these skills, and over time, you’ll feel more confident in your ability to handle whatever comes your way without getting swept up by your feelings.