

humantold

DBT Skills (Emotions Part 2)

Emotions are not positive or negative, good or bad, right or wrong. All emotions are a normal part of being human, and there is no right or wrong way to have them. Judging emotions as good or bad can create suffering, because it can keep us from feeling our feelings. It is more effective to think of our emotions as comfortable or uncomfortable, enjoyable or difficult.

You are not your emotion. Sometimes when we experience the same emotions a lot, we can mistake that emotion as a part of our identity. Feeling a difficult emotion doesn't mean that you are the difficult emotion, so instead of saying "I am depressed" say "I feel depressed."

You cannot get rid of emotions. We can't force ourselves to not have emotions. Avoiding or stuffing emotions just causes them to stick around longer. Radically accepting difficult emotions works better than trying to get rid of them.

Emotions do not last forever. Remember that emotions naturally come and go. Sometimes we keep the same emotion around by ruminating or behaving in ways that keep the emotion activated. Emotions will eventually pass, and we can use skills to tolerate them and to create new emotions, too.

Emotions are not facts. Emotions, especially when intense, can feel like the "truth." Sometimes we can mistake emotions as evidence and our belief can feel true.

You can have an emotion and not act on it. Although urges associated with an emotion can be strong, you can make a choice if you want to act on that urge. Even with intense emotions, you do not have to act on your urges.

Your emotions are unique to you. All people are capable of the same emotions, but people can have different emotions in response to the same situation. Each person can also experience the same emotion differently.