

YMCA – Week 2 “Feelings Matter” Conversation Series

Juggling Roles during COVID-19

STRUCTURE, ROUTINE, ORGANIZATION

For so many of us, everything is turned upside down. Working from home, homeschooling our children, inability to visit friends and family, everything is currently different. Our world appears chaotic, different, and unpredictable.

Take a minute to figure out those things most challenging (e-learning.... What the heck is google classroom? How do I zoom meet?) Ask for help if you are not sure. This stuff can be super overwhelming.

Communication is key if you are struggling. Ask for help from you children’s teachers or your boss/co-worker or your partner

Creating a routine...

Wake up, shower, get dress, work/school/check in with family members, (how can we resemble life pre-pandemic?)

Work in time segments

Take an actual lunch break

Take an afternoon break

Enjoy your family in the evening

Stick to normal bedtime!

SLEEP, DIET, EXERCISE really important (as always) for overall mental and physical health

Be consistent with flexibility, create a schedule with room for variation (especially with kids)

Create a positive space in your home. Whether this a good workspace, school space, soothing space. Make it comfortable to fit your needs. Juggling your work from room to room, or having school items strung out through the home is stressful. Add sensory items in this area, stress balls, music, soothing scents?

Therapy takeaway RADICAL ACCEPTANCE/DISTRESS TOLERANCE

Distress Tolerance Skills

Radical Acceptance

Sometimes you'll run into a problem that's simply out of your control. It can be easy to think "This isn't fair" or "I shouldn't have this problem", even though those ways of thinking only make the pain worse.

Radical acceptance refers to a healthier way of thinking during these situations. Instead of focusing on how you would like something to be different, you will recognize and accept the problem or situation as it is. Remember, accepting is not the same as liking or condoning something.

Learning to accept the problems that are out of your control will lead to less anxiety, anger, and sadness when dealing with them.

Situation	
You find out that you were not selected for a job where you felt that you were the best candidate.	
Typical Thinking	Radical Acceptance
"This isn't fair—I did everything right! I was the best one there. They can't do this to me."	"It's frustrating that I didn't get the job, but I accept that they felt someone else would be a better fit."

Self-Soothe with Senses

Find a pleasurable way to engage each of your five senses. Doing so will help to soothe your negative emotions.

Vision	Go for a walk somewhere nice and pay attention to the sights.
Hearing	Listen to something enjoyable such as music or nature.
Touch	Take a warm bath or get a massage.
Taste	Have a small treat—it doesn't have to be a full meal.
Smell	Find some flowers or spray a perfume or cologne you like.

Distress Tolerance Skills

Distraction (A.C.C.E.P.T.S.)

Negative feelings will usually pass, or at least lessen in intensity over time. It can be valuable to distract yourself until the emotions subside. The acronym "A.C.C.E.P.T.S." serves as a reminder of this idea.

A ctivities	Engage in activities that require thought and concentration. This could be a hobby, a project, work, or school.
C ontributing	Focus on someone or something other than yourself. You can volunteer, do a good deed, or do anything else that will contribute to a cause or person.
C omparisons	Look at your situation in comparison to something worse. Remember a time you were in more pain, or when someone else was going through something more difficult.
E motions	Do something that will create a competing emotion. Feeling sad? Watch a funny movie. Feeling nervous? Listen to soothing music.
P ushing Away	Do away with negative thoughts by pushing them out of your mind. Imagine writing your problem on a piece of paper, crumpling it up, and throwing it away. Refuse to think about the situation until a better time.
T houghts	When your emotions take over, try to focus on your thoughts. Count to 10, recite a poem in your head, or read a book.
S ensations	Find safe physical sensations to distract you from intense negative emotions. Wear a rubber band and snap it on your wrist, hold an ice cube in your hand, or eat something sour like a lime.

DISTRESS TOLERANCE HANDOUT 11



(Distress Tolerance Worksheets 8–9a)

Radical Acceptance

(When you cannot keep painful events and emotions from coming your way.)

WHAT IS RADICAL ACCEPTANCE?

1. Radical means *all the way*, complete and total.
2. It is accepting in your mind, your heart, and your body.
3. It's when you stop fighting reality, stop throwing tantrums because reality is not the way you want it, and let go of bitterness.

WHAT HAS TO BE ACCEPTED?

1. Reality is as it is (the facts about the past and the present are the facts, even if you don't like them).
2. There are limitations on the future for everyone (but only realistic limitations need to be accepted).
3. Everything has a cause (including events and situations that cause you pain and suffering).
4. Life can be worth living even with painful events in it.

WHY ACCEPT REALITY?

1. Rejecting reality does not change reality.
2. Changing reality requires first accepting reality.
3. Pain can't be avoided; it is nature's way of signaling that something is wrong.
4. Rejecting reality turns pain into suffering.
5. Refusing to accept reality can keep you stuck in unhappiness, bitterness, anger, sadness, shame, or other painful emotions.
6. Acceptance may lead to sadness, but deep calmness usually follows.
7. The path out of hell is through misery. By refusing to accept the misery that is part of climbing out of hell, you fall back into hell.

DISTRESS TOLERANCE HANDOUT 11A

Radical Acceptance: Factors That Interfere

RADICAL ACCEPTANCE IS NOT:

Approval, compassion, love, passivity, or against change.

FACTORS THAT INTERFERE WITH ACCEPTANCE

- 1. You don't have the skills for acceptance; you do not know how to accept really painful events and facts.
- 2. You believe that if you accept a painful event, you are making light of it or are approving of the facts, and that nothing will be done to change or prevent future painful events.
- 3. Emotions get in the way (unbearable sadness; anger at the person or group that caused the painful event; rage at the injustice of the world; overwhelming shame about who you are; guilt about your own behavior).
- Other: _____

DISTRESS TOLERANCE HANDOUT 11B

(Distress Tolerance Worksheets 9, 9a)

Practicing Radical Acceptance Step by Step

- Observe that you are questioning or fighting reality (“It shouldn’t be this way”).
- Remind yourself that the unpleasant reality is just as it is and cannot be changed (“This is what happened”).
- Remind yourself that there are causes for the reality. Acknowledge that some sort of history led up to this very moment. Consider how people’s lives have been shaped by a series of factors. Notice that given these causal factors and how history led up to this moment, this reality had to occur just this way (“This is how things happened”).
- Practice accepting with the whole self (mind, body, and spirit). Be creative in finding ways to involve your whole self. Use accepting self-talk—but also consider using relaxation; mindfulness of your breath; half-smiling and willing hands while thinking about what feels unacceptable; prayer; going to a place that helps bring you to acceptance; or imagery.
- Practice opposite action. List all the behaviors you would do if you did accept the facts. Then act as if you have already accepted the facts. Engage in the behaviors that you would do if you really had accepted.
- Cope ahead with events that seem unacceptable. Imagine (in your mind’s eye) believing what you don’t want to accept. Rehearse in your mind what you would do if you accepted what seems unacceptable.
- Attend to body sensations as you think about what you need to accept.
- Allow disappointment, sadness, or grief to arise within you.
- Acknowledge that life can be worth living even when there is pain.
- Do pros and cons if you find yourself resisting practicing acceptance.