



My distress tolerance worksheet

Rate the moment, choose from your menu, weigh any urge, then rate again. Below that, build your plan and keep a short log.

01 1. How bad is it right now?

A quick, honest number. You are not trying to talk yourself out of how you feel.

How much distress am I in right now?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Manageable

Unbearable

What happened, in a few words?

What am I feeling most? (for example panic, shame, anger, grief, emptiness)

02 2. My skills menu

Tick the ones that suit you and add your own. The aim is to give your mind or body something else to do while the peak passes. None of these removes the problem, and they are not meant to.

Take my mind elsewhere for a while

- ☐ A task that needs focus (a puzzle, tidying one drawer, a recipe)
- ☐ A show, film or podcast that holds my attention
- ☐ Counting, or listing things in a category (cities, songs, foods)
- ☐ Doing something kind for someone else
- ☐ Going somewhere with other people around, even a shop or a café

Soothe myself through the five senses

- ☐ Sight: a calming photo, the sky, a candle, a walk with my eyes up
- ☐ Sound: music I find steady, rain sounds, birdsong
- ☐ Smell: hand cream, a warm drink, fresh air, a scent I like
- ☐ Taste: something I can eat slowly, a mint, a sip of tea
- ☐ Touch: a warm shower, a soft blanket, holding something heavy or textured

Change what my body is doing

- ☐ Breathe out for longer than I breathe in
- ☐ Walk briskly for a few minutes

- ☐ Stretch, shake out my hands and arms, roll my shoulders
- ☐ Tense and release my fists, then my shoulders
- ☐ Cool water on my hands (check the TIPP worksheet's safety list before using it on my face)

My own skills, in my own words:

The one or two I will try now:

03 3. If I have an urge to act

Distress can come with a pull to do something: send the message, quit, drink, shout, spend, disappear. Slow it down by looking at both sides. Do not write about methods of harming yourself here. If that is the urge, stop and use the numbers above.

The urge is to...

If I act on it

Short term and long term

If I wait and use a skill

Short term and long term

Which choice fits the person I want to be next week?

04 4. Accepting what I can't change right now

Arguing with a fact you can't change can leave you stuck. Accepting it does not mean you approve of it or that it is fair. It means you stop spending energy arguing with what has already happened.

The fact I am struggling to accept:

A sentence I can say in my own words (for example 'This has happened, and I don't have to like it'):

One small thing within my control in the next hour:

05 5. How bad is it now?

Re-rate it. It does not need to reach zero.

How much distress am I in now?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Manageable					Unbearable				

What helped, and what didn't?

06 6. My plan and log

Fill in the plan when you are calm. Use the log to see what works for you over time.

If I notice... A sign, a place or a time _____ _____ _____	Then I will... One or two skills from my menu _____ _____ _____
---	--

Someone I can contact if skills aren't enough:

When Date, and what happened	Before 1 to 10	Skill I used	After 1 to 10
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

When you're done, a moment to reflect

- What usually sets off your hardest moments, and how early can you spot the first sign?
- Which skill on your menu changed how you felt, even a little?
- What do you do now that makes a hard moment worse, and what could you do instead?
- What would you say to a friend sitting through the same moment?
- Once you are steadier, is there something underneath this that is worth talking to someone about?

Free worksheet from selfgrowth.org. Free self-growth worksheets for real life. Fill it in online and it saves as you go: selfgrowth.org/worksheets/distress-tolerance-worksheet



If things feel heavier than a worksheet can hold

These are self-reflection tools, not therapy. If you're struggling, especially if you have any thoughts of harming yourself, please reach out to someone now. In the US, call or text **988**. In the UK & Ireland, call **116 123** (Samaritans). Elsewhere, find a free helpline at findahelpline.com. If you're in immediate danger, call your local emergency number.