

# 15. Acceptance of your experience

*Learn to mindfully accept difficult emotions*

## THINK & FEEL



### DURATION

20 minutes

### FREQUENCY

1x/day

### DIFFICULTY

Moderate

### EVIDENCE QUALITY



+ WELLBEING

+ RESILIENCE

+ MOOD

+ ANXIETY

+ STRESS



## What it is?

- Strong emotions are a natural part of life, and are completely understandable when you think about how busy your life is! Family, friends, study, work, relationships... There are lots of sources of difficult emotions.
- Lots of psychological studies have found that a good way to deal with negative emotions is simply to accept them rather than avoid or control them.
- This is not about ignoring or minimising the difficult emotions, but about mindfully noticing and accepting them.

## What can I use it for?

- This activity is about proactively managing your difficult emotions to make sure they don't get the best of you.
- You can use it to reduce negative emotions and help you deal with your mood. You can also use it to battle the effects of stress or anxiety.

## How to do it?

A description of each of these steps is available on the other side of this page:

1. Identify an emotion you would like to work on
2. Label the emotion
3. Accept the emotion
4. Realise that the emotion is just a temporary state
5. Inquire and investigate the effects of the emotions
6. Let go of the need to control your emotions, and accept them coming and eventually going.

## Anything to consider before I start?

- If emotions become too difficult to manage, seek help to deal with them.



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**Notice or picking the emotion:** Once you are aware of the emotion, notice where it is in your body. How do you feel? It may be tension in the muscle, your heart rate, or as a stomach ache. If you are practicing this skill: imagine an emotional event which brought up a specific emotion. Make sure you turn to it with acceptance.

**Identify the emotion:** What emotion can you identify? Write it down. Remember, this is about objectively noticing the emotion. e.g. "this is embarrassment", not "I'm embarrassed".

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**What does the emotion make you feel?** Try not to deny the emotion, instead accept it. What does the emotion make you feel like. Write it down objectively. E.g. *I am noticing* that I feel angry and I am feeling hot, not 'I am angry and hot'.

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**Accept the emotion.** Don't try and avoid or control the emotion. Acknowledge that it exists.

**Realise that it is temporary.** How long do you expect this emotion to last? A day, two days? A week? Or is it already reducing by writing your thoughts down? Remember, emotions are temporary.

**Investigation and respond.** What brought up this emotion for you? What triggered you or made you feel this way? **Let go of the need to control your emotion** The key to this activity is to mindfully deal with your emotions rather than control them. This is hard and it can take some time.

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## MY HABIT STATEMENT

Habit Statement: .....

When will I practice it?

How will I remind myself to practice?

How will I celebrate?

