

DBT TIPP Skill Worksheet

Reduce acute emotional arousal before choosing your next action

When to use TIPP

TIPP is a short-term DBT crisis-survival sequence for moments of very high emotional arousal, when thinking clearly is difficult and acting on an urge could make the situation worse. The goal is to lower body arousal enough to choose the next effective step - not to solve the whole problem.

Part	Practice	Safety check
T - Temperature	Use brief, comfortable face cooling such as a cool damp cloth or a wrapped cool pack on the cheeks and upper face. Keep breathing normally.	Do not submerge your head, hold your breath, use ice directly on skin or use extreme cold. Ask a clinician first if you have heart, circulation, fainting, cold-sensitivity or other relevant medical conditions.
I - Intense exercise	If medically safe, do a brief burst of vigorous movement that fits your ability, then stop and notice the shift in arousal.	Choose low-impact options when needed. Stop for chest pain, faintness, unusual breathlessness, injury pain or other alarming symptoms.
P - Paced breathing	Slow the breath without forcing it. Try inhaling gently for 4 counts and exhaling for 6 counts for 1-3 minutes.	Do not hold the breath. Return to normal breathing if dizzy, numb, panicky or uncomfortable.
P - Paired muscle relaxation	Gently tense one muscle group while breathing in, then release as you breathe out. Notice the contrast between tension and release.	Use light tension only. Skip injured, painful or medically restricted areas.

TIPP crisis plan

What situation, emotion and action urge are present right now?

Before practice	Rating
Emotional intensity (0-10)	
Urge intensity (0-10)	
Can I stay physically safe for the next 10 minutes? Yes / No / Unsure	

Temperature: Which safe cooling option will I use? What medical cautions apply to me?

Intense exercise: What movement is safe, accessible and time-limited for me?

Paced breathing and paired relaxation: What rhythm and muscle groups will I use?

After practice	Rating / notes
Emotional intensity (0-10)	
Urge intensity (0-10)	
What is the next effective action?	

Use this worksheet safely

This worksheet is for education and skills practice. It does not replace assessment, diagnosis, crisis support or individual treatment. If you may harm yourself or someone else, cannot stay safe, or have a medical emergency, contact local emergency services or a qualified crisis resource now. TIPP includes physical techniques. Modify or avoid them when a medical condition, pregnancy, disability, medication effect or clinician instruction makes them unsafe.

Research and source notes: Linehan, M. M. (2025). *DBT Skills Training Manual*, Revised Edition. Guilford Press. Linehan, M. M. (2025). *DBT Skills Training Handouts and Worksheets*, Revised Edition. Guilford Press. Lee, R. K., Harms, C. A., & Jeffery, S. E. (2022). The contribution of skills to the effectiveness of dialectical behavioral therapy. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 78(12), 2396-2409. Zaccaro, A., et al. (2018). How breath-control can change your life: A systematic review on psycho-physiological correlates of slow breathing. *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, 12, 353. American Heart Association. (2026). *Nonoptimal Temperature and Cardiovascular Health*: scientific statement and safety summary. This is an original CounselorAid worksheet and does not reproduce proprietary DBT handouts.