DISTRESS TOLERANCE HANDOUT 9

(Distress Tolerance Worksheets 7, 7a, 7b; pp. 386–388)

Improving the Moment

A way to remember these skills is the word **IMPROVE.**

With **I**magery:

- ❑ Imagine very relaxing scenes.
- ❑ Imagine a secret room within yourself. Furnish it the way you like. Close and lock the door on anything that can hurt you.
- ❑ Imagine everything going well.
- ❑ Make up a calming fantasy world.
- ❑ Imagine hurtful emotions draining out of you like water out of a pipe.
- ❑ Remember a happy time and imagine yourself in it again; play out the time in your mind again.
- ❑ Other: _____

With **M**eaning:

- ❑ Find purpose or meaning in a painful situation.
- ❑ Focus on whatever positive aspects of a painful situation you can find.
- ❑ Repeat these positive aspects in your mind.
- ❑ Remember, listen to, or read about spiritual values.
- ❑ Other: _____

With **P**rayer:

- ❑ Open your heart to a supreme being, God, or your own Wise Mind.
- ❑ Ask for strength to bear the pain.
- ❑ Turn things over to God or a higher being.
- ❑ Other: _____

With **R**elaxing actions:

- ❑ Take a hot bath or sit in a hot tub.
- ❑ Drink hot milk.
- ❑ Massage your neck and scalp.
- ❑ Practice yoga or other stretching.
- ❑ Breathe deeply.
- ❑ Change your facial expression.
- ❑ Other: _____

With **O**ne thing in the moment:

- ❑ Focus your entire attention on just what you are doing.
- ❑ Keep yourself in the moment.
- ❑ Put your mind in the present.
- ❑ Focus your entire attention on the physical
- ❑ Listen to a sensory awareness recording (or use Distress Tolerance Handout 9a)
- ❑ Other: _____

With a brief **V**acation:

- ❑ Give yourself a brief vacation.
- ❑ Get in bed; pull the covers up over your head.
- ❑ Go to the beach or the woods for the day.
- ❑ Get a magazine and read it with chocolates.
- ❑ Turn off your phone for a day.
- ❑ Take a blanket to the park and sit on it for a whole afternoon.
- ❑ Take a 1-hour breather from hard work.
- ❑ Take a brief vacation from responsibility.
- ❑ Other: _____

With self-**E**ncouragement and rethinking the situation:

- ❑ Cheerlead yourself: "You go, girl!" "You da man!"
- ❑ "I will make it out of this."
- ❑ "I'm doing the best I can."
- ❑ Repeat over and over: "I can stand it."
- ❑ "This too shall pass."
- ❑ "I will be OK."
- ❑ "It won't last forever."
- ❑ Other: _____

List (and then practice) rethoughts that are particularly important in your crisis situations (e.g., "The fact that he did not pick me up doesn't mean he doesn't love me"):

❑ _____ ❑ _____

From *DBT Skills Training Handouts and Worksheets, Second Edition,* by Marsha M. Linehan. Copyright 2015 by Marsha M. Linehan. Permission to photocopy or download and print this handout is granted to purchasers of this book for personal use or for use with clients.