

## EMOTION REGULATION HANDOUT 14

(Emotion Regulation Worksheets 9–14b)

### Overview: Reducing Vulnerability to Emotion Mind— Building a Life Worth Living

A way to remember these skills is to remember the term **ABC PLEASE**.

#### **ACCUMULATE POSITIVE EMOTIONS**

**A**

**Short Term:** Do pleasant things that are possible now.

**Long Term:** Make changes in your life so that positive events will happen more often in the future. Build a “life worth living.”

#### **BUILD MASTERY**

**B**

Do things that make you feel competent and effective to combat helplessness and hopelessness.

#### **COPE AHEAD OF TIME WITH EMOTIONAL SITUATIONS**

**C**

Rehearse a plan ahead of time so that you are prepared to cope skillfully with emotional situations.

#### **PLEASE TAKE CARE OF YOUR MIND BY TAKING CARE OF YOUR BODY**

**PLEASE**

Treat Physical illness, balance Eating,  
avoid mood-Altering substances, balance Sleep,  
and get Exercise.



## Accumulating Positive Emotions: Short Term

Accumulate positive emotions in the short term by doing these things.

### **BUILD POSITIVE EXPERIENCES NOW**

- INCREASE PLEASANT EVENTS that lead to positive emotions.
- Do ONE THING each day from the Pleasant Events List.  
(See *Emotion Regulation Handout 16.*)
- Practice opposite action; AVOID AVOIDING.
- BE MINDFUL of pleasant events (no multitasking).

### **BE MINDFUL OF POSITIVE EXPERIENCES**

- FOCUS your attention on positive moments when they are happening.  
No multitasking.
- REFOCUS your attention when your mind wanders to the negative.
- PARTICIPATE and ENGAGE fully in each experience.

### **BE UNMINDFUL OF WORRIES**

Such as . . .

- When the positive experience will end.
- Whether you deserve this positive experience.
- How much more might be expected of you now.



## Accumulating Positive Emotions: Long Term

**A**ccumulate positive emotions in the long term  
to build a “life worth living.”

That is, make changes in your life so that positive events will occur in the future.

### Step 1. Avoid avoiding.

Start now to do what is needed to build the life you want. If you are not sure about what to do, follow the steps below.

### Step 2. Identify values that are important to you.

ASK: What values are really important to me in my life?

*Examples:* Be productive; be part of a group; treat others well; be physically fit.

### Step 3. Identify one value to work on now.

ASK: What is really important to me, right now, to work on in my life?

*Example:* Be productive.

### Step 4. Identify a few goals related to this value.

ASK: What specific goals can I work on that will make this value part of my life?

*Examples:* Get a job where I can do something useful.

Be more active keeping up with important tasks at home.

Find a volunteer job that will use skills I already have.

### Step 5. Choose one goal to work on now.

Do pros and cons, if necessary, to select a goal to work on now.

*Example:* Get a job where I can do something useful.

### Step 6. Identify small action steps toward your goal.

ASK: What small steps can I take to get to my goal?

*Examples:* Visit places and look for job openings on the Internet in my area.

Submit applications for jobs at places I want to work.

Write résumé.

Check out benefits at places I might want to work.

### Step 7. Take one action step now.

*Example:* Go on Internet and check for jobs in my area.



## Build Mastery and Cope Ahead

### **B**uild Mastery

1. Plan on doing at least one thing each day to build a sense of accomplishment.

Example: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Plan for success, not failure.

- Do something difficult, but possible.

3. Gradually increase the difficulty over time.

- If the first task is too difficult, do something a little easier next time.

4. Look for a challenge.

- If the task is too easy, try something a little harder next time.

### **C**ope Ahead of Time with Difficult Situations

1. **Describe** the situation that is likely to prompt problem behavior.

- Check the facts. Be specific in describing the situation.
- Name the emotions and actions likely to interfere with using your skills.

2. **Decide** what coping or problem-solving skills you want to use in the situation.

- Be specific. Write out in detail how you will cope with the situation and with your emotions and action urges.

3. **Imagine the situation** in your mind as vividly as possible.

- Imagine yourself **IN** the situation **NOW**, not watching the situation.

4. **Rehearse in your mind coping effectively.**

- Rehearse in your mind exactly what you can do to cope effectively.
- Rehearse your actions, your thoughts, what you say, and how to say it.
- Rehearse coping effectively with new problems that come up.
- Rehearse coping effectively with your most feared catastrophe.

5. **Practice relaxation *after* rehearsing.**