

DBT Skills Group

- Goal: Learn DBT skills to help manage strong emotions, unhelpful behavior urges, improving relationships, and navigate stressful situations in your life, and to achieve readiness for trauma exposures
- Daily Format:
 - Brief mindfulness exercise
 - Review of previous day's skills practice
 - Learn and try out new skills
 - Assign outside practice

MINDFULNESS PRACTICE

WISE MIND



Skills Practice Review: Opposite Action

- Review the Emotion Specific Opposite Action handout
- Practice Opposite Action to any urge that you don't find effective
 - Ex. Spending time outside if the urge is to stay in bed
 - Ex. Catching yourself scrolling social media & put phone down
- Optional advanced practice:
 - Practice Opposite Action to a trauma-related distressing emotion



STATES OF MIND & WISE MIND



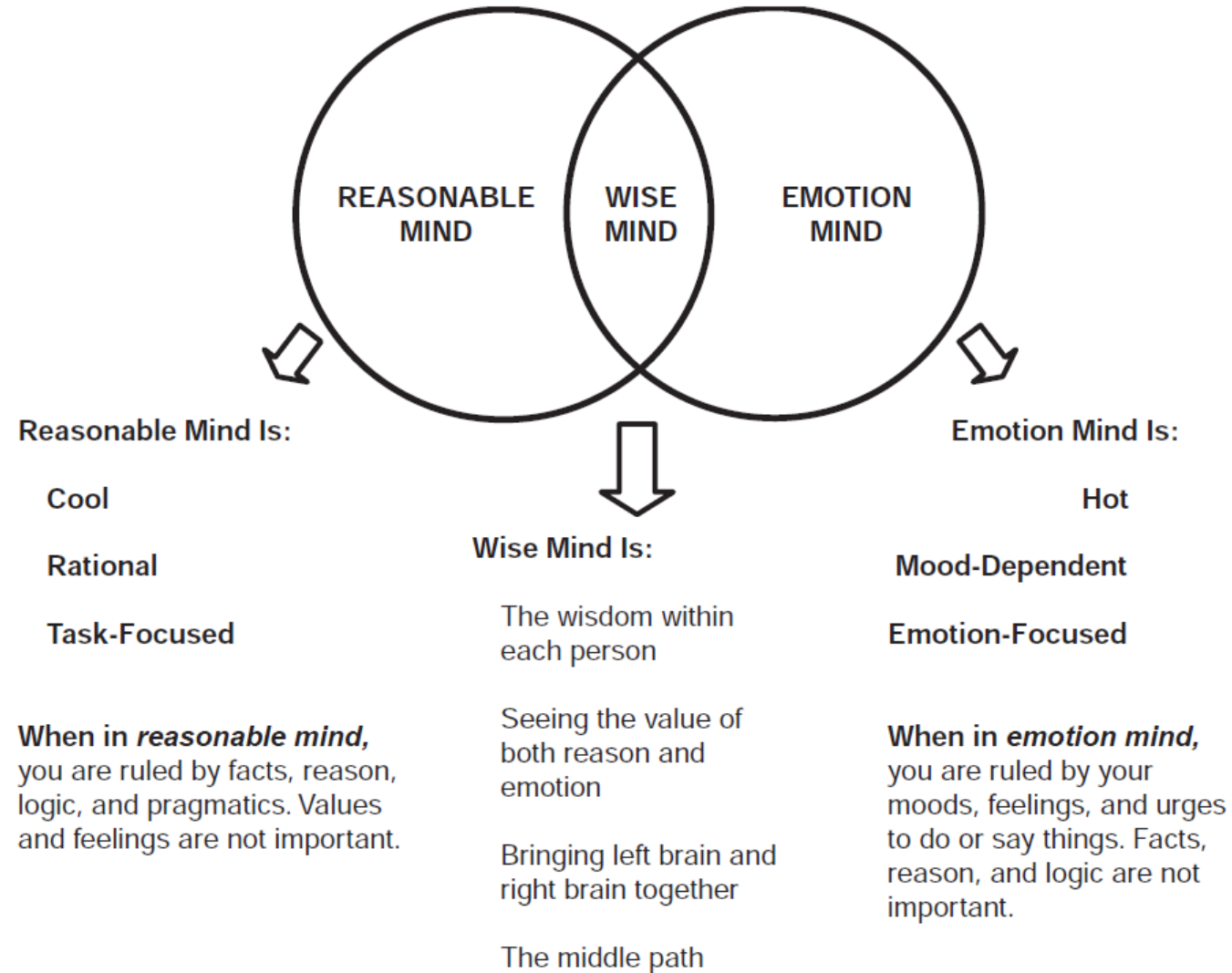
DBT Skills Categories

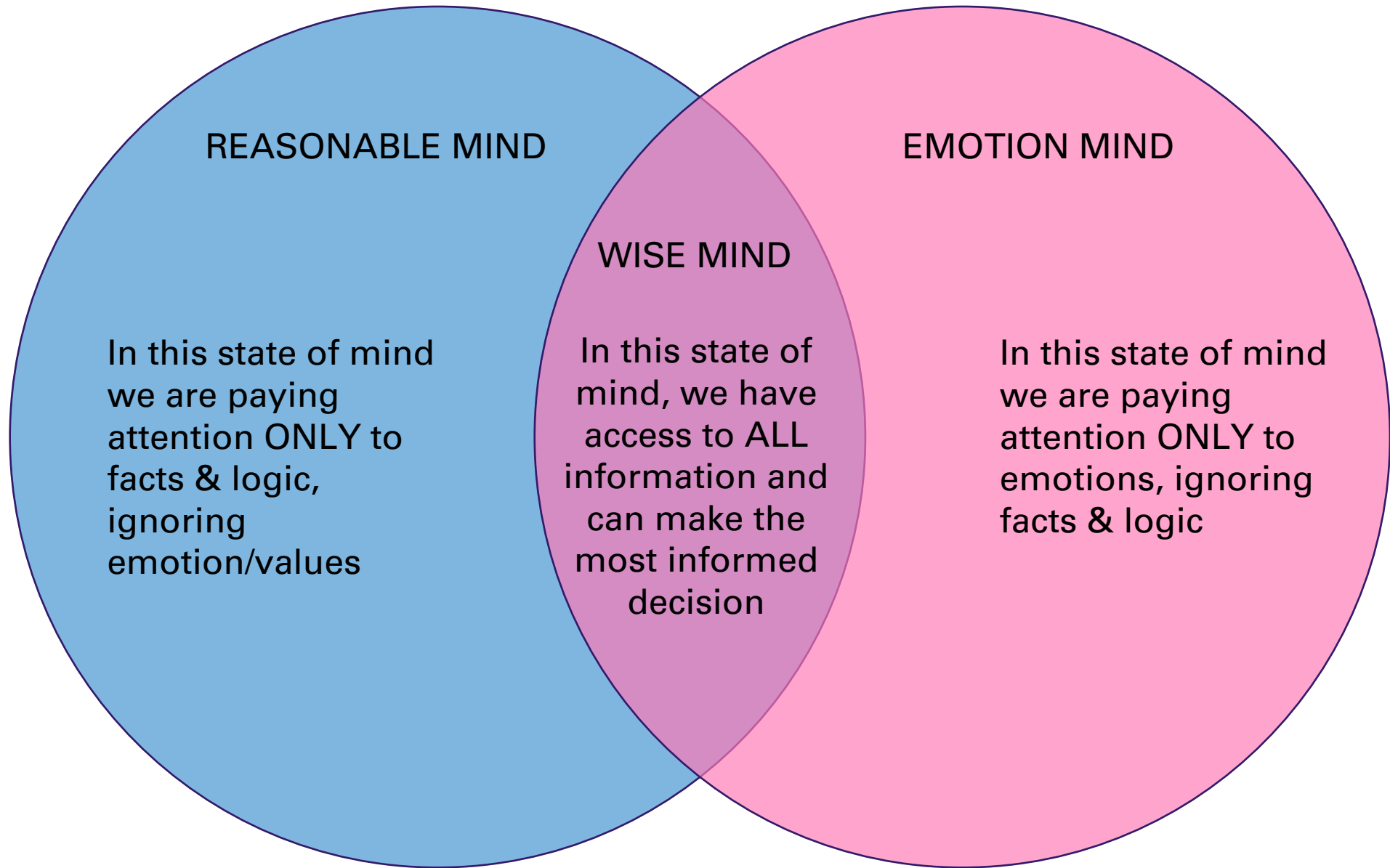
- **Mindfulness: Skills that help us increase our awareness of our thoughts, feelings, and surroundings so that we can react effectively in the moment.**
- Distress Tolerance
- Emotion Regulation
- Interpersonal Effectiveness

Goals of today's class:

- Learn how to practice recognizing different states of mind
- Understand “Wise Mind” concept
- Begin practicing how to access Wise Mind

Wise Mind: States of Mind





Wise Mind

- Integrating emotion and reasonable mind– logic, observation, our own experiences, and intuition
- Striking a balance between emotional and reasonable to support values-based decision making
- A part of us that helps us act in our best interests instead of being controlled by moods and emotions
- Something we all have but we can struggle to access it in difficult moments. We need to practice!

Why is recognizing these states of mind important?

- Building this skill is crucial for people who have been through trauma:
 - Break the habit of ignoring “gut” feelings and red flags and not trusting themselves to make good decisions
 - Build awareness around our internal experience
 - Reduce avoidance/bring awareness to values-based actions

Example: planning exposure practice

Emotion Mind

Excessive focus on fear leads you to avoid planning exposures at all, or impulsively avoid a planned exposure

Reasonable mind

Excessive focus on the goal of completing exposures leads you to attempt to be practicing constantly, without sufficient breaks, attempting the highest difficulty tasks first

Wise Mind

Intentionally choosing exposure practice tasks that will be difficult but not overwhelming, planning ahead for expected challenges, following through when the moment comes, and allowing yourself to change plans mindfully as needed

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Example: working for unfair boss

Emotion Mind

Reasonable mind

Wise Mind

How can we get better at accessing Wise Mind?

EVERY skill we teach in DBT is one of many ways to practice reaching a Wise Mind decision!

Here are some ways to get started practicing:

Today we will focus on how to practice #3

1. Practice identifying examples from the recent past of times when we have been in emotion/reasonable/wise mind
2. Practice identifying & labeling what state of mind we are in currently
3. Practice learning how to increase our awareness of both in-the-moment emotions & urges, and current environment & context
4. Practice identifying and reminding ourselves of our longer-term goals and values
5. Combine steps 3&4 before reacting or deciding how to proceed in any given moment

Ways to practice increasing awareness:

- Any mindfulness/meditation practice that gives us time to pause and mindfully observe internal thoughts & feelings
 - Ex) Breathe “Wise” in, and “Mind” out
 - Focus entirely on the words and continue until you have settled into Wise Mind
- Is this Wise Mind? Technique
 - Observing a current behavior and asking yourself “Is this Wise Mind?”
 - Settle into breathing, letting your attention settle at your center, listening to your gut

Summary and takeaways

- **Wise Mind** integrates information from logic, our environment, and our own thoughts/feelings
- Helps us respond intuitively and effectively to even the most challenging situations
- We all have a Wise Mind, but may need practice tuning in

Homework Options

- Practice filling out the “Wise Mind- States of Mind” worksheet (identifying states of mind)
- Select an option from the “Ideas for Practicing Wise Mind” handout, or select your own meditation practice
- Practice pausing and asking yourself “Is this Wise Mind?” (set timers to remind yourself!)