

GETTING STARTED

Getting Started

Begin with what feels possible - not with what you think you should finish.

**ONE PAGE
CAN BE
ENOUGH.**

USE THE WORKBOOK YOUR WAY

There is no single right place to begin.

Use the structure that fits today. These are three independent entry points, not steps you must complete.

CHOOSE AN ENTRY POINT

FOLLOW THE PATH

Move through the workbook in order when you want structure.

GO BY NEED

Use the starting-point map on p. 8 to find the closest skill.

RETURN TO WHAT HELPS

Repeat any reprintable page when practice or tracking would be useful.



Not sure? Turn the page for a brief check-in.

Quick Check-In: What Feels Possible Today?

This is not a test of motivation or wellness. It is a brief check-in so the practice fits the capacity you have today. Choose what is realistic now, not what you think you should be able to do. You can change your answer at any point.

1. Date

2. How much room do I have for practice right now?

- ☐ 0 almost none
 ☐ 1
 ☐ 2
 ☐ 3
 ☐ 4
 ☐ 5 some room

3. What do I need most right now?

- ☐ Return to the present
 ☐ Get through a hard moment
☐ Understand what is happening
 ☐ Prepare one next step

4. Today, I can...

Examples: read one page, fill one box, or practice for two minutes.

☐

I give myself permission to do less, stop, or return later.



A low-capacity day does not mean you are doing it wrong. Reading one prompt can be the whole practice.

Choose a Skill for What You Need Now

You do not need to diagnose the problem or choose the perfect skill. Mark the need that sounds closest, then start with one suggested page. If more than one row fits, choose the lightest place to begin.

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RETURN TO THE PRESENT

Mindfulness Practice Record, p. 11 | Wise Mind, p. 13

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GET THROUGH AN EMOTIONAL PEAK

STOP, p. 15 | TIPP Plan, p. 17 | ACCEPTS Plan, p. 19

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UNDERSTAND AN EMOTION

Emotion Signals Map, p. 29 | Check the Facts, pp. 31-32

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PREPARE A CONVERSATION

Which Goal Matters Most?, p. 37 | DEAR MAN, pp. 38-39 | FAST, p. 41

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NOTICE A REPEATING PATTERN

Emotional Regulation Tracker, p. 30 | Optional Behavior Chain, pp. 43-45

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REVIEW WHAT HAS HELPED

Personal Toolkit, p. 48 | Weekly Review, pp. 50-51 | Closing Reflection, p. 52

I will try...

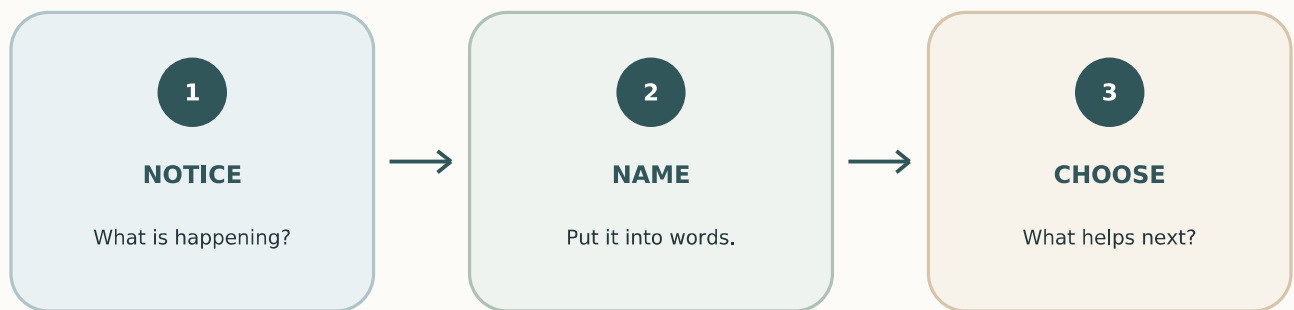
Write one page or skill, not the whole plan.



These are navigation options, not rules. If a page does not fit once you open it, choose another or return later.

Mindfulness

Use this simple cue in sequence. Pause at any step and return when you are ready.



Mindfulness is not a requirement to relax or empty your mind. It is a way of observing, describing, and participating with more awareness and less automatic reaction.

For the full teaching, return to Chapter 2 in The DBT BOOK For Adults.

Mindfulness What and How - At a Glance

WHAT skills are what you do with attention; HOW skills are the way you practice. For this record, move through all three WHAT actions and bring all three HOW qualities to the activity.

WHAT | THREE ACTIONS

1 OBSERVE

Notice thoughts, feelings, sensations, urges, or surroundings without fixing them.

2 DESCRIBE

Put what you notice into clear words that stay close to the facts.

3 PARTICIPATE

Bring your full attention to the activity instead of watching yourself from the sidelines.

HOW | THREE QUALITIES

1 NONJUDGMENTALLY

Notice labels such as good, bad, weak, or unfair, then return to description.

2 ONE-MINDFULLY

Do one thing in this moment, returning gently whenever your attention wanders.

3 EFFECTIVELY

Choose what serves the situation and your goal, not what proves a point.

ONE ADULT EXAMPLE

- WHAT**
- 1 Observe the tension and urge to reply.
 - 2 Describe: 'My jaw is tight, and I want to defend myself.'
 - 3 Participate by rereading once and drafting a response.

HOW Stay nonjudgmental, one-mindful, and effective while choosing what serves your goal.

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The aim is practice, not perfect focus. If you lose the thread, return to Observe and continue.

Related teaching: Chapter 2, especially p. 11

Mindfulness Practice Record - What + How

Choose an ordinary activity that is safe to practice with. Complete every numbered item below. The WHAT actions and HOW qualities are not choices: use all three of each during the practice. Returning after attention wanders counts as practice.

1. Date / ordinary activity

Examples: drinking coffee, walking to the car, folding laundry, reading an email.

2. WHAT - COMPLETE ALL 3

DO 1, THEN 2, THEN 3. THESE ARE NOT OPTIONS.

- 1 OBSERVE
- 2 DESCRIBE
- 3 PARTICIPATE

3. HOW - APPLY ALL 3

USE EVERY QUALITY. THESE ARE NOT OPTIONS.

- 1 NONJUDGMENTALLY
- 2 ONE-MINDFULLY
- 3 EFFECTIVELY

4. What did I notice in my thoughts, emotions, body, or surroundings?

5. What supported the practice?

6. What pulled my attention away, without judging it?

7. My next micro-practice

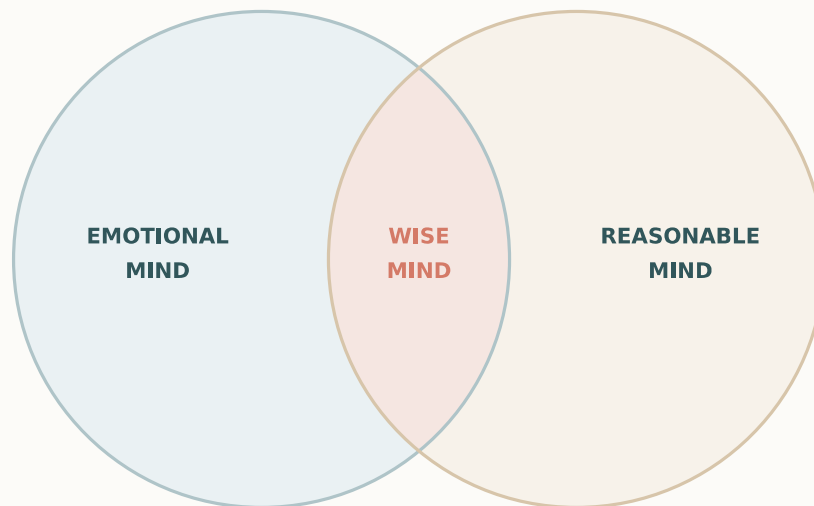
Keep it small and specific.



If an activity becomes activating or unsafe to continue, stop the practice and orient to your present surroundings or seek appropriate support.

Wise Mind - A Brief Guide

These are perspectives, not steps, and none is morally better. Wise Mind makes room for both emotion and reason in the present situation.



EMOTIONAL MIND

Feelings, urges, needs, memories, and values are loud. This state carries important information, but intensity can narrow the view.

WISE MIND

Emotion and reason are both heard with context, values, and safety. It may feel clear or simply less pulled. It is integration, not automatic compromise.

REASONABLE MIND

Facts, logic, planning, and practical limits lead. This state can clarify options, but it may underweight emotional needs.

A DECISION EXAMPLE

Emotional Mind: Quit today.

Reasonable Mind: Stay because I need the income.

Wise Mind: Do not decide at the peak. Gather options, rest, and choose a workable next step.

Wise Mind may support action, a pause, a boundary, or a firm no.

Use the worksheet on p. 13

Wise Mind Decision Worksheet

Use this page for a decision that is safe to explore without immediate pressure. Let emotion and reason each contribute; Wise Mind does not silence feelings or discard facts.

1. What decision or situation am I considering?

2. Emotional Mind

What do my feelings, fears, wishes, or urges say?

3. Reasonable Mind

What do the facts, priorities, and practical limits say?

4. Wise Mind

What becomes clearer when I make room for both perspectives?

5. One manageable next step

Choose a step that is specific, realistic, and consistent with safety and your values.

6. How ready do I feel to take that step?

○
0

not ready

○
1

○
2

○
3

○
4

○
5

ready



If this decision involves threat, coercion, abuse, or urgent risk, prioritize protection and qualified support over completing the worksheet.