

Bodhi Life Balance

Mental Health Workbook Series

THE TIPP METHOD

Cool. Move. Breathe. Release.

A simple body-first workbook for emotional storms, strong urges, panic, anger, shutdown, and overwhelm.

Part One: Learn the skill

Part Two: Practice the skill

How to Use This Workbook

The TIPP Method is a fast distress tolerance skill. It is designed for moments when emotions are high and the body is acting like there is an emergency. TIPP helps calm the body first so the mind has a better chance to think clearly.

The goal is not to erase feelings.

The goal is to lower the intensity enough to pause, make a safer choice, and take the next right step.

Use this workbook when:

- Your emotion feels like a 7, 8, 9, or 10 out of 10.
- You feel close to yelling, quitting, using, self-sabotaging, or making an impulsive choice.
- You are anxious, panicked, angry, overwhelmed, numb, or shut down.
- Talking yourself down is not working because your body is too activated.

Important safety note:

This workbook is educational and is not a substitute for therapy, medical care, or emergency support. If you are in immediate danger, call 911. If you are in the United States and need suicide or emotional crisis support, call or text 988. If any part of TIPP feels medically unsafe, use a gentler version or skip that step.

Part One: A Simple Explanation of TIPP

TIPP is a body-first coping method from Dialectical Behavior Therapy skills. It can help people manage intense emotional waves by changing physical arousal first. When the body settles, the brain often gets more room to make a wise choice.

TIPP stands for:

Temperature, Intense Exercise, Paced Breathing, and Progressive Muscle Relaxation.

T = Temperature

Change your body temperature to interrupt the emotional surge.

- ☐ Splash cool water on your face.
- ☐ Hold a cold pack wrapped in cloth on your cheeks.
- ☐ Hold something cool and notice the sensation.

I = Intense Exercise

Move the body hard enough to burn off some stress energy.

- ☐ Do wall pushups, squats, jumping jacks, or a fast walk.
- ☐ Keep it short, safe, and realistic.
- ☐ Stop if you feel pain, chest pressure, or dizziness.

P = Paced Breathing

Slow the breath, especially the exhale, so your body receives a safety signal.

- ☐ Try inhale 4, exhale 6.
- ☐ Repeat for 1 to 3 minutes.
- ☐ Keep it comfortable. Do not force your breath.

P = Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Tense and release muscles to help your body let go.

- ☐ Tense a muscle group for about 5 seconds.
- ☐ Release for about 10 seconds.
- ☐ Notice the difference between tight and loose.

The 5 Minute TIPP Sequence

1. Pause and rate the emotion from 0 to 10.
2. Use a safe temperature change for 15 to 60 seconds.
3. Move intensely but safely for 30 to 90 seconds.
4. Use paced breathing for 1 to 3 minutes.
5. Tense and release a few muscle groups, then rate the emotion again.

After TIPP, ask: What is one safe next step I can take right now?

When TIPP Works Best

TIPP is best used early in the emotional storm, before the feeling takes over your behavior. It can also work after the storm has already started. Think of TIPP as a brake pedal. It may not stop the car instantly, but it can slow things down enough to steer.

Use TIPP before the conversation, not after the damage.

If you already know you are about to say something destructive, walk away safely and do TIPP first. Then come back when your body is calmer.

TIPP is not meant for:

- Proving you are tough.
- Punishing yourself.
- Avoiding every feeling forever.
- Replacing therapy, medication support, medical care, or crisis care when those are needed.

TIPP is meant for:

- Getting through the next few minutes safely.
- Lowering emotional intensity enough to make a better choice.
- Giving your nervous system a reset.
- Building confidence that you can ride out emotional waves.

Medical and Safety Cautions

Use common sense and adapt the skill to your body. Choose gentler options if you have heart concerns, breathing problems, fainting history, seizures, significant injuries, pregnancy, eating disorder concerns, or any medical restriction. Stop immediately if you feel chest pain, severe shortness of breath, faintness, confusion, or unsafe body sensations.

Part Two: Fillable TIPP Worksheet Section

This section guides you through the TIPP Method step by step. You can write on the printed pages or type directly into the boxes in Word.

Before you begin:

If you are in immediate danger, call 911. If you might harm yourself or someone else, seek live support now. Call or text 988 in the United States for suicide or emotional crisis support.

Quick Safety Check

☐ I am physically safe enough to do this worksheet right now.	☐ I moved away from anything I could use to hurt myself or someone else.
☐ I can sit, stand, or move safely.	☐ I can stop this skill if my body feels unsafe.
☐ I know who I can contact if I need support.	☐ I know where to go if I need in-person help.
Support person I can contact:	Phone or contact method:
Safe place I can go:	Emergency step if I cannot stay safe:

Worksheet 1: Name the Emotional Storm

The first step is to name what is happening without judging it. You are not weak. You are having a wave, and waves can be managed.

Date and time	Type or write here.
Location	Type or write here.

What happened?

Briefly describe the situation, event, thought, memory, or conflict.

What emotion or emotions are showing up?

Examples: anger, fear, sadness, shame, panic, guilt, numbness, grief.

Emotion intensity before TIPP

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Circle or mark one number.

What is my body doing?

Examples: tight chest, clenched jaw, shaky hands, fast heart, hot face, frozen body, nausea.

What urge is showing up?

Examples: yell, leave, use, text, shut down, self-harm, avoid, over-explain, control, quit.

What do I need to avoid doing for the next 10 minutes?

Name the behavior you are choosing not to act on right now.

T: Temperature

Temperature means using a safe cold or cool sensation to interrupt the emotional surge. The point is to create a strong but safe body signal that helps you pause.

Choose one simple option.

You do not have to do this perfectly. You are using the body to lower the volume of the emotion enough to think again.

Options to try:

- Splash cool water on your face.
- Hold a cold pack wrapped in cloth on your cheeks or under your eyes.
- Hold a cool drink or ice cube wrapped in cloth and focus on the sensation.
- Step outside into cool air for a moment, if safe.

My plan for this step:

What option will I use? Where will I do it? What do I need?

What I used:

Example: cool water, cold pack, cool air, wrapped ice.

How long I used it:

Example: 30 seconds, 60 seconds, 2 minutes.

What changed in my body?

Example: heart slowed, face cooled, thoughts paused, urge dropped slightly.

I: Intense Exercise

Intense exercise means moving your body safely and briefly to burn off stress energy. You do not need a gym. You need a short burst that fits your body and space.

Choose one simple option.

You do not have to do this perfectly. You are using the body to lower the volume of the emotion enough to think again.

Options to try:

- 10 to 30 squats or chair squats.
- Wall pushups, counter pushups, or modified pushups.
- Fast walk, march in place, stairs, or step-ups.
- Jumping jacks, mountain climbers, or a short sprint only if safe for your body.

My plan for this step:

What option will I use? Where will I do it? What do I need?

Exercise I chose:

Type or write the movement here.

Safe modification:

How did I adjust it to fit my body, space, or medical needs?

Duration or reps:

Example: 60 seconds, 3 sets of 10, walk around the block.

What changed in my body?

Example: energy burned off, shaking reduced, anger dropped, breathing changed.

P: Paced Breathing

Paced breathing means slowing the breath in a comfortable pattern. A longer exhale can help signal safety to the body. Do not force it. Keep it steady and gentle.

Choose one simple option.

You do not have to do this perfectly. You are using the body to lower the volume of the emotion enough to think again.

Options to try:

- Inhale for 4, exhale for 6.
- Inhale for 3, exhale for 5 if 4 and 6 feels too long.
- Use box breathing only if it feels calming, not stressful.
- Place one hand on your chest or belly and feel the rhythm.

My plan for this step:

What option will I use? Where will I do it? What do I need?

Breathing pattern I used:

Example: inhale 4, exhale 6.

How many rounds or minutes:

Example: 10 rounds, 2 minutes, until intensity dropped.

What did I notice?

Example: shoulders dropped, thoughts slowed, body felt less urgent.

P: Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Progressive muscle relaxation means tensing and releasing muscle groups so your body can feel the difference between tight and loose. This can help discharge stress without acting on the emotion.

Choose one simple option.

You do not have to do this perfectly. You are using the body to lower the volume of the emotion enough to think again.

Options to try:

- Hands: make fists for 5 seconds, release for 10 seconds.
- Shoulders: lift toward ears, hold, release.
- Face: squeeze eyes and jaw gently, release.
- Legs: press feet into the floor, hold, release.

My plan for this step:

What option will I use? Where will I do it? What do I need?

Muscle groups I used:

Example: hands, shoulders, face, legs, feet.

What tension did I notice?

Where was my body holding stress?

What changed after release?

Example: jaw softened, hands opened, shoulders dropped, body settled.

Worksheet 2: After TIPP Check-In

Now check what changed. Small changes count. Dropping from a 9 to a 7 matters because it creates more room to choose safely.

Emotion intensity after TIPP

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Circle or mark one number.

What number did I start at, and what number am I at now?

Example: I started at 9 and I am now at 6.

What helped the most?

Temperature, exercise, breathing, muscle relaxation, or the whole sequence?

What is one safe next step?

Examples: drink water, take a shower, call someone, wait 20 minutes, walk away, ask for help, return to task.

What problem-solving step can wait until I am calmer?

Name what does not need to be solved in this exact moment.

If you are still at a 7 or higher:

Repeat TIPP once, change location if safe, contact support, use 988 or local crisis support, or seek in-person help. High intensity is not a failure. It means you need more support or more time.

Worksheet 3: My Personal TIPP Menu

Build your own menu before the next emotional storm. The easier the plan is to find, the easier it is to use when your brain is under stress.

Temperature tools I can safely use:

Examples: cold pack in freezer, cool water, cold drink, cool cloth.

Safe exercise options for me:

Examples: squats, walk, stairs, wall pushups, marching in place.

Paced breathing pattern I like:

Examples: 4 in and 6 out, 3 in and 5 out, slow belly breathing.

Muscle relaxation sequence I can remember:

Examples: hands, shoulders, face, legs, feet.

My reminder phrase:

Example: I am having a wave. I do not have to obey it. I can cool, move, breathe, release, and choose.

People, places, or supports I can use after TIPP:

List names, numbers, locations, crisis lines, or safe places.

Worksheet 4: 7 Day TIPP Practice Tracker

Practice TIPP when you are mildly upset so it becomes easier to use when emotions are stronger. This tracker is for practice, not perfection.

Day	Situation	Skill used	Before 0-10	After 0-10	What I learned
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					

Practice counts even when the number only drops a little.

A two-point drop is progress. A one-point drop is information. No drop means you learned that you may need more time, another skill, or live support.

One Page TIPP Quick Guide

Use this page when you need the shortest possible reminder.

Pause	Rate the feeling from 0 to 10. Say: This is a wave, not a command.
T: Temperature	Use cool water, a cold pack wrapped in cloth, or cool air safely.
I: Intense Exercise	Move hard and safe for 30 to 90 seconds. Match your body and health needs.
P: Paced Breathing	Slow down. Try inhale 4, exhale 6 for 1 to 3 minutes.
P: Muscle Release	Tense for 5 seconds. Release for 10 seconds. Repeat with hands, shoulders, face, legs, or feet.

My next right step after TIPP:

What safe action will I take after my body settles?

Reminder phrase

I can cool my body, move the energy, slow my breath, release the tension, and choose what happens next.