



Build Your Own ACCEPTS Menu

The ACCEPTS skill offers a menu of distraction strategies to help manage intense emotions in moments of distress. You don't need to use all the strategies—just pick and choose what works best for you or your teen. This is a flexible, personalised space to create a list of go-to tools and activities, including special interests and sensory supports.

A – Activities

What activities help you shift focus when you're feeling overwhelmed? These can include creative hobbies, movement, or playful distractions.

Examples I might try:

C – Contributing

How can you help someone else, even in a small way? Giving back can offer a sense of purpose and connection.

Examples I might try:

C – Comparisons

Can you think of a time when things were harder—and how you got through it? Or a reminder that everyone struggles sometimes?

Examples I might try:

E – Emotions (different ones)

What can you do to spark a different emotion—joy, humor, calm, curiosity? Think movies, music, memories.

Examples I might try:

P – Pushing Away

How can you mentally set aside the distressing situation, just for now? This might include putting it in a 'mental box' or shifting attention.

Examples I might try:

T – Thoughts (new ones)

What helps you redirect your thinking? Think puzzles, podcasts, learning something new, or diving into a special interest.

Examples I might try:

S – Sensations

What sensory input helps you feel calmer or more regulated? This might include fidget toys, cold water, deep pressure, or favourite textures.

Examples I might try:

Your ACCEPTS menu is personal and flexible. Revisit and update it over time as you learn what works best in different situations. Special interests, sensory supports, and creativity are all valid and valuable parts of your emotional toolkit.

