

Low-Demand DBT Skills Menu

This menu is designed to minimize pressure, demand, and power struggles. You do not need to do these skills perfectly or fully. The goal is not to calm down. The goal is to stay in charge long enough to choose what happens next.

How to Use the Menu

- Explore **one** option
- Experiment with it for **30–90 seconds**
- Stop whenever you want
- Sometimes relief doesn't happen. That's okay; it at least gives you information. You can explore another option instead.

Body-Based Options (When Emotions Are High)

- Temperature change (cold or warm)
- Brief movement or stretching
- Strong sensory input (taste, touch, sound)
- Paced Breathing or Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Attention-Shifting Options

- Engage in a simple activity
- Focus on something external
- Do a mental task or puzzle

Meaning & Mindset Options

- Encourage yourself
- Set a grounding intention
- Radical acceptance statements

Boundary Options

- Mentally set the problem aside (container exercise)
- Delay decisions
- Give yourself permission not to fix anything right now

Important Reminders

- If a skill doesn't help, it gives information—not failure
- Refusing a skill is allowed
- You are allowed to modify, shorten, or abandon any skill

Skills are tools for preserving choice not instructions for how you should feel.

You may return to problem-solving or emotional processing later, when distress is lower.