

# ACCEPTS SKILL

In the moment, distressing emotions may seem impossible to overcome. However, over time, these emotions will lessen in intensity, and eventually fade away. The acronym **ACCEPTS** outlines skills for distracting yourself from distressing emotions until they pass.

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## ACTIVITIES

- Activities that are grounding or engaging.
- Play puzzles, sports, games.
- Call a friend, go for a walk, dance with music.
- Activities that brought you joy while on your own or with your family that you can replicate on campus.

## CONTRIBUTIONS

- Distract yourself by being of service to others.
- Volunteer, donate your time.
- Ask a friend about their day.
- Send a gift/card/letter to someone you care about.

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## COMPARISONS

- Look at your situation from a different perspective.
- Compare how you feel now to a time when you felt worse, recognizing your own resilience.
- Consider others who may be coping similarly or less well than you, to remind yourself of your strengths and resources available to you.

## EMOTIONS

- Do something to create a new emotion that will compete with your distressing emotion.
- Sad? Watch comedies, listen to an upbeat song.
- Anxious? Practice deep breathing, listen to calming music, guided meditation through [Headspace](#) app.

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## PUSHING AWAY

- Gently push the negative thoughts and emotions away. Leave the situation mentally.
- Build an imaginary wall between yourself and the situation
- Put the pain on a shelf. Box it up and put it away temporarily.

## THOUGHTS

- Direct your thoughts elsewhere from the current situation.
- Count backwards by seven, starting at 100.
- Count colors in a painting or poster or out the window.
- Sing a song out loud or recite it in your head.

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## SENSATIONS

- Find safe physical sensations to distract you.
- Hold ice in your hand or mouth
- Take a warm/cold shower
- Squeeze a stress ball very hard

