



## Therapy For Real Life

**WHAT CAN MAKE IT HARD**  
**(but not impossible!)**  
**TO REGULATE YOUR MOOD**

**and**  
**WHAT TO DO**  
**ABOUT IT**

# **WHAT CAN MAKE IT HARD** **(but not impossible!)** **TO REGULATE YOUR MOOD:**

Drawn and adapted from DBT Skills Training Manual, 2nd Ed.

**BIOLOGY**

**LACK OF SKILL**

**REINFORCEMENT FROM  
THE CULTURE OR ENVIRONMENT**

**MOODINESS**

**OVERWHELM**

**FALSE NOTIONS THAT EMOTIONS  
ARE BAD, USELESS, OR WEAK**

# **TIPS FOR COPING WITH A DIFFICULT MOOD:**

## **BIOLOGY**

**Research your family medical history,  
including mental health history.**

**Track your mood and look for patterns.**

**Schedule a doctor's check-up.**

**Take necessary medications  
as prescribed.**

**Reduce or quit drugs and alcohol.**

**Improve your sleep routine.**

**Bio-hack your mood with  
exercise and relaxation skills.**

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# **TIPS FOR COPING WITH A DIFFICULT MOOD:**

## **LEARN A MOOD MGMT SKILL**

**Practice mindfulness and develop greater awareness of your moods.**

**Learn communication strategies to ask for the changes you need.**

**Replace harmful behaviors with alternative coping skills.**

**Track emotional triggers and learn how to respond to your needs faster.**

**Try evidence-backed therapies, such as CBT, DBT, or ACT, which include emotional skills coaching.**

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# **TIPS FOR COPING WITH A DIFFICULT MOOD:**

## **MAKE CHANGES AROUND YOU**

**Set realistic expectations of what  
you can deliver.**

**Ask for a raise at work or  
request time off.**

**Practice loving kindness meditation  
when you feel frustrated.**

**Leave situations that are harmful and  
unproductive.**

**Stop saying 'yes' when you  
actually mean 'no'.**

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# **TIPS FOR COPING WITH A DIFFICULT MOOD:**

## **MOODINESS**

**Recognize when you are tempted  
to say "I just can't even..."  
— and simply pause.**

**Ask yourself what basic needs are  
unmet when you feel stressed.**

**Say how you are feeling out loud to a  
trusted friend.**

**Give yourself a night to “sleep on it”  
and assess how you feel  
again in the morning.**

**Set a timer and give yourself permission  
to feel as moody as you want to  
until the time is up.**

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# **TIPS FOR COPING WITH A DIFFICULT MOOD:**

## **OVERWHELM**

**Break problems into tiny steps.**

**Schedule rest into your routine.**

**Celebrate small successes.**

**Cheerlead yourself with  
positive self-talk.**

**Give yourself permission to take  
one thing off your To-Do list.**

**Call 911 or a crisis number  
if you need immediate support  
(eg. [www.crisistextline.org](http://www.crisistextline.org)).**

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# **TIPS FOR COPING WITH A DIFFICULT MOOD:**

## **EMOTION MYTHS**

**Do not deny your emotions.  
They will only build up.**

**Call out anti-emotion language**  
(eg. someone says "Calm down" instead of  
hearing out another person's point of view).

**Notice when you are tempted to judge  
your own emotions... and simply pause.**

**Be aware of social stigma. Break all the  
rules and make self-care contagious by  
learning and talking about emotions.**

**Be part of a cultural movement that  
values emotional intelligence.**

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# MAKE YOUR OWN MOOD MGMT CHECKLIST:

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Name the self-care strategies that will help buffer you  
in each of the following areas:

**BIOLOGY:**

**SKILLS:**

**CHANGE:**

**MOODINESS:**

**OVERWHELM:**

**MYTHS:**