Short-Term Distress Menu - Concept brief

Understand the idea behind short-term distress menu and consider whether it fits your context.

Adults; supported use as appropriate | 8 minutes

Fictional example: Taylor chooses quiet music while waiting for an uncertain result.

The idea

Short-term coping aims to get through a moment without adding avoidable harm.

An ordinary example

Taylor chooses quiet music while waiting for an uncertain result.

What this can look like

Build a menu of accessible distraction, soothing, and support options with a clear time to reassess.

Check the fit

Which option fits this moment, and when will you reassess? You may disagree with the framing, use fiction, or decide that this approach is not useful today.

A useful distinction

Acceptance acknowledges the present; it does not endorse harm or remove the need for change.

Reflection

Which option fits this moment, and when will you reassess?

Scope and adaptation

These are selected DBT-informed educational exercises, not comprehensive DBT, phone coaching, or crisis care. Use individualized clinical assessment and existing care plans. No cold-water immersion, breath holding, intense exercise prescriptions, exposure assignments, or risk scoring are included. Behavior chains and opposite-action decisions need clinician guidance when risk or complexity is present.

Original AI-assisted educational draft; independent clinical review pending. Version 1.0. Background: Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills Training: Fundamentals. Full source links and scope: library.morethantherapy.org/approaches/resources/DBT-A07-1