

Urge Surfing*

let's *THERAPIZE* that shit !!!

Note: This is not an official DBT publication; rather, it is what I use when I practice urge surfing. The urge surfing skills is mentioned on several handouts and worksheets in the addiction section of Distress Tolerance. However, there is no DBT handout or worksheet detailing how to use the skill. Several of my instructors described urge surfing as something akin to Mindfulness of Current Emotions and/or Thoughts*, so I selected the steps from each of these two skills that also apply to urges.

1. OBSERVE YOUR URGE

- Step back and just notice your urge. Acknowledge its presence.
- Experience your urge as a wave, coming and going.
- Now imagine surfing the urge wave.
- Try not to block or suppress the urge.
- Don't try to get rid of or push away the urge.
- Don't try to keep the urge around; don't hold on to it; don't amplify it.

2. PRACTICE MINDFULNESS OF BODY SENSATIONS

- Ask, "Where does my urge come from?" Watch and see.
- Observe but do not evaluate your urge. Let go of judgements.
- Notice where in your body you are feeling urge sensations. Experience the sensations as fully as you can.
- Notice that every urge that comes also goes out of your mind/body. Observe how long it takes before the urge goes down.
- Allow your urge to come and go as you observe your breath.

3. REMEMBER: YOU ARE NOT YOUR URGE

- Do not necessarily act on your urge.
- Remember times when you have felt different.
- Remember how you feel when you are not feeling such intense suffering and pain.

4. PRACTICE LOVING YOUR URGE

- Ask, "What sensations is this urge trying to avoid?" Turn your mind/body to the sensation. Then come back to the urge. Repeat several times.
- Respect your urge.
- Practice willingness.
- Try loving your urge.
- Do not judge your urge.
- Radically accept your urge.

* Adapted from *DBT Skills Trainings Handouts and Worksheets, Second Edition* by Marsha M. Linehan, specifically Distress Tolerance Handout 15 (Mindfulness of Current Thoughts) and Emotion Regulation Handout 22 (Mindfulness of Current Emotions: Letting Go of Emotional Suffering).