Healthy distraction

Turning your attention elsewhere for a while, on purpose.

Name _____ Date _____

When a feeling is too strong to work with, and nothing can be done about the situation right now, shifting your attention gives the feeling time to pass. Use it for the short term only.

Way of distracting	Ideas	What I will try
Activities	Walk, clean, cook, a game, a puzzle	
Contributing	Help someone, send a kind message	
Comparisons	Remember a time I coped with worse	
Opposite emotions	A funny clip, uplifting music	
Pushing away	Park the problem for an hour, on purpose	
Other thoughts	Count, do a crossword, plan a meal	
Sensations	Hold ice, a hot shower, a strong taste	

Distraction helps when...

- The feeling is too strong to think
- Nothing can be done right now
- I need to get through the next hour
- I come back to the issue later

It becomes avoidance when...

- It is my only way of coping
- The problem needs solving and I never return to it
- I use it to never feel anything
- It causes problems of its own

My top three, ready to go

Based on the ACCEPTS skill from Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT), developed by Marsha Linehan.

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