

## Accepting Reality: Choices We Can Make

*Five optional ways of responding when a serious problem comes into your life:*

1. Figure out how to solve the problem.
2. Change how you feel about the problem.
3. Accept it.
4. Stay miserable (no skill use).
5. Make things worse (act on your impulsive urges).

*When you can't solve the problem or change your emotions about the problem, try acceptance as a way to reduce your suffering.*

### ***Why Bother Accepting Reality?***

- ✓ Rejecting reality does not change reality.
- ✓ Changing reality requires first accepting reality.
- ✓ Rejecting reality turns pain into suffering.
- ✓ Refusing to accept reality can keep you stuck in unhappiness, anger, shame, sadness, bitterness, or other painful emotions.

### ***Radical Acceptance***

- ✓ RADICAL ACCEPTANCE is the skill of accepting the things you can't change.
- ✓ RADICAL = complete and total accepting in mind, heart, and body.
- ✓ ACCEPTANCE = seeing reality for what it is, even if you don't like it.
- ✓ ACCEPTANCE can mean to acknowledge, recognize, endure, not give up or give in.
- ✓ It's when you stop fighting reality, stop throwing tantrums about reality, and let go of bitterness. It is the opposite of "Why me?" It **is** "Things are as they are."
- ✓ Life can be worth living, even with painful events in it.

*(continued)*

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**Accepting Reality: Choices We Can Make** (page 2 of 2)

List one important thing that you need to accept in your life *now*: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

List one less important thing you need to accept *this week*: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

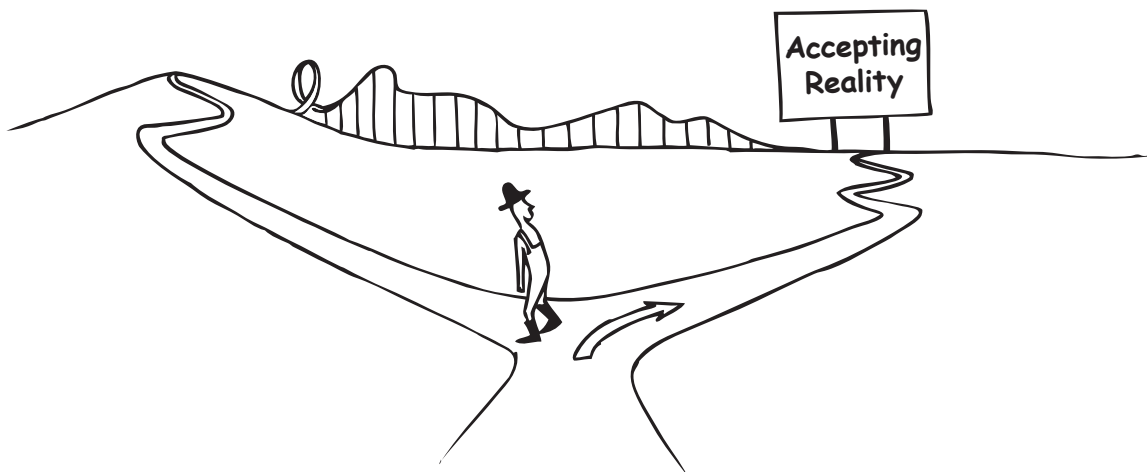
## Accepting Reality: Turning the Mind

- ✓ ACCEPTANCE is a choice. It is like coming to a “fork in the road.” You may have to turn your mind toward the ACCEPTANCE road and away from the REJECTING “Reality Road.”
- ✓ First notice you are not accepting reality (anger, bitterness, “Why me?”)
- ✓ Second, make an inner commitment to ACCEPT.
- ✓ You may have to turn your mind over and over and over again.

### Factors That Interfere with Acceptance

- ✓ Beliefs get in the way: You believe that if you accept your painful situation, you will become weak and just give up (or give in), approve of reality, or accept a life of pain.
- ✓ Emotions get in the way: Intense anger at the person or group that caused the painful event; unbearable sadness; guilt about your own behavior; shame regarding something about you; rage about the injustice of the world.

**REMEMBER: ACCEPTANCE DOES NOT MEAN APPROVAL!**



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## Create Your Crisis Survival Kit for Home, School, or Work

List below 10 “tools” that go into your home crisis survival kit. Choose from your Distract with Wise Mind ACCEPTS skills, your Self-Soothe skills, your IMPROVE skills, and your TIPP skills. Take a shoebox, sturdy bag, or basket and place the relevant items inside: for example, your iPod, a stress ball, your favorite scented lotion or aftershave, picture of your favorite vacation spot, a favorite magazine, a crossword book, herbal tea bags, a favorite piece of candy, a relaxation CD or DVD.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

Create a smaller version of your kit for school or work that fits in a pencil case or lunchbox. Consider items that can be used at your desk: for example, multicolored rubber bands to stretch; paper and pens for doodling; a mini-pack of playdough; a squeeze ball; silly putty; a list of visual stimuli in your class or office that can distract or soothe you; snacks to self-soothe; a list of friends, teachers, counselors, or colleagues you can approach when you have a break.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

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