

Turning the Mind & Radical Acceptance Worksheet

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Learning to Accept Reality One Choice at a Time

A psychologist-created educational worksheet from KALM Psychology

Welcome

There are moments in life that we wish had never happened. We may find ourselves replaying conversations, resisting painful realities, asking “Why me?”, or hoping that if we think about something long enough, reality will somehow change.

While these reactions are understandable, they often add another layer of suffering to an already painful situation.

In Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT), Radical Acceptance is the practice of fully acknowledging reality as it is in this moment, even when we dislike it. Acceptance does not mean approval, agreement, giving up, or pretending that something is fair. Rather, it means recognizing what is already true so we can respond more effectively.

Acceptance is rarely a one-time decision. Most of us need to choose it repeatedly. This is where Turning the Mind comes in. Turning the Mind is the ongoing practice of gently bringing ourselves back toward acceptance each time we notice ourselves resisting reality.

This worksheet will help you:

- Understand Radical Acceptance and Turning the Mind.
 - Recognize signs that you may be resisting reality.
 - Reflect on a situation you are struggling to accept.
 - Practise making small, intentional choices toward acceptance.
 - Develop a plan for applying these skills in everyday life.
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Understanding Radical Acceptance & Turning the Mind

Pain is an unavoidable part of being human.

Suffering often develops when we fight against realities that cannot be changed in this moment.

Radical Acceptance asks us to acknowledge reality without adding judgment or resistance.

This does not mean:

- Approving of what happened.
- Saying something is fair.
- Giving up.
- Choosing not to make changes in the future.

Instead, Radical Acceptance means saying:

“This is what has happened. I may not like it, but I can acknowledge that it is real.”

Turning the Mind is what happens next.

Every time your mind says:

“This shouldn’t be happening.”

“I can’t accept this.”

“It’s not fair.”

You gently notice that thought and make another conscious decision to move back toward acceptance.

Sometimes this happens once.

Sometimes it happens fifty times in a single day.

That is completely normal.

Acceptance is a practice, not a destination.

Reflection Worksheet

What situation am I struggling to accept?

What thoughts keep pulling me away from acceptance?

What emotions come up when I think about this situation?

☐ Sadness

☐ Anger

☐ Fear

☐ Shame

☐ Guilt

☐ Frustration

☐ Hopelessness

☐ Grief

☐ Other

How has resisting this reality affected me?

If I moved just one step closer to acceptance today, what might that look like?

Practising Turning the Mind

Acceptance often requires repeated choices.

Complete the following statements.

Today I notice I am resisting...

I can gently turn my mind toward...

One compassionate statement I can tell myself is...

One action that reflects acceptance is...

Even if acceptance feels difficult today, I am willing to...

My reminder when I become stuck:

Bringing It All Together

Acceptance is not about giving up.

It is about freeing yourself from the exhausting struggle against realities that already exist.

When we stop fighting reality, we create space for healing, problem-solving, and intentional action.

Remember:

- Acceptance is a choice you may need to make many times.
- You can dislike reality while still accepting that it exists.
- Acceptance often reduces suffering, even when pain remains.

Progress is measured by practice, not perfection.

This Week's Practice

This week, notice one situation each day where you find yourself resisting reality.

Ask yourself:

"Can I gently turn my mind toward acceptance, even if only for this moment?"

Write down what you notice.

Continue Your Mental Health Journey

Learning DBT skills takes patience, courage, and practice. If this worksheet has been helpful, remember that meaningful change often happens through repeated practice and support over time.

KALM Psychology provides evidence-based psychological services for adolescents and adults, including individual therapy, DBT skills groups, couples therapy, and therapy intensives.

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This worksheet is intended for educational purposes only and is not a substitute for psychological assessment, diagnosis, or treatment. If you are experiencing a mental health crisis or are concerned about your safety, please seek immediate support through your local emergency or crisis services.