

Community

Being human, we all have basic needs for our existence. These include food, clothing, shelter, safety, friends, and self control. A community is a group of people living and working together to get their needs met. Resources for the community include the available people, places, and things that can make the community better. Everyone has the opportunity to make the community a better place to live. How can you help?

Safety

Most of the individuals who come to state hospitals have had bad and frightening experiences in their lives. Bad experiences can cause a person to often feel a sense of danger in the environment. They may have a hard time feeling safe and calm. Triggers can be sights, sounds, feelings, or thoughts that remind a person of bad experiences. Severe triggers may even cause flashbacks for some individuals. A person may feel as if they are reliving the pain they experienced in the past. It can be very frightening and confusing. Recovery involves regaining control over your life so the past has a less harmful influence and a decrease in its power to hurt you.

Coping

Every individual needs resources and skills to feel safe and calm. Feeling helpless and hopeless can also be frightening. Skills help you to be more in control by giving you knowledge and power to bring about change. Your ability to problem solve improves when you are calm and relaxed. Learning how to feel calm can help you become more effective in many aspects of your life. What do you do to relax? Here are some possibilities.

Listening to music
Reading, word searches
Coloring, drawing, puzzles
Talking with a friend

Crisis Survival Skills

When you are in a crisis situation the emotional response from your body can feel overwhelming. Because of past experiences your body may react as if your very life is in danger. What is happening is that your body's memories of the past are being awakened by the crisis and your body may be over reacting to the situation. Refocus and don't let your body or your feelings control you. Be aware of your feelings, but recognize the situation for what it is, not simply what your body is telling you.

To survive the crisis:

Identify

What is causing the stress?
Why is it causing stress?

Engage problem solving skills

What can be done?
Who can I ask for help?

For strong emotion:

Distraction*

Activities – Reading, word search puzzles, power walking, coloring, drawing, music, talking with a friend

Contributing – Helping others

Comparison – Recognizing that it could be worse and that other people may be worse off

Emotion – stimulate the opposite, more positive emotion, calming music, watching comedies

Pushing Away – Not dwelling on it, not staying with the negative feeling

Thoughts – naming different things in the room around you, counting backward from 100 by fives

Self-Soothing*

Vision- beautiful pictures

Sound – music, humming

Smell – appealing fragrances

Taste – peppermint, chocolate

Touch – rubbing your forearm

Kinetic – rocking chair, swing

* Marsha Linehan, DBT self-help



A Safe Place The Sensory Comfort Room

The Sensory Comfort Room is a supportive environment available to our individuals. It is designed to assist individuals in developing self-calming skills by providing relaxing stimuli and a temporary relief from environmental stress. Individuals can learn skills to help themselves feel more relaxed and in control.

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