

RO DBT COURSE WORKBOOK

WELCOME!

SOME HELPFUL REMINDERS:

- RO is experiential. To be effective, it must be practiced (not just studied or memorized).
- Like all new things, confusion & missteps are a given and part of the process.
- You're new at this! So...an easy-going, small steps, and *any progress is progress* attitude will help you learn more and get further than a high pressure mindset.
- See the weekly homework and updates at:
<https://greenwellpsychology.com/radically-open-dbt-class-resources/>



List of Radical Openness Handouts and Worksheets

Radical Openness Handout 1.1	Inkblot.....	1
Radical Openness Handout 1.2	What Is Radical Openness?.....	2
Radical Openness Handout 1.3	Learning from Self-Enquiry.....	3
Radical Openness Handout 1.4	Main Points for Lesson 1: Radical Openness.....	5
Radical Openness Worksheet 1.A	Myths of a Closed Mind.....	6
Radical Openness Worksheet 1.B	Flexible Mind DEFinately: Three Steps for Radically Open Living.....	8
Radical Openness Worksheet 1.C	The Pros and Cons of Being Open Versus Closed to New Experience.....	12
Radical Openness Handout 2.1	The RO DBT Neuroregulatory Model of Emotions.....	13
Radical Openness Handout 2.2	Main Points for Lesson 2: Understanding Emotions.....	15
Radical Openness Worksheet 2.A	Identifying the Different Neural Substrates.....	16
Radical Openness Handout 3.1	Changing Social Interactions by Changing Physiology.....	19
Radical Openness Handout 3.2	Closed-Mouth Cooperative Smile.....	21
Radical Openness Handout 3.3	Main Points for Lesson 3: Activating Social Safety.....	22
Radical Openness Worksheet 3.A	Activating Social Safety.....	23
Radical Openness Handout 4.1	A Script for Loving Kindness Meditation.....	25
Radical Openness Handout 4.2	Main Points for Lesson 4: Enhancing Openness and Social Connection via Loving Kindness.....	28
Radical Openness Worksheet 4.A	Daily Practice of Loving Kindness Meditation.....	29
Radical Openness Handout 5.1	Engaging in Novel Behavior: Flexible Mind VARIEs.....	31
Radical Openness Handout 5.2	Using Experience to Examine Willingness to Learn.....	34
Radical Openness Handout 5.3	The Art of Nonproductivity and Being Just a Little Bit Silly.....	36

Radical Openness Handout 5.4	Are We Having Fun Yet? Self-Enquiry About Humor and Play.....	38
Radical Openness Handout 5.5	Main Points for Lesson 5: Engaging in Novel Behavior.....	40
Radical Openness Worksheet 5.A	Engaging in Novel Behavior: Flexible Mind VARIEs.....	41
Radical Openness Worksheet 5.B	Nonproductive and Novel Behavior Monitoring Log.....	44
Radical Openness Handout 6.1	Emotions Are There for a Reason.....	46
Radical Openness Handout 6.2	Not Everything That's Important Is Emotional.....	47
Radical Openness Handout 6.3	Main Points for Lesson 6: How Do Emotions Help Us?.....	48
Radical Openness Worksheet 6.A	Overcontrolled Myths About Emotions.....	49
Radical Openness Worksheet 6.B	Using Neural Substrates to Label Emotions.....	51
Radical Openness Handout 7.1	Main Points for Lesson 7: Understanding Overcontrolled Coping.....	55
Radical Openness Worksheet 7.A	Overcontrol Can Become a Habit.....	56
Radical Openness Worksheet 7.B	Finding Our Habitual Ways of Coping.....	57
Radical Openness Handout 8.1	Tribe Matters: Understanding Rejection and Self-Conscious Emotions	59
Radical Openness Handout 8.2	Prototypical Emotional Expressions.....	61
Radical Openness Handout 8.3	Shaming Ritual.....	62
Radical Openness Handout 8.4	Flexible Mind SAGE: Dealing with Shame, Embarrassment, and Feeling Rejected or Excluded.....	63
Radical Openness Handout 8.5	The RO DBT Self-Conscious Emotions Rating Scale.....	67
Radical Openness Handout 8.6	Signaling Nondominance.....	69
Radical Openness Handout 8.7	Main Points for Lesson 8: Tribe Matters.....	70
Radical Openness Worksheet 8.A	Flexible Mind SAGE Skills.....	71
Radical Openness Handout 9.1	Open Expression = Trust = Social Connectedness.....	75
Radical Openness Handout 9.2	Emotions Communicate to Others.....	76
Radical Openness Handout 9.3	Main Points for Lesson 9: Social Signaling Matters!.....	77
Radical Openness Worksheet 9.A	Practicing Enhancing Facial Expressions.....	78
Radical Openness Handout 10.1	The Three Channels of Emotion Expression.....	79
Radical Openness Handout 10.2	Face in the Crowd.....	80
Radical Openness Handout 10.3	Using Social Signaling to Live by Your Values.....	81

Radical Openness Handout 10.4	Main Points for Lesson 10: Using Social Signaling to Live by Your Values.....	84
Radical Openness Worksheet 10.A	Flexible Mind Is DEEP.....	85
Radical Openness Worksheet 10.B	Flexible Mind Is DEEP.....	89
Radical Openness Handout 11.1	Overcontrolled States of Mind.....	92
Radical Openness Handout 11.2	Being Kind to Fixed Mind.....	93
Radical Openness Handout 11.3	Learning from Fatalistic Mind.....	94
Radical Openness Handout 11.4	Main Points for Lesson 11: Mindfulness Training, Part 1.....	96
Radical Openness Worksheet 11.A	Being Kind to Fixed Mind.....	97
Radical Openness Worksheet 11.B	Going Opposite to Fatalistic Mind.....	99
Radical Openness Handout 12.1	“Describe with Integrity” Skills: The Awareness Continuum.....	101
Radical Openness Handout 12.2	Main Points for Lesson 12: Mindfulness Training, Part 2.....	103
Radical Openness Worksheet 12.A	“Observe Openly” Skills.....	104
Radical Openness Worksheet 12.B	Making Participating Without Planning a Daily Habit.....	106
Radical Openness Worksheet 12.C	The Three “What” Skills: Daily Practice Log for the “Observe Openly,” “Describe with Integrity,” and “Participate Without Planning” Skills.....	107
Radical Openness Handout 13.1	The Core Mindfulness “How” Skill: With Self-Enquiry.....	108
Radical Openness Handout 13.2	Cultivating Healthy Self-Doubt.....	109
Radical Openness Handout 13.3	Practicing Self-Enquiry and Outing Oneself.....	110
Radical Openness Handout 13.4	Main Points for Lesson 13: Mindfulness Training, Part 3.....	111
Radical Openness Worksheet 13.A	Practicing the Core Mindfulness “How” Skill: With Self-Enquiry.....	112
Radical Openness Handout 14.1	The Four RO “How” Skills.....	113
Radical Openness Handout 14.2	Using Self-Enquiry to Examine Harsh Judgments.....	115
Radical Openness Handout 14.3	Main Points for Lesson 14: Mindfulness Training, Part 4.....	116
Radical Openness Worksheet 14.A	Practicing the “How” of RO Mindfulness.....	117
Radical Openness Handout 15.1	Main Points for Lesson 15: Interpersonal Integrity, Part 1.....	122
Radical Openness Worksheet 15.A	Recognizing Indirect Communication.....	123
Radical Openness Handout 16.1	Identifying Pushbacks and “Don’t Hurt Me” Responses.....	124
Radical Openness Handout 16.2	Using Self-Enquiry to Explore Pushback and “Don’t Hurt Me” Behaviors.....	126

Radical Openness Handout 16.3	Main Points for Lesson 16: Interpersonal Integrity, Part 2.....	129
Radical Openness Worksheet 16.A	Flexible Mind REVEALs.....	130
Radical Openness Worksheet 16.B	Identifying Secret Desires for Control.....	134
Radical Openness Handout 17.1	Enhancing Interpersonal Kindness, Effectiveness, and Connectedness, Using Flexible Mind ROCKs ON.....	135
Radical Openness Handout 17.2	New Year's Resolutions.....	139
Radical Openness Handout 17.3	Signaling an Easy Manner.....	140
Radical Openness Handout 17.4	Main Points for Lesson 17: Enhancing Interpersonal Effectiveness.....	141
Radical Openness Worksheet 17.A	Overcontrolled Myths About Interpersonal Relationships.....	142
Radical Openness Worksheet 17.B	Kindness First and Foremost.....	145
Radical Openness Worksheet 17.C	Using Flexible Mind ROCKs ON to Enhance Interpersonal Effectiveness.....	147
Radical Openness Handout 18.1	Self-Enquiry About Rumination After a Social Interaction.....	151
Radically Open Handout 18.2	Main Points for Lesson 18: Being Assertive with an Open Mind...	152
Radical Openness Worksheet 18.A	Being Assertive with an Open Mind: Flexible Mind PROVEs.....	153
Radical Openness Handout 19.1	Main Points for Lesson 19: Using Validation to Signal Social Inclusion.....	157
Radical Openness Worksheet 19.A	Flexible Mind Validates: The Seven Levels.....	158
Radical Openness Handout 20.1	Self-Enquiry About Mistrust.....	162
Radical Openness Handout 20.2	The Intimacy Thermometer.....	164
Radical Openness Handout 20.3	What Characterizes a Genuine Friendship?.....	165
Radical Openness Handout 20.4	Main Points for Lesson 20, Part 1.....	167
Radical Openness Handout 21.1	Enhancing Social Connectedness, Using Flexible Mind ALLOWs.....	168
Radical Openness Handout 21.2	Match + 1 Intimacy Rating Scale.....	171
Radical Openness Handout 21.3	Using Match + 1 to Establish New or Improve Existing Relationships.....	172
Radical Openness Handout 21.4	Main Points for Lesson 21.....	174
Radical Openness Worksheet 21.A	Practicing Flexible Mind ALLOWs.....	175
Radical Openness Handout 22.1	Being Open to Feedback from Others: Flexible Mind ADOPTS.....	178

Radical Openness Handout 22.2	Steps for Evaluating Feedback: Deciding Whether to Accept or Decline.....	180
Radical Openness Handout 22.3	Main Points for Lesson 22: Learning from Corrective Feedback.....	182
Radical Openness Worksheet 22.A	Practicing Flexible Mind ADOPTS.....	183
Radical Openness Handout 27.1	Main Points for Lesson 27: Envy and Resentment.....	186
Radical Openness Worksheet 27.A	Opposite Action to Unhelpful Envy: Flexible Mind DARES (to Let Go).....	187
Radical Openness Handout 28.1	Main Points for Lesson 28: Cynicism, Bitterness, and Resignation.....	191
Radical Openness Worksheet 28.A	Changing Bitterness: Flexible Mind Is LIGHT.....	192
Radical Openness Handout 29.1	What Forgiveness Is and Is Not.....	196
Radical Openness Handout 29.2	Forgiveness Self-Enquiry Questions.....	197
Radical Openness Handout 29.3	Strengthening Forgiveness Through Grief Work: Examples of Common Beliefs or Expectations.....	199
Radical Openness Handout 29.4	Main Points for Lesson 29: Learning to Forgive.....	201
Radical Openness Worksheet 29.A	Flexible Mind Has HEART.....	202
Handout 30.1	The Asch Experiment.....	208

Radical Openness Handout 1.1

Inkblot



Radical Openness Handout 1.2

What Is Radical Openness?

- Radical openness means being open to new information or disconfirming feedback in order to learn.
- Radical openness helps us learn to celebrate self-discovery—it is freedom from being stuck.
- Radical openness can be rewarding—it often involves trying out novel ways of behaving that may help us cope more effectively.
- Radical openness is courageous—it alerts us to areas of our life that may need to change.
- Radical openness enhances relationships—it models humility and readiness to learn from what the world has to offer.
- Radical openness involves purposeful self-enquiry and a willingness to acknowledge one's fallibility—with an intention to change (if needed). It can be both painful and liberating.
- Radical openness challenges our perceptions of reality. *We don't see things as they are—we see things as we are.*
- Being *open* to learning new things involves a willingness to consider that there are many ways to get to the same place.
- Radical openness takes responsibility for our personal reactions and emotions—rather than automatically blaming others or the world.
- Radical openness helps us adapt to an ever-changing environment.

Radical Openness Is Not...

- Approval, naively believing, or mindlessly giving in
- Assuming one already knows the answer
- Something that can solely be understood intellectually—it requires direct and repeated practice
- Rejecting the past
- Expecting good things to happen
- Always changing
- Being rigid about being open

Radical Openness Handout 1.3

Learning from Self-Enquiry

Instructions: Use the sample questions that follow to enhance your practice of radical openness; see worksheet 1.B (Flexible Mind DEFinitely: Three Steps for Radically Open Living).

Carry a copy of this list with you and write down in your RO self-enquiry journal new questions you discover.

- *Is it possible that my bodily tension means that I am not fully open to the feedback? If yes or possibly, then what am I avoiding? Is there something here to learn?*
- *Is the resistance, dislike, and tension I am feeling helpful? What is it that I might need to learn from my closed-mindedness?*
- *Do I find myself wanting to automatically explain, defend, or discount the other person's feedback or what is happening? If yes or maybe, then is this a sign that I may not be truly open?*
- *Am I finding it hard to question my point of view or even engage in self-enquiry? If yes or maybe, then what might this mean?*
- *Am I talking more quickly or immediately responding to the other person's feedback or questions? Am I holding my breath or breathing more quickly? Has my heart rate changed? If yes or maybe, then what does this mean? What is driving me to respond so quickly? Is it possible I am feeling threatened?*
- *Am I able to truly pause and consider the possibility that I may be wrong or may need to change? Am I saying to myself "I know I am right" no matter what they say or how things seem? Or do I feel like shutting down, quitting, or giving up? If yes or maybe, then is it possible that I am operating out of Fixed or Fatalistic Mind? What is it that I fear?*
- *Am I resisting being open to this feedback because part of me believes that doing so will change an essential part of who I am? If yes or maybe, then what might this mean? What am I afraid of?*
- *Am I automatically blaming the other person or the environment for my emotional reactions? If yes or maybe, then is it possible this could represent a way for me to avoid being open to the feedback?*
- *Do I believe that I know what the intentions are of the person giving me the disconfirming feedback? For example, am I assuming that they are trying to promote themselves? Or do I believe that they are trying to manipulate, coerce, or intimidate me? If yes or maybe, then is it possible that I am not really giving them a chance? What am I afraid might happen if I were to momentarily drop my perspective?*
- *Do I think it is unfair to fully listen to someone who I believe is not listening to me? If yes or sometimes, then is it possible this is occurring now? If yes or maybe, then why do I need things to be fair?*
- *Do I feel invalidated, hurt, unappreciated, or misunderstood by the person giving me the disconfirming feedback? Is there a part of me that believes it is important for them to acknowledge (or apologize) that they do not understand me before I would be willing to fully consider their position? If yes or maybe, then why do I need to be understood? Why do I need to be validated? Is it possible this desire might subtly block openness on my part by requiring the other person to change first?*

- *Do I believe that further self-examination is unnecessary because I have already worked out the problem, know the answer, or have done the necessary self-work about the issue being discussed? If yes or maybe, then is it possible that I am not willing to truly examine my personal responses? Why do I feel so convinced that I already know the answer? What do I fear I may lose?*
- *Do I desire to capitulate, give up, or agree with the feedback? If yes or maybe, then is it possible that my agreement is disguised avoidance? Am I agreeing in order to avoid conflict, not because I truly believe they are right? What might this mean?*
- *Is the feedback I am being given something that I have heard from others before? If so, what might this mean? Is it possible that there is something to learn from this feedback?*

If you find yourself resisting self-enquiry or feeling nothing, use self-enquiry to explore this further by asking...

- *What might my resistance be trying to tell me? What is it I need to learn?*
- *What does my resistance tell me about myself or my willingness to engage in learning this new skill?*
- *What am I resisting? Is there something important for me to acknowledge or recognize about myself or the current moment?*
- *Is it possible that I am numbing out or shutting down in order to avoid taking responsibility or make important changes? What is it that I need to learn?*

Use the following space to record new self-enquiry questions that emerge for you over time.

Radical Openness Handout 1.4

Main Points for Lesson 1: Radical Openness

1. We tend to pay attention to things that fit our beliefs and ignore or dismiss those things that do not.
2. We don't know what we don't know, and this keeps us from learning new things.
3. To learn anything new, we must acknowledge our lack of knowledge and then behave differently!
4. RO DBT considers psychological health to involve three core features: (1) receptivity and openness, (2) flexible control, and (3) intimacy and connectedness.
5. There are pros and cons to being open, as well as to being closed.
6. We only need to practice radical openness when we are closed.
7. Radical openness enhances relationships because it models humility and a willingness to learn from the world. Yet, it can be both painful and liberating because it often requires sacrificing firmly held convictions or beliefs in order to learn or connect with another.
8. To practice Use Flexible Mind DEFinitely and the three steps needed for open living: (1) acknowledge the presence of an unwanted private experience, (2) practice self-enquiry by turning toward the discomfort in order to learn, and (3) flexibly respond by doing what's needed in the moment.

Radical Openness Worksheet 1.A

Myths of a Closed Mind

Instructions: Place a checkmark in the box next to each myth you believe is true or somewhat true.

- ☐ Being open means others can use you. Only idiots are open.
- ☐ If you don't have an opinion on how things should be, you'll get hurt.
- ☐ Planning ahead is always imperative.
- ☐ There is a right and wrong way to do things and that's the way it is.
- ☐ Behaving correctly is the most important thing in life.
- ☐ I have tried everything there is to try. There is nothing new out there.
- ☐ Even if I tried something new, it won't help.
- ☐ You can't teach an old dog a new trick.
- ☐ If I try something new and it works, I was a fool for not trying it before.
- ☐ If I try something new, then it means I was wrong.
- ☐ New things are for gullible fools.
- ☐ Doing something different means giving up my values.
- ☐ It doesn't matter what you say or how things seem, when I am right about something I know I am correct.
- ☐ Doing what I always do just feels right.
- ☐ It is always important to do things properly.
- ☐ Rules are there to be followed—especially mine.

In the following space, write out any other myths you may have about emotions that were not mentioned.

Next: Pick one of the preceding myths that you strongly believe in and practice self-enquiry about the myth over the next week.

- **Remember to keep your self-enquiry practices short in duration**—for example, not much longer than five minutes. The goal of self-enquiry is to *find a good question* that brings you closer to your edge or personal unknown (the place you don't want to go), in order to learn. After a week, move to another myth and repeat your self-enquiry practice.
- **Remember to record** in your RO self-enquiry journal the images, thoughts, emotions, and sensations that emerge when you practice self-enquiry about your myths.
- **Remember to practice being suspicious of quick answers** to self-enquiry questions. Allow any answers to your self-enquiry practice to emerge over time.
- **Remember, self-enquiry does not automatically assume that a myth is wrong, bad, or dysfunctional.** Use the following questions to enhance your practice.
 - *What might I need to learn from this myth?*
 - *What might this myth be telling me about myself and my life?*
 - *Am I feeling tense doing this exercise?*
 - *Am I feeling tense right now? If so, then what might this mean? What is it that I might need to learn?*
 - *How open am I to thinking differently about this myth or changing the myth?*
 - *If I am not open or only partly open, then what might this mean?*
 - *How does holding on to this myth help me live more fully?*
 - *How might changing this myth help me live more fully?*
 - *What might my resistance to changing this myth be telling me?*
 - *Is there something to learn from my resistance?*
 - *What does holding on to this myth tell me about myself?*
 - *What do I fear might happen if I momentarily let go of this myth?*
 - *What is it that I need to learn?*

Use the following space to record additional self-enquiry questions or observations that emerged from your practice.

Radical Openness Worksheet 1.B

Flexible Mind DEFinitely: Three Steps for Radically Open Living

Flexible Mind DEFinitely

- D Acknowledge **D**istress or unwanted emotion
- E Use self-**E**nquiry to learn
- F **F**lexibly respond with humility

Instructions: Look for a time in the coming week when you find yourself feeling tense, irritated, annoyed, uncertain, invalidated, criticized, fearful, judgmental, numb, shut down, closed, resisting, ruminating, or disliking something and then use the following skills to practice radical openness.

- **Remember, we only need to practice radical openness when we are closed**—plus, small moments are just as important as big ones (for example, disliking someone cutting you off in traffic may be just as important to practice RO with as an argument with your spouse).

D Acknowledge **D**istress or unwanted emotion (*for example, annoyance, anxiety, tension in the body, numbness*).

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the questions that best address your unwanted experience.

- ☐ Were you in a novel or uncertain situation?
- ☐ Did you feel invalidated, misunderstood, or criticized?
- ☐ Were your expectations or beliefs about the world, other people, or yourself being challenged?

Other circumstances.

Describe in the following space what happened. Where were you when it happened? Who were you with? What did you feel inside your body?

E Use self-**Enquiry** to learn from the distress rather than automatically attempting to regulate, distract, change, deny, or accept.

Place a checkmark in the boxes that best describe the skill you practiced.

- ☐ In the heat of the moment, I turned toward my discomfort and asked *What do I need to learn?* rather than automatically regulating, distracting, fixing, or trying to accept.
- ☐ Made a commitment to practice self-enquiry on multiple days after the event had passed.
- ☐ Remembered that self-enquiry means *finding a good question* that brings me closer to my edge (my personal unknown), not finding a good answer.
- ☐ Found my edge by turning my mind to the very thing I don't want to think about or admit having.
- ☐ Celebrated finding my edge as an opportunity for growth.
- ☐ Recorded my edge in my RO self-enquiry journal and used it to focus my self-enquiry practice.
- ☐ Pinpointed a question that elicited my edge.
- ☐ Used a self-enquiry question from handout 1.2 (What Is Radical Openness?) to enhance my practice.
- ☐ Remembered that the best self-enquiry question is the one I dislike the most.
- ☐ Set aside five minutes per day over a period of several days to ask my self-enquiry question and recorded what emerged each day in my RO self-enquiry journal.
- ☐ Purposefully kept my self-enquiry practices brief (five minutes or less) by recognizing that prolonged practices are often disguised attempts to prove I am working hard, punish myself, or solve the problem in order to feel better.
- ☐ Practiced being slightly suspicious of quick answers or urges to justify my actions when asking my self-enquiry question.
- ☐ Remembered that ruminating or brooding is not self-enquiry—it is me trying to *solve the problem or regulate/avoid my discomfort*.
- ☐ Blocked blaming myself, others, or the world during my practice of self-enquiry.
- ☐ Noticed secret attempts to avoid my edge or downregulate during a self-enquiry practice and used this to deepen my understanding rather than as another opportunity to get down on myself.

- ☐ Blocked attempts to be perfect at self-enquiry.
- ☐ When I found myself resisting self-enquiry, I used self-enquiry to explore my resistance, using the questions from handout 1.3 (Learning from Self-Enquiry).

Record in the following space the self-enquiry question(s) you found most useful.

F *Flexibly respond with humility by doing what's needed in the moment, in a manner that accounts for the needs of others.*

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Acknowledged that flexible responding is freely chosen by me; no one can force me to be flexible.
- ☐ Activated my social safety system to maximize my flexible responding (for example, by closed-mouth smiling with eyebrows raised while slowing and deepening my breathing).
- ☐ Used stall tactics to block automatic, habitual, and quick responding. **Check all that apply.**
 - ☐ Reminded myself it is okay to take time to reflect—not every problem needs immediate fixing.
 - ☐ Let two to three days pass before making a decision or responding to an emotionally evocative event (for example, an email, request, or telephone call).
 - ☐ Communicated to another person that I needed some time to reflect on what had just happened—including how I may have contributed to it—before making a decision about what to do or discussing it further, and then used this time to practice self-enquiry.
 - ☐ Reminded myself that stalling does not mean walking away or abandoning the problem, my responsibility, or the relationship. It means taking a short break to practice self-enquiry and then reengaging with the issue.
- ☐ Practiced living according to my values by taking responsibility for my personal reactions and responses to the world. **Check all that apply.**
 - ☐ Blocked my automatic tendency to blame others or expect the world to change when things did not go as expected.
 - ☐ Reminded myself that no one can force me to feel something.
 - ☐ Practiced outing myself about secret desires to pout, stonewall, walk away, or obstruct another person or an event instead of pretending that I was not upset, that the other person made me do it, or that they got what was coming to them.

- ☐ Gave others the benefit of the doubt (for example, by assuming that they mean well and/or are doing the best they can to cope effectively).
- ☐ Challenged my rigid belief that I was correct or right by reminding myself that we don't see things as they are, but that we see things as we are.
- ☐ Reminded myself that it is arrogant to assume that the world or other people should conform to my expectations or beliefs.
- ☐ Remembered that I don't know what I don't know, in order to be more receptive to what was happening in the moment.
- ☐ Practiced a willingness to be wrong without falling apart or giving up.
- ☐ Practiced surrendering arrogance (for example, by acknowledging the fallibility inherent in all humans or by recalling times when my convictions were proven wrong).
- ☐ Practiced letting go of desires to control or dominate other people.
- ☐ Practiced celebrating diversity by recognizing that there are many ways to live, behave, or think.
- ☐ Practiced celebrating problems as opportunities for new learning rather than obstacles preventing me from enjoying my life.
- ☐ Practiced seeing the big picture and letting go of detail-focused processing by asking...
 - ☐ *Does what I noticed really matter in the long run?*
 - ☐ *What are the downsides of holding on to my detailed observation?*
 - ☐ *What other valued goals may be negatively impacted by my insistence on this?*
- ☐ Used my desired level of intimacy to guide how I would respond by asking...
 - ☐ *Should I persist or suspend the behavior I had been engaging in prior to the unwanted experience?*
 - ☐ *Should I inhibit or disinhibit my action urges?*
 - ☐ *Should I express or constrain what I am feeling inside?*
 - ☐ *Should I reveal or edit what my beliefs, expectations, or inner thoughts are?*
- ☐ Practiced being flexible about flexibility; sometimes being closed may be what is needed in the moment, and/or change is not necessary.

Describe other ways you may have practiced flexible responding in the following space.

Radical Openness Worksheet 1.C

The Pros and Cons of Being Open Versus Closed to New Experience

Make a list of pros and cons for being open to new experience, trying out new things, tolerating the distress of not having an answer, or being seen as inexperienced. Also make a list of pros and cons for being closed to new experience or solely basing a decision on the past.

	Being open to new experience	Being closed to new experience
PROS		
CONS		

Radical Openness Handout 2.1

The RO DBT Neuroregulatory Model of Emotions

Neuroception ^a of Evocative Cues ^b					
	Safety Cue	Novelty Cue	Rewarding Cue	Threatening Cue	Overwhelming Cue
<i>Primary neural substrate response</i>	PNS ^c -VVC ^d engaged	PNS-VVC withdrawn without SNS ^e activation	SNS-E ^f (excitatory) engaged	SNS-D ^g (defensive) engaged	PNS-DVC ^h engaged
<i>ANS system triggered</i>	Social safety engagement system (<i>adaptive function</i> : enhances intraspecies communication, facilitates social connectedness)	Orienting and primary appraisal system (<i>adaptive function</i> : provides a quick means to identify and appropriately respond to environmental threats or rewards)	Excitatory approach system (<i>adaptive function</i> : promotes goal-pursuit behaviors that maximize goal attainment)	Defensive avoidance system (<i>adaptive function</i> : promotes defensive fight and flight behaviors that maximize harm avoidance)	Emergency shutdown systems (<i>adaptive function</i> : conserve vital energy reserves needed for survival when SNS fight/flight/approach responses are ineffective)
<i>Primary action urge</i>	Socialize	Stand still	Approach or pursue	Flee or attack	Give up
<i>Autonomic responses</i>	Body is relaxed Breathing is slow and deep Heart rate is reduced	Body is frozen Breath is suspended Orientation is toward cue	Body is animated and vivacious Breathing is faster Heart rate is fast	Body is tense and agitated Breathing is fast, shallow Heart rate is fast Sweating	Body is immobile Heart rate and breathing is slowed Increased pain threshold
<i>Emotion words associated with interoceptive experienceⁱ</i>	Relaxed, sociable, contented, open, playful	Alert but not aroused; curious, focused, evaluative	Excited, elated, passionate, goal-driven	Anxious or irritated, defensively aroused	Numb, unresponsive, trancelike, nonreactive, apathetic, insensitive to pain

	Safety Cue	Novelty Cue	Rewarding Cue	Threatening Cue	Overwhelming Cue
<i>Impact on social signaling</i>	Social signaling enhanced	Social signaling capacities momentarily suspended	Empathic perception impaired; individual still expressive	Empathic perception capacities and prosocial signaling capacities both impaired	SNS fight/flight/approach responses withdrawn; social signaling irrelevant
<i>Action or expression (overt behavior or social signal)</i>	Effortless eye contact and facial expressions Listening to and touching others Appearing approachable, sociable, receptive, open to exploration	Orienting response (“What is it?”) Stopping, looking, listening	Excitatory approach Goal-driven behavior Expansive gestures Insensitivity to others’ facial expressions and subtle social cues	Constrained facial expressions, tight gestures Monotonic voice Averted gaze or hostile stare Fight-or-flight response	Flat, unexpressive face Monotonic voice Slow speech Dissociation, swooning, fainting

^aThe term *neuroception* denotes how a person appraises or assesses evocative stimuli. Primary appraisals are quick evaluations, elicited without conscious awareness and originating at the sensory receptor level. Secondary appraisals are slower, top-down reappraisals of primary evaluations; they involve evolutionarily newer central cognitive and conscious levels of emotional processing.

^b A *cue* is an emotionally evocative stimulus that occurs inside the body (a happy memory, for example), outside the body (an unexpected loud noise), or as a function of context (the time of day).

^cPNS = parasympathetic nervous system.

^d PNS-VVC = ventral vagal complex (“new” vagus) of the parasympathetic nervous system; social safety system.

^e SNS = sympathetic nervous system; activating system.

^f SNS-E = SNS excitatory approach system.

^gSNS-D = SNS defensive avoidance system.

^h PNS-DVC = dorsal vagal complex (“old” vagus) of the parasympathetic nervous system; shutdown system.

ⁱ The term *interoceptive* refers to emotion-based phenomena and sensations occurring inside the body.

Radical Openness Handout 2.2

Main Points for Lesson 2: Understanding Emotions

1. Our neurosensory system is constantly scanning the world and ourselves for the presence of cues or stimuli relevant to our well-being.
2. Our brains are hardwired to detect and react to five broad classes of emotionally relevant stimuli or cues.
3. Safety cues are stimuli associated with feeling protected, secure, loved, fulfilled, cared for, and part of a community or tribe.
4. Novel cues are discrepant or unexpected stimuli that trigger an automatic evaluative process designed to determine whether the cue is important for our well-being.
5. Rewarding cues are cues appraised as potentially gratifying or pleasurable.
6. Threatening cues are cues appraised as potentially dangerous or damaging.
7. Overwhelming cues trigger our emergency shutdown system.
8. We are never unemotional, because we are always in one of the five emotional-mood states.
9. Broadly speaking, when one emotional system is on, the other four are off or inhibited.
10. Finally, when an emotional response tendency is ineffective, we move to another neuroregulatory response.

Radical Openness Worksheet 2.A

Identifying the Different Neural Substrates

Instructions: During the coming week, be on the lookout for experiences and events linked to changes in body sensations and mood states (for example, felt suddenly very hot, unexpectedly felt keyed up, without warning was suddenly very tired, a headache rapidly came on, all of a sudden began to sweat). Use the following skills to identify which of the five emotional response systems may have been involved and to pinpoint the name of the emotion you may have been experiencing.

Step 1. Describe the cue that triggered your emotional response.

Use the following questions to facilitate your description.

- *Did the cue occur inside your body—for example, a memory about an ex-partner?*
- *Did the cue occur outside your body—for example, a loud bang, a beautiful sunset?*
- *To what extent did contextual factors matter—for example, time of day, season of the year?*

Describe other features of the emotion-eliciting cue.

Step 2. Use your body to identify the emotional system triggered by your cue.

Place a checkmark in the box next to the statement that best describes how your body felt.

- ☐ My body felt relaxed and calm (social safety cue).
- ☐ My body felt alert and focused (novelty cue).
- ☐ My body felt energized and powerful (rewarding cue).
- ☐ My body felt tense, agitated, and hot (threatening cue).
- ☐ My body felt numb and detached from reality (overwhelming cue).

Describe other body sensations.

Step 3. Observe how you socially signaled.

Place a checkmark in the box next to the questions that best address your experience.

- ☐ Was it easy to make eye contact or express your emotions? Was your voice tone easygoing? Did you touch or reach out to someone? (likely the parasympathetic social safety system)
- ☐ Did you suddenly find yourself standing still and gazing intently? Or listening carefully? (likely novelty-evaluative system)
- ☐ Were you highly expressive, talkative, or using expansive gestures? Did it require effort to listen to others? Did it seem like you had missed something important that another person had said or done during an interaction but you were unable to identify it? (likely SNS excitatory arousal system)
- ☐ Did you find it difficult to smile without feeling phony? Was your facial expression flat or stony? Did you avert your eyes or stare intensely? Did your voice tone sound flat or strident? Were your gestures tight and constrained? (likely SNS defensive arousal system)
- ☐ Were your face and body expressionless? Were your body movements slow? Was your speech rate slow and your voice tone flat? Did you stare vacantly? (likely parasympathetic shutdown system)

Describe other social signals you observed.

Step 4. Describe if there was someone with you who experienced the same external cue or trigger but signaled a different response to you.

Record other emotional response tendencies or reactions.

Radical Openness Handout 3.1

Changing Social Interactions by Changing Physiology

- Our bodies are hardwired with a special regulatory system for social safety. This system calms and relaxes us.
- We have another regulatory system for defending against threats and for exciting us. This system alerts and arouses us.
- When the social safety system is activated, we feel open, flexible, and relaxed; we are more likely to want to explore, play, and socialize—it's our friendly state.
- When our social safety system is on, our defensive system is off or muted. We can't be relaxed and angry, afraid and content, or excited and calm at the same time.
- The good news is that when stressed or anxious, we can turn our social safety system on and our threat-emotion system off by doing certain behaviors that our brain naturally links to safety.
- Thus, we don't have to *think* our way out of anxiety; we can *do* our way out.
- So if you want to feel less tension, let your body do the work!

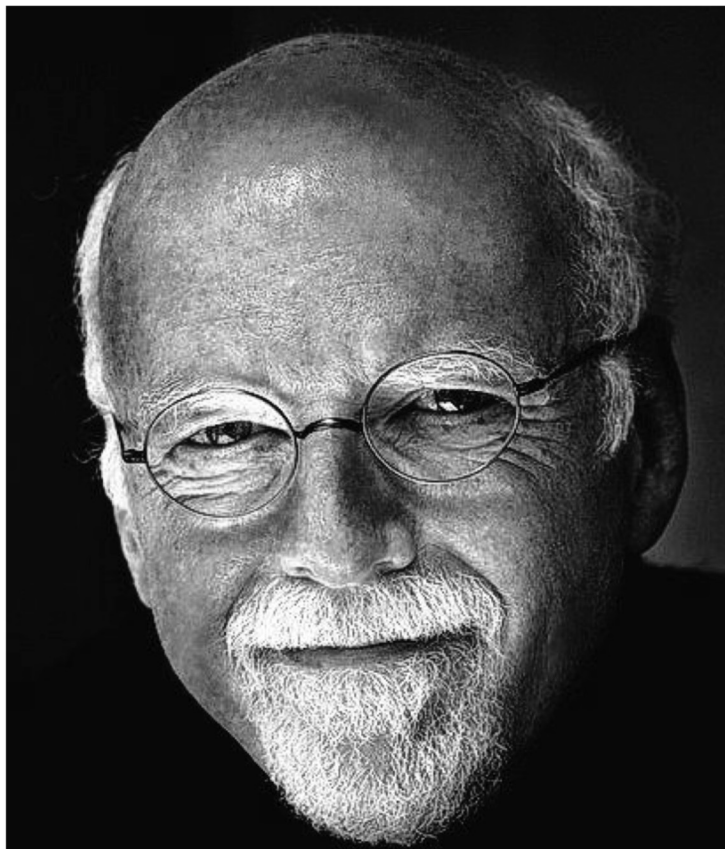
Practice These Skills

- **Use the Big Three + 1.** Lean back in your chair, take a slow deep breath, make a closed-mouth smile, and use an eyebrow wag.
- **Use big expansive gestures with open hands** rather than keeping your arms and hands close to your body.
- **Move your facial muscles.** When threatened or tense, our facial muscles naturally become frozen and we lose our ability to flexibly communicate via facial expressions. By deliberately moving our facial muscles, we send safety signals to our brain. Facial movement tells our brain, "I must be safe because I am not trying to mask my inner feelings." In front of a mirror at home or elsewhere, when alone, practice tensing, releasing, and stretching your facial muscles. Exaggerate your facial expressions. Make your eyebrows go up and down; then scrunch your eyes together; pucker your mouth; then stretch your lips as wide as they can go, open your mouth and eyes as wide as they can go, stick out your tongue as far as it can go; then raise your eyebrows and stretch all of these muscles as much as you can at the same time. Now close your eyes as hard as you can and scrunch up all of the muscles in your face, and tense them all as hard as you can—then release the tension. Tense and release as many different facial muscles as you can—see if you can find all of them! Repeat whenever possible throughout your day.
- **Deliberately breathe more deeply and slowly; use long, slow exhalations.** Purposely exhale longer than normal. Slow your rate of breathing to six breaths per minute; on inbreath, focus on raising the belly, not the chest.
- **Deliberately tense and relax large muscle groups.** Start with your toes and feet, then to legs and torso, then to your arms and neck, and then to your facial muscles. Tense each set of muscles, hold the tension, then slowly release the tension and notice the difference.

- **Use touch, deep pressure, massage, and hugs.** Practice touching or hugging soft objects (furry pets, stuffed toys, pillows); lightly stroke your face and neck; massage the muscles of your face, scalp, and neck. Locate the spot directly beneath the beginning of each eyebrow in the uppermost corner of each eye socket; use both thumbs to press this spot in an upward direction, and notice what happens. Wrap yourself tightly in blankets or towels (swaddling). Place a small heavy beanbag or sandbag over your forehead and thighs—notice what happens. Hug yourself by crossing both arms over your upper chest until your hands can reach your upper back, then rock your body slowly back and forth. Rub your tummy in a clockwise direction. Wrap a hot water bottle in a towel, lie on the floor, and place a cushion under each knee, then place the hot water bottle over your belly—notice what happens. Gently but firmly press the space in between the webbing of your thumb and pointer finger—notice what happens. Purchase a commercially available massaging machine or vibrating/massaging chair. Take a warm bath or shower; use the jet sprays in hot tubs to massage your back and neck. If you have a partner or friend to practice with, ask for a neck or foot massage; ask for a hug and squeeze firmly—practice hugging each day, if possible. Lie down on the floor and allow your friend to gently support your head in his or her hands; then, with your fingers, gently rub the point directly above the bridge of your nose adjacent to each eyebrow. Experiment with using the sensation of touch—be creative—and incorporate touch into each day.
- **Chewing and eating food.** When anxious, our bodies are tense and ready for action. Our brain associates eating and chewing with resting and digesting, not fleeing or fighting. Chewing moves the muscles of the face linked to social safety. It is difficult to swallow when really upset; chewing and swallowing food naturally calms the body. Look for your favorite calming foods (for example, milk and cookies) and incorporate these into everyday living. Carry sugar-free chewing gum, sweets, or snack bars with you. When stressed, rather than restricting intake, start chewing and moving those facial muscles.
- **Hearing—music and the human voice.** When stressed, use music that you find calming or soothing and/or recordings of the human voice that you find calming to activate your social safety system. Avoid listening to music that is arousing, disturbing, or exciting.
- **Vision—gazing at pictures of loved ones, pets, or landscapes.** You can trigger your social safety system by gazing at pictures linked to warmth, expansion, or a sense of peace. These might be pictures of a friend, your child or grandchild, a favorite pet, or your partner in a place that brings back warm memories. Use pictures you can carry with you and look at when you feel threatened or tense. As you gaze, breathe deeply and notice what happens.

Radical Openness Handout 3.2

Closed-Mouth Cooperative Smile



Radical Openness Handout 3.3

Main Points for Lesson 3: Activating Social Safety

1. Overcontrolled individuals are biotemperamentally (genetically) threat-sensitive, making it more likely for them to unintentionally carry defensive moods and behaviors (hunting dogs, shields, and swords) with them into social situations that can lead to social ostracism.
2. One can naturally improve social connectedness by changing one's physiology by activating the brain's social safety system.
3. Effective emotional expression is always *context*-dependent—that is, sometimes not expressing an emotion is the most effective way to manage a given situation.

Radical Openness Worksheet 3.A

Activating Social Safety

Look for opportunities to practice activating your social safety system. Describe the event you chose.

Observe and describe any hunting dogs, shields, or swords that you may have wanted to bring into a social situation—for example, frowning when entering a room, pretending to feel okay when not, and so forth.

Place a checkmark in the box next to each strategy you practiced, and in the spaces following each strategy, briefly describe your emotional experience, and rate the intensity of the emotion or body tension before and after trying the strategy (using a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 signifying low intensity, 5 moderate intensity, and 9 or 10 extremely intense).

- ☐ Adjusted my body posture by using the Big Three + 1—leaned back, took a deep breath, made a closed-mouth smile, and used an eyebrow wag.

Intensity before _____ Intensity after _____

- ☐ Used big gestures with open hands rather than keeping my arms and hands close to my body.

Intensity before _____ Intensity after _____

- ☐ Deliberately practiced exaggerating facial expressions and moving facial muscles.

Intensity before _____ Intensity after _____

- ☐ Deliberately slowed my breath and used long slow exhalations.

Intensity before _____ Intensity after _____

- ☐ Deliberately tensed and relaxed large muscle groups in my body.

Intensity before _____ Intensity after _____

- ☐ Used touch, deep pressure, hugs, and massage.

Intensity before _____ Intensity after _____

- ☐ Ate calming food(s) or chewed gum.

Intensity before _____ Intensity after _____

- ☐ Used hearing by listening to soothing music and soothing voices.

Intensity before _____ Intensity after _____

- ☐ Used vision by gazing at pictures of loved ones, pets, or landscapes.

Intensity before _____ Intensity after _____

Describe other social safety activation skills you used.

Radical Openness Handout 4.1

A Script for Loving Kindness Meditation

Remember, the goals of LKM practices are to induce a positive mood state associated with social safety.

- **Use the following script to make an audiorecording.** It is designed to be read aloud. We recommend that you do not change the wording. Practice using the script as it is currently written first. Research has demonstrated this script to be the most useful for people in RO DBT skills classes. If you decide you would like to make changes to the script, work with your individual therapist or skills instructor before doing so.
- **Commit to a daily practice.**

Getting seated

Find a comfortable seated position in a chair, on the floor, on the sofa. The most important thing is that you find a position in which you feel alert and the chances of you drifting off to sleep are minimal. For the practice of loving kindness you can keep your eyes open or closed—the choice is yours—with the understanding that our goal is to remain awake, as best we can.

Noticing the breath

Once you find that position, begin by simply taking a breath—with awareness. Not trying to change the breath or fix it in some way, just being fully present with the full duration of the inbreath and the full duration of the outbreath. You may notice it most strongly in the nose and the throat. Some people notice the breath in the chest or the belly. Wherever the breath is most alive for you, just allow yourself to rest your awareness there. If your mind wanders away from the breath, which it is prone to do, then, without judgment, just simply bring yourself back to the next natural inhalation or exhalation.

Finding our heart center

And now, very gently, allow your awareness to move from your breath to your heart center. Into that place, right there, in the middle of the chest. Not as much the physical heart but that place where we tend to feel warm emotions. If you would like to do so, sometimes people find it helpful to gently place their open hand over the location of their physical heart as this can help facilitate the practice.

As best you can, try and find a memory or feeling sense of a time when you experienced a strong sense of loving kindness, either from someone or toward someone. It might have been the first day you met your life partner; the day a child or grandchild was born; it might have even been a particular afternoon with your favorite pet, or a time when you felt warm appreciation after helping or being helped by someone. The idea is not to find the perfect experience or image, nor should you be concerned if you find yourself thinking of many different events or experiences. The idea is—as best you can—to re-create the warm, tender, or positive feelings associated with prior experiences of loving kindness, and to allow these feelings to grow in your heart center. For just a moment, allow these feelings to grow.

Sending loving kindness to a person we care about

And now, in your mind's eye, gently bring into focus an image of someone you care about, a person you already have existing warm feelings for, may feel love toward, or may feel a sense of positive connection with. It doesn't have to be a perfect relationship or one without conflict—the idea is to find an image or feeling sense of someone you know whom you already have warm feelings for. As best you can, hold this image or a feeling sense of this person in your heart center. And now, from the feelings of loving kindness in the center of your chest, extend warm wishes to this person you care about. Using these phrases, silently repeat to yourself...

May this person be at ease.

May they be content with their life.

May they be joyful.

May they feel safe and secure.

Again, extending warm wishes of loving kindness to this person you care about...

May they be at ease.

May they be content with their life.

May they be joyful.

May they feel safe and secure.

And again, from the source of loving kindness in your own heart, extending well wishes to this person you already care for...

May this person be at ease.

May they be content with their life.

May they experience joy.

And may they feel safe and secure.

And now, gradually allow the image or feeling sense of this person you care for to gently dissolve from your mind's eye, resting your attention back in your heart center, back into those feelings of warm loving kindness—as best you can.

Sending loving kindness to a person we feel neutral about

Bring to mind an image of someone who you don't really know, who you've at least seen once but don't feel any connection with one way or another. It could be your postman, or a supermarket clerk you've seen, or someone else of that sort. And again, as best you can, from your own heart, extending warm wishes of loving kindness toward this person you hardly know about, saying silently...

May this person be at ease.

May they be content with their life.

May they be joyful.

May they feel safe and secure.

Again, extending warm wishes of loving kindness to this person you hardly know at all...

May they be at ease.

May they be content with their life.

May they be joyful.

May they feel safe and secure.

And again, from the source of loving kindness in your own heart, extending well wishes to this person you barely know...

May this person be at ease.

That they be content with their life.

That they be joyful.

That they feel safe and secure.

And now, with warm loving care, gently turn your attention back to the sensations of your breath and your heart center, allowing the image or feeling sense of this person you hardly know to be released—allowing yourself to rest here, in this moment, with your feelings of warmth and kindness. Remembering that you can carry with you throughout your day these warm feelings of love and kindness that you were able to generate, knowing that you can always find your heart center when needed and making a kindhearted commitment to integrate this practice of loving kindness into your life, as best you can. And when you are ready, you can open your eyes and bring your attention back into the room.

End of practice

Radical Openness Handout 4.2

Main Points for Lesson 4: Enhancing Openness and Social Connection via Loving Kindness

1. Loving kindness meditation is a type of mood induction that activates our brain's social safety system.
2. LKM practices in RO DBT are designed to be used prior to social encounters (social safety effects have been reported to last from twenty minutes to up to four hours).
3. Importantly, the overarching goal of LKM practices in RO DBT is not to improve a person's ability to experience love or kindness toward themselves or other people but instead to trigger a mood state associated with contentment, curiosity, and desires for social engagement by activating an area of the brain linked with social safety responses.
4. RO DBT LKM differs from other LKM practices. Since many OC clients can find it difficult or even distressing to consider extending feelings of warmth, kindness, or love toward themselves, LKM practices in RO DBT involve only three steps: (1) creating an experience of warmth/love/kindness, (2) extending warm feelings toward someone the client already cares about, and (3) extending warm feelings toward a neutral person.

Radical Openness Worksheet 4.A

Daily Practice of Loving Kindness Meditation

- Loving kindness meditation is a type of positive mood induction that activates our brain's social safety system, our "friendly system" that is linked to feelings of calmness, contentment, and an easy social manner.
- Use LKM practices before social interactions to increase positivity and social connectedness toward others.
- A short six-minute exercise is all that is needed; research shows that the more you practice, the stronger the effects. Make it part of your daily ritual.
- Remember, LKM in RO DBT involves only three steps: (1) creating an experience of warmth/love/kindness, (2) extending warm feelings toward someone you already care about, and (3) extending warm feelings toward a neutral person.
- Remember, LKM in RO DBT is less about extending love or kindness and more about activating our social safety system.
- Use the script in handout 4.1 as a guide for practice or in making a digital recording of a loving kindness practice to use on a daily basis. Practice each day prior to leaving your house. Record your experiences using the following daily practice log.

Day	What did I notice during the practice? How long did the social safety experience last? How did it impact my day?
Sunday	
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	

Were there any obstacles that arose while practicing loving kindness meditation? Describe these and how you used radical openness skills to deal with them.

Radical Openness Handout 5.1

Engaging in Novel Behavior: Flexible Mind VARIEs

Flexible Mind VARIEs

- V** **Verify** one's willingness to experience something new
- A** Check the **Accuracy** of hesitancy, aversion, or avoidance
- R** **Relinquish** compulsive planning, rehearsal, or preparation
- I** Activate one's social safety system and then **Initiate** the new behavior
- E** Nonjudgmentally **Evaluate** the outcome

V *Verify one's willingness to experience something new.*

Notice what emotion arises when you imagine engaging in the novel behavior; rate the intensity of the emotion on a 1 to 10 scale (with 1 being low intensity and 10 highest). Notice any tendencies to avoid.

A *Check the **Accuracy** of hesitancy, aversion, or urges to avoid engaging in the new behavior in order to determine whether your emotions are warranted.*

- ✓ **Ask:** What are my expectations or predictions of what might happen if I tried out the new behavior? Do I believe that I already know the outcome of what might happen if I tried the new behavior?
- ✓ **Ask:** Do I believe that I know all of the facts in the situation I am in? Do I find myself wanting to automatically explain or defend my perceptions of the facts or discount the other person's perceptions of the facts. If yes or maybe, then is this a sign that I am in Fixed Mind?
- ✓ **Ask:** Am I saying to myself that I have already tried out the new behavior in the past and believe it useless to try again? Do I believe it is unfair that I must do something different? If yes or maybe, then what might this mean? Is it possible I am operating from Fatalistic Mind?
- ✓ **Ask:** Is there a possibility that I may not really want to change how I behave or think? Do I secretly hope I will fail when trying the new behavior? If so, how might this influence my ability to achieve my valued goals?
- ✓ **Ask:** Is it possible I am minimizing the positive consequences?

R *Relinquish compulsive planning, rehearsal, or preparation prior to trying out the new behavior.*

- Remind yourself that compulsive planning or rehearsal may feel like wisdom but in reality may masquerade as avoidance (for example, "I just need to read one more article").

- **Use self-enquiry to determine whether planning is actually needed.** *Ask: Is preparation actually necessary for me to engage in this new behavior?*
 - **If yes:** Mindfully research what is needed while blocking obsessive rehearsals. Picture yourself doing the new behavior, memorize the steps needed, but block excessive planning.
 - **If no:** Purposefully decide to not plan ahead and then let go of urges to practice further by turning your mind to an unrelated activity (for example, read an amusing book, take a soothing bath or nap, practice mindful breathing, conduct a loving kindness meditation).
- **Use urge-surfing to not respond to compulsive desires to plan ahead or excessively rehearse.** *Urge-surfing* means mindfully observing urges like a wave that crests and then passes away. Remind yourself of times you have been successful at urge-surfing in the past (for example, if you ever quit cigarettes, you surfed the urge to smoke repeatedly; eventually urges to smoke fade away with repeated practice). In the same way, repeatedly practice observing urges to plan ahead or rehearse (and the thoughts, emotions, or images accompanying them) like a wave that rises and falls. *As best you can, observe these urges without giving in to them—not trying to make them go away, but simply allowing them to crest and fall—knowing that they are transitory experiences that don't require an immediate response. Rather than dwelling on them, keep turning your attention to the sensations of your breath when they arise. Repeat the practice again and again every day until your brain learns that urges to plan or rehearse are not mandates for action.*
- **Practice radically accepting that no one knows what will happen in the future; mindfully live in the here and now.**
- **Remember that learning new things usually involves making a mistake;** otherwise, you would already know the skill!

I *Activate one's social safety system and then **Initiate** the new behavior.*

- **Activate your social safety system before you engage in the new behavior.** Use skills from lesson 3 (changing social interactions by changing physiology). Use a loving kindness meditation to induce a long-lasting social safety mood state (lesson 4).
- **When actually doing the new behavior, repeatedly use the Big Three + 1 skills to keep yourself in your social safety system** (that is, lean back, deep breath, closed-mouth smile, eyebrow wag).
- **Mindfully participate fully in the experience while letting go of judgmental thoughts.** Carry out the behavior again and again until anxiety begins to pass.
- **Remember that behaving differently is the only way to learn something new.** Feeling awkward tells you that you are learning, *not* that you are failing.

E *Look back over what happened, and nonjudgmentally **Evaluate** the outcome.*

- ✓ **Ask:** *What have I learned from this experience? Am I finding it hard to feel a sense of accomplishment because I did not perform perfectly?* If so, practice accepting your perfectionist tendencies rather than trying to fix them. Trying to rid oneself of perfectionistic thinking is like using mud to wash mud off your car—it just makes matters worse.

- **Open and soften into your style and practice loving kindness toward the perfectionistic part of you.** For example, “May my perfectionist self be happy, may my perfectionist self be content, may my perfectionist self be safe and secure.”
- **Remind yourself that striving to meet or exceed expectations is needed for societies to flourish** (without it, trains would never run on time; we would never have landed on the moon, and so forth).
 - ✓ **Ask:** *Do I find myself wanting to automatically discount positive feedback or praise from others about how well I did?* If yes or maybe, remind yourself that accepting praise from others when you believe that you could have done better lays down new learning that opposes your habitual tendencies to value only a perfect performance.
- **Practice saying “Thank you” to people giving compliments, without further explanation or minimization of your efforts.**
- **Reward yourself for trying out new things and create a list of potential rewards to be used in the future—**for example, curl up for half an hour with a nonserious book, have a glass of wine, eat one of your favorite chocolates, take a long hot bath with scented candles, take a nap, listen to your favorite music while enjoying your favorite beverage, watch your favorite TV show, sit out in your garden and enjoy the sunshine. Get into the habit of rewarding yourself every time you do something new or different, whether you feel like you deserve a reward or not. Then reward yourself for rewarding yourself! Experiment and remember that celebrating one’s successes is a core means for preventing burnout and exhaustion.

Radical Openness Handout 5.2

Using Experience to Examine Willingness to Learn

- After engaging in a new behavior, evaluate your experience with self-enquiry.
- Use the following questions to examine how open you are to trying out new things and discover any potential obstacles for growth.
 - *To what extent did I find myself enjoying the new experience?*
 - *Am I more OR less inclined to try out this behavior again? What might my answer tell me?*
 - *Am I dismissing or minimizing the positive benefits that occurred? What does this mean?*
 - *If I am self-critical of my behavior—is there something important for me to learn?*
 - *Have I allowed myself sufficient time to practice or try out the new behavior before I evaluated what happened?*
 - *Am I finding it hard to feel a sense of accomplishment because I did not perform perfectly? If so, then what might this mean?*
 - *Do I find myself wanting to automatically blame someone else for what happened when I tried out the new behavior? What might this tell me about my coping style? What do I need to learn?*
 - *Am I secretly expecting myself to be perfect or for the new behavior to feel good when I first attempt it? If so, then what might this tell me about how I am feeling now?*
 - *To what extent am I telling myself that my experience just proves I was right all along about the new behavior? What might this response tell me about my openness to new experience?*
 - *Do I have urges to pout or give up because things didn't go as planned? If so or maybe, then what is it that I need to learn?*
 - *Am I using this experience as another opportunity to beat up on myself or to prove to myself or others that I am worthless or unworthy? Is there a part of me that was hoping I would fail when engaging in the new behavior? If so or maybe, then what might this mean?*
 - *Do I ever secretly fail or attempt to destroy others' expectations (even my own) so that I won't be expected to do things differently in the future? Do I ever harshly blame myself so that others will expect less from me?*
 - *To what extent am I willing to change my behavior? What might I be doing to contribute to my personal suffering? How might I learn from this, without using it as another opportunity to prove to myself and others that I am a failure? What is it I need to learn?*

- Write other self-enquiry questions you found useful here.

Radical Openness Handout 5.3

The Art of Nonproductivity and Being Just a Little Bit Silly

- **Overcontrolled individuals don't need to learn how to take life more seriously.** Instead, those of us with overcontrolled tendencies need to learn how to chill out and take it easy. We need to practice relaxing, find time to be nonproductive, and learn how to take life (and ourselves) a little less seriously.
- **Relearning to laugh and play will require practice.** It involves a willingness to step outside of one's comfort zone.
- **Each day try to do something new or different.** Remember, whenever we do something new or different without judgment, we acquire new learning (for example, that it is okay not to have everything planned, that making mistakes or embracing uncertainty is how we learn).
- **Here are a few ideas.** Work at creating your own list that you add to each day. The idea is to increase your flexibility by changing old habits!
 - *Put your rings on different fingers.*
 - *Wear a watch on the opposite arm.*
 - *Use different bedding.*
 - *Do your hair differently.*
 - *Wear something different.*
 - *Use a purple (or silver) pen.*
 - *Write with your other hand.*
 - *Sit in a different seat during mealtime.*
 - *Listen to different music or radio stations.*
 - *Ask people to call you by a different name for a day (for example, shortened or longer form of name, nickname).*
 - *For fun, do the exact opposite of what you would normally do in a situation.*
 - *Read a different newspaper or watch a different newscast.*
 - *Talk to everyone wearing pink at a party.*
 - *Watch TV and repeat everything said in an Italian accent.*
 - *Go into a fancy restaurant and order a burger and fries.*
 - *Order a pizza and end the call with, "Remember, we never had this conversation."*
 - *Repeat every third word you say during a conversation with someone.*

- *Walk backward.*
- *Communicate in mime.*
- *Drive a different way to work.*
- *Wear a Hawaiian shirt.*
- *Wear your underwear backward.*
- *Eat your dessert first, before your main meal.*
- *Ask someone else the best way to do a household chore and do it that way for the next few days.*
- **Make up your own list of novel behaviors and write your ideas here.**

Radical Openness Handout 5.4

Are We Having Fun Yet? Self-Enquiry About Humor and Play

- **Remember, keep your self-enquiry practices short in duration**—that is, not much longer than five minutes. The goal of self-enquiry is to *find a good question* that brings you closer to your edge or personal unknown (the place you don't want to go), in order to learn.
- **Remember to record** the images, thoughts, emotions, and sensations that emerge when you practice self-enquiry about the following questions (or other questions that emerge) in your self-enquiry journal.
- **Remember to practice being suspicious of quick answers** to self-enquiry questions. Allow any answers to your self-enquiry practice to emerge over time.
- **Remember, the questions we dislike the most are usually the best.** They often hold some gem of truth or learning we may know is there but may wish to avoid. Be alert for questions that trigger bodily tension, annoyance, fear, urges to avoid or justify one's behavior, and/or urges to fall apart, attack or blame others, and/or get down on oneself.
- **Use the following questions to uncover your edge and facilitate learning.**
 - *How many of my recreational activities are competitive in nature?*
 - *If I am not winning, do I still find the activity enjoyable?*
 - *How serious am I about my recreational activities?*
 - *To what extent do the games, playtime, or recreational activities I engage in require preplanning (for example, parachuting requires careful checking beforehand that one's parachute has been packed properly).*
 - *How often do I engage in recreation, relaxing, or fun that does not require any preplanning or preparation?*
 - *How often do I read a book or watch a program on TV that is not teaching me something, about learning something new, and/or about self-improvement?*
 - *Have I ever been given feedback that I work too hard or that I need to relax?*
 - *Do I find it hard to self-soothe, relax, or experience pleasure without guilt?*
 - *To what extent do I believe it immoral or selfish to engage in behaviors that are for pleasure and/or have no obvious productive value?*
 - *How many of my recreational activities involve in-person contact with other people (that is, not over the internet or via telephone)?*
 - *To what extent do I believe that relaxing, playing, or recreation must be earned?*
 - *What do I find amusing?*
 - *What is so amusing about what I find amusing?*
 - *What type of TV programs or movies do I find enjoyable or humorous? Am I proud of what I watch? If not or not always, what is it that I might need to learn?*

- *Do I consider myself to possess a cutting sense of humor? What might this say about my social interactions?*
- *Do I secretly pride myself on being able to make clever or barbed comments disguised as innocent jests? What prevents me from being more direct?*
- *Do I consider myself expert at the humorous put-down or the nigger?*
- *Do I like it when other people nigger me? What might this tell me about my values?*
- *How often do I laugh out of social obligation?*
- *Am I expert at the phony laugh? What might this mean?*
- *How free do I feel to express pleasure or laughter in public?*
- *Do I ever hide expressions of laughter from others? How might this impact my relationships?*
- *Do I pride myself on being able to make other people laugh?*
- *How much time do I spend memorizing or rehearsing funny stories or anecdotes?*
- *To what extent do I use a joke to avoid something serious? Has this ever caused problems for me? What might be the downsides?*
- *Do I ever feel like an impostor when telling someone a joke or a funny story? What might this tell me?*
- *What am I afraid might happen if I did not tell a joke?*
- *How often do I find myself laughing at other people's jokes?*
- *How often do I find myself laughing, chuckling, or giggling, without trying to?*
- *To what extent do I believe genuine laughter is even possible?*
- *When I hear the word "silly," what type of thoughts, emotions, or images arise?*
- *How often am I silly?*
- *Can I be silly? If not, what is preventing me?*
- *What do I fear might happen if I were silly?*
- *Who am I silly around?*
- *To what extent do I believe being silly is a silly thing to do (☺)?*

- **Write here other questions that emerged.**

Radical Openness Handout 5.5

Main Points for Lesson 5: Engaging in Novel Behavior

1. Discovery requires openness and willingness not to always have an answer. The most effective people in the world learn something new every day!
2. Learning new things usually involves making a mistake.
3. There are four stages we all go through when learning something new: unconscious incompetence, conscious incompetence, conscious competence, and unconscious competence.
4. Use Flexible Mind VARIEs skills to try new things.
5. OC clients need to let go of always trying to perform better or try harder. Relaxing, playing, and being nonproductive are skills that OC individuals need to practice.
6. Doing something new or different every day helps break down old habits and encourages spontaneity. New behavior often opens up new horizons. It teaches our brain that it's okay to not have everything planned.

Radical Openness Worksheet 5.A

Engaging in Novel Behavior: Flexible Mind VARIEs

Flexible Mind VARIEs

- V **Verify** one's willingness to experience something new
- A Check the **Accuracy** of hesitancy, aversion, or avoidance
- R **Relinquish** compulsive planning, rehearsal, or preparation
- I Activate one's social safety system and then **Initiate** the new behavior
- E Nonjudgmentally **Evaluate** the outcome

V *Verify one's willingness to experience something new.*

Notice what emotion arises when you imagine engaging in the novel behavior; rate the intensity of the emotion on a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being low intensity and 10 highest). Notice any tendencies to avoid.

A *Check the Accuracy of hesitancy, aversion, or urges to avoid engaging in the new behavior in order to determine whether your emotions are warranted.*

Use the self-enquiry questions in handout 5.2 (Using Experience to Examine Willingness to Learn) to help with this. Record here what you discovered.

R Relinquish *compulsive planning, rehearsal, or preparation prior to trying out the new behavior.*

Check the skills you used.

- ☐ Reminded myself that compulsive planning or rehearsal may feel right but in reality might not be needed.
- ☐ Asked myself *Is preparation actually necessary for me to engage in this new behavior?*
 - ☐ **If yes:** Then mindfully planned or rehearsed what was needed and let go of urges to do more.
 - ☐ **If no:** Purposefully practiced not planning by engaging in an unrelated activity.
- ☐ Practiced urge-surfing compulsive desires to plan ahead or excessively rehearse; see handout 5.1 (Engaging in Novel Behavior: Flexible Mind VARIEs).
- ☐ Practiced radically accepting that I cannot predict or control what will happen in the future and turned my mind to living fully in the present moment.
- ☐ Remembered that taking risks and making mistakes is the only way to learn a new skill.

Other skills practiced.

I *Activate one's social safety system and then **Initiate** the new behavior.*

Check the skills you used.

- ☐ Activated my social safety system *before* I engaged in the new behavior (write in the following space what skill or skills you used to do this).

- ☐ Used the Big Three + 1 skills while engaged in the new behavior.
- ☐ Mindfully participated in the experience while letting go of judgmental thoughts.
- ☐ Remembered that behaving differently is the only way to learn something new and that any feelings of awkwardness or discomfort are growth pains, not a sign of failure.

Other skills practiced.

E *Look back over what happened and nonjudgmentally* **Evaluate** *the outcome.*

What have I learned by trying out the new behavior? What do I still need to do or practice when it comes to this new behavior? Was I able to allow myself to experience a sense of accomplishment or pride for having tried something new? Write answers here, and place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Remembered that behaving differently means new learning—*attaching new positive meanings to previously feared or avoided behaviors.*
- ☐ Practiced accepting my perfectionist tendencies rather than compulsively trying to ignore them, make them go away, or control them.
- ☐ Practiced extending loving kindness toward the perfectionistic part of myself rather than chastising myself for being a perfectionist.
- ☐ Reminded myself that striving to meet or exceed expectations (perfectionism) is needed for societies to flourish.
- ☐ Practiced saying “Thank you” and blocked automatic tendencies to dismiss praise or positive feedback about my performance.
- ☐ Rewarded myself for trying out the new behavior. Write here what you actually did.

Radical Openness Worksheet 5.B

Nonproductive and Novel Behavior Monitoring Log

Daily practice log: Each day practice trying out something new or different. Focus on behaviors that are not about self-improvement, work, or obligation. Stretch yourself—make it fun—but keep it real; use handout 5.3 (The Art of Nonproductivity and Being Just a Little Bit Silly) for ideas. Record what you did and what emotions, thoughts, and sensations you experienced in the spaces provided.

Use **self-enquiry** to enhance self-discovery. For example, *What type of new behaviors did I find myself resisting the most? Did I tend to choose behaviors that involved self-improvement? Did I find it difficult to not be productive? What might this mean? What skills would be useful for me to practice?* Record other self-enquiry questions that arose from this practice and describe where they led you.

	What did you do that was different? What emotions, thoughts, and sensations arose?	What self-enquiry questions did you use to enhance self-discovery?
Sunday		
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		

1. **Describe any Fixed Mind or Fatalistic Mind behaviors that arose during the week.** How did they impact what you did? If you were able to get to Flexible Mind, what skills did you use?

2. **What were the aftereffects of trying out something new or novel, behaving less seriously, being silly, and/or practicing being less rather than more productive?** What did you learn? What do you need to do to deepen your learning?

3. **Describe how you will make this practice part of your life.** What are the obstacles that might make this difficult? What skills will you need to use to overcome these obstacles?

Radical Openness Handout 6.1

Emotions Are There for a Reason

Emotions have **four** primary functions or purposes:

1. They **help us make decisions**.

- Emotions help us make quick decisions about the world without having to spend a great deal of time thinking about it.
- For example, if we depended solely on our abilities to logically calculate the probabilities of being hit by an oncoming speeding bus before moving out of the way, we would likely have been run over long ago.

2. They **motivate our actions**.

- Emotions prepare us for action—each emotion has a unique action urge or response tendency that evolved to enhance our survival.
- For example, fear prepares us to escape a threat, anger helps protect us from harm, and contentment helps us join with others.

3. They **communicate our inner experience and signal our intentions**.

- Our species survival depended upon signaling cooperation to other members of our species in order to form tribes to fight enemies/predators, share valuable resources, and work together to achieve long-term goals that would be impossible in isolation.
- We have more facial muscles than any other species and we are capable of making ten thousand different expressions.
- Facial expressions communicate our intentions.
- For example, an angry facial expression signals to another person that they have crossed our boundaries without necessitating an actual physical attack to make this clear.

4. They **facilitate empathic responding and the formation of strong social bonds**.

- We automatically micromimic (that is, copy) the facial expressions of a person we are interacting with, which triggers the same brain areas and results in a similar emotional experience in the person who is watching the other person express an emotion.
- This facial feedback process involves the mirror neuron system in our brain, and it happens so fast (in milliseconds) that we are rarely aware of it.
- Thus, if we observe a person grimace in pain, we tend to, without conscious awareness, microgrimace, and as a result, via the influence of the mirror neuron system, we can literally know in our body how the other person feels.
- Emotions (and micromimicry) help *facilitate* the formation of strong social bonds because *knowing* how someone else feels means we are more likely to respond with empathy and even be willing to risk our lives to save (or fight for) someone we hardly know and *treat them as we would like to be treated*. A stranger can suddenly become part of the family.

Radical Openness Handout 6.2

Not Everything That's Important Is Emotional

1. *It's all in the details!*

- **The brains of overcontrolled individuals are hardwired to notice details rather than global patterns of information.** For example, they may often exhibit heightened memory for details and notice minor discrepancies (such as grammatical mistakes, a misaligned book in a bookcase).
- **Research suggests that this way of behaving may be nonemotional;** that is, OC individuals appear to be very good at recognizing small details, regardless of how they're feeling at the time.
- **Yet the consequences of detail-focused processing may be emotional.** For example, noticing that a book is out of alignment on a bookshelf may be purely a nonemotional sensory receptor response. However, the obsessive need to straighten the misaligned item can trigger strong emotions.
- **Plus, this superior ability to notice small changes may trigger emotionally driven social comparisons** (for example, frustration when a detailed observation is unappreciated by others, or secret pride in being able to notice an error that no one else picked up on).

2. *Help! My self-control is out of control!*

- **By definition, overcontrolled individuals possess superior self-control capacities** (for example, being able to plan ahead, delay gratification, tolerate distress, and inhibit emotional action urges).
- **Self-control involves areas of the brain that are nonemotional by nature.**
- **Despite being nonemotional, self-control is hard work!** It requires effortful control over emotion-based action urges and the delaying of gratification. Excessive self-control depletes energy.
- **Too much willpower depletes the energy resources needed to override too much willpower,** making a person more emotionally vulnerable or reactive.
- **Superior capacities in self-control can lead to secret pride and frequent downward social comparisons** (for example, secretly looking down on people who are unable to sit for hours during a meditation practice without coughing or twitching).
- **Excessive rule-governed behavior can result in a person being less open to change, which can damage important relationships** (for example, insisting my partner stack the dishwasher according to my rules might result in an argument, or compulsive planning may make it hard to be spontaneous in a relationship).

Radical Openness Handout 6.3

Main Points for Lesson 6: How Do Emotions Help Us?

1. Pure logic often fails when it comes to human relationships or making quick decisions.
2. Most of us carry myths about emotions with us that can bias how we respond to the world. Rather than challenging a myth about emotion to get rid of it, use self-enquiry in order to learn from it. Self-enquiry is able to enquire about a myth, but it does not automatically assume that a myth is wrong, bad, or dysfunctional.
3. Emotions exist for a reason. They have four primary functions or purposes: (1) they help us make decisions, (2) they motivate our actions, (3) they communicate our inner experience and signal our intentions to others, and (4) they facilitate the formation of strong social bonds.
4. Not everything that's important is emotional. OC individuals are characterized by superior self-control and detail-focused capacities, features that by nature are nonemotional yet have emotional consequences when they are excessively or compulsively used.

Radical Openness Worksheet 6.A

Overcontrolled Myths About Emotions

Instructions: Place a checkmark in the box next to each myth you believe is true or somewhat true.

- ☐ We make our best decisions when emotions are kept out of it.
- ☐ There is a right way to feel in every situation.
- ☐ Emotions should be controlled.
- ☐ Letting others know what I am feeling inside is a sign of weakness.
- ☐ Most people dislike emotional people.
- ☐ Negative feelings are bad and destructive.
- ☐ Feeling happy or excited is naive or childish.
- ☐ Love is only a chemical reaction.
- ☐ It is important to never let another person know what you are really feeling inside.
- ☐ Being emotional means being out of control.
- ☐ Most emotions are really stupid.
- ☐ All painful emotions are a result of a bad attitude.
- ☐ Painful emotions are not really important and should be ignored.
- ☐ People who feel happy are liars.

In the following space, write out any other myths you may have about emotions that were not already mentioned.

Next: Pick one of the preceding myths that you believe in strongly and practice self-enquiry about the myth over the next week. Keep your self-enquiry practices short in duration, not much longer than five minutes. The goal of self-enquiry is to *find a good question* that brings you closer to your edge or personal unknown (the place you don't want to go), in order to learn. After a week, move to another myth and repeat your self-enquiry practice.

Keep a record in your self-enquiry journal of the images, thoughts, emotions, and sensations that emerge when you practice self-enquiry about your myths about emotions. Practice being suspicious of quick answers to self-enquiry questions. Allow any answers to your self-enquiry practice to emerge over time.

Remember, self-enquiry does not automatically assume that a myth is wrong, bad, or dysfunctional. Use the following questions to facilitate a daily practice. Record what emerges in your self-enquiry journal.

- *What might I need to learn from this myth?*
- *What might this myth be telling me about myself and my life?*
- *Am I feeling tense doing this exercise?*
- *Am I feeling tense right now? If so, then what might this mean? What is it that I might need to learn?*
- *How open am I to thinking differently about this myth or changing the myth?*
- *If I am not open or only partly open, then what might this mean?*
- *How does holding on to this myth help me live more fully?*
- *How might changing this myth help me live more fully?*
- *What might my resistance to changing this myth be telling me?*
- *Is there something to learn from my resistance?*
- *What does holding on to this myth tell me about myself?*
- *What do I fear might happen if I momentarily let go of this myth?*
- *What is it that I need to learn?*

Use the following space to record additional self-enquiry questions or observations that emerged from your practice.

Radical Openness Worksheet 6.B

Using Neural Substrates to Label Emotions

Instructions: During the coming week, as you did last week, be on the lookout for experiences and events linked to changes in body sensations and mood states, and use the following skills to identify which of the five emotional response systems may have been involved. However, this week we go one step further, where the emphasis is on pinpointing the name of the emotion you may have been experiencing.

Step 1. Describe the cue that triggered your emotional response.

Use the following questions to facilitate your description.

- *Did the cue occur inside your body (for example, a memory about an ex-partner)?*
- *Did the cue occur outside your body (for example, a loud bang, a beautiful sunset)?*
- *To what extent did contextual factors matter (for example, time of day, season of the year)?*

Describe other features of the emotion-eliciting cue.

Step 2. Use your body to identify the emotional system triggered by your cue.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the statements that best describe how your body felt.

- ☐ My body felt relaxed and calm (social safety cue).
- ☐ My body felt alert and focused (novelty cue).
- ☐ My body felt energized and powerful (rewarding cue).
- ☐ My body felt tense, agitated, and hot (threatening cue).
- ☐ My body felt numb and detached from reality (overwhelming cue).

Describe other body sensations.

Step 3. Observe how you socially signaled.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the questions that best address your experience.

- ☐ Was it easy to make eye contact or express your emotions? Was your voice tone easygoing? Did you touch or reach out to someone? (likely the parasympathetic social safety system)
- ☐ Did you suddenly find yourself standing still and gazing intently? Or listening carefully? (likely novelty-evaluative system)
- ☐ Were you highly expressive, talkative, or using expansive gestures? Did it require effort to listen to others? Did it seem like you had missed something important that another person had said or done during an interaction but you were unable to identify it? (likely SNS excitatory arousal system)
- ☐ Did you find it difficult to smile without feeling phony? Was your facial expression flat or stony? Did you avert your eyes or stare intensely? Did your voice tone sound flat or strident? Were your gestures tight and constrained? (likely SNS defensive arousal system)
- ☐ Were your face and body expressionless? Were your body movements slow? Was your speech rate slow and your voice tone flat? Did you stare vacantly? (likely parasympathetic shutdown system)

Other social signals.

Step 4. Observe your action urges and desires in order to label your emotions.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the statements that best describe your experience.

- ☐ I wanted to run away (likely fear).
- ☐ I wanted to hide my face or disappear (likely shame).
- ☐ I felt an urge to repair or make amends (likely guilt).
- ☐ I wanted to isolate and deactivate (likely depression/sadness).
- ☐ I wanted to push away or expel (likely disgust).
- ☐ I desired to exert my superiority (likely dominance).
- ☐ I desired to harshly gossip about someone (likely unhelpful envy).
- ☐ I desired to reject help from another (likely bitterness).
- ☐ I desired to pursue (likely pleasurable dominance).
- ☐ I wanted to give up but blame it on others (likely bitterness).
- ☐ I wanted revenge (likely envy).
- ☐ I desired to block a person from getting to know someone I feel very close to (likely jealousy).
- ☐ I felt an urge to stand still or freeze (likely novelty).
- ☐ I desired to socialize (likely contented love).
- ☐ I wanted to explore my environment (likely curiosity).
- ☐ I desired to flee (likely fear).
- ☐ I experienced an urge to attack (likely anger).
- ☐ I wanted to explore (likely curiosity).

Record other emotional response tendencies or reactions.

Step 5. Identify the function of the emotion, remembering it may have more than one.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the phrases that best describe your experience.

- ☐ Helped me make a decision
- ☐ Motivated my actions
- ☐ Communicated my inner experience and signaled my intention
- ☐ Helped me get closer to someone and/or experience empathy with someone

Other functions of the emotion.

Step 6. Notice if the cue prompts a nonemotional reaction linked to OC tendencies to notice details, discrepancies, engage in rule-governed behavior, and or/superior capacity for self-control.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the statement that best describe your experience.

- ☐ I made a detailed observation missed by others.
- ☐ I noticed a discrepancy that no one else picked up on.
- ☐ My behavior was rule-governed.
- ☐ I engaged in compulsive planning behavior.

Other reactions.

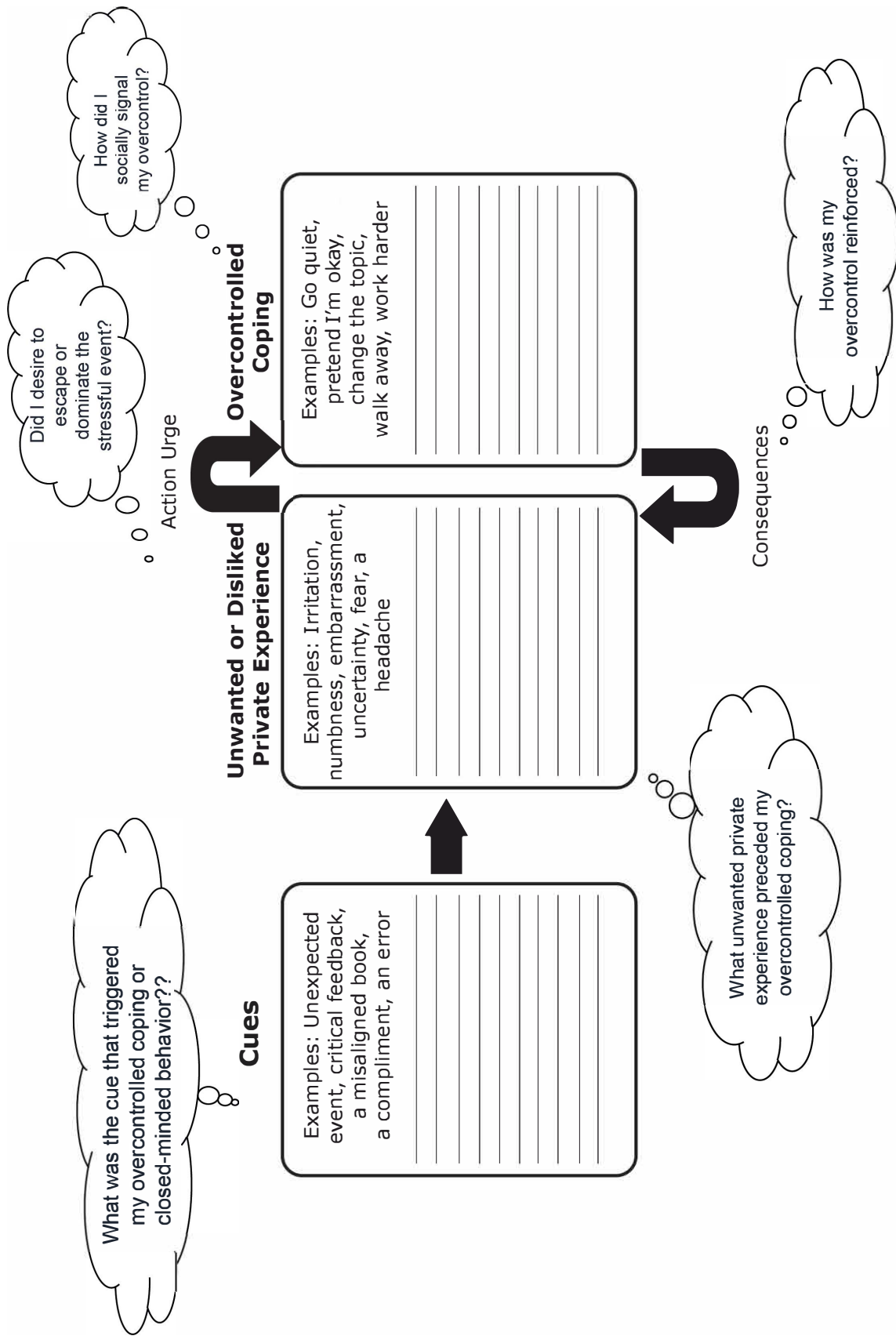
Radical Openness Handout 7.1

Main Points for Lesson 7: Understanding Overcontrolled Coping

1. Excessive self-control is maintained because it is rewarding. For example, losing two pounds by not succumbing to urges to eat may trigger feelings of pride and a sense of achievement.
2. To break a habit, one must know how it is reinforced.

Radical Openness Worksheet 7.A

Overcontrol Can Become a Habit



Radical Openness Worksheet 7.B

Finding Our Habitual Ways of Coping

During the week, look for triggers that lead to an experience of stress or emotions that you do not like or want (aversive tension). They might be feelings of tension, irritation, impatience, annoyance, sadness, anxiety, or numbness. Use the following steps to identify what happened.

Describe the situation you were in. What was the trigger or cue for the emotion? For example, maybe your boss asked for your opinion about a new project, or a neighbor invited you over for tea, or you saw an email announcing the promotion of a competitor at work.

Observe and describe your thoughts and emotions. Observe, then write down your thoughts and label the emotion. Rate the intensity of the emotion (on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being most intense). **Examples of thoughts:** *I am uncertain what is proper in this situation; they will think that I am a fool; they are being phony or fake or I am being phony or fake; they don't appreciate me; I must not show weakness; rules must be followed; being correct is more important than being liked by others.* **Examples of emotions:** anger, frustration, desire for revenge, fear, anxiety, despair, sadness, envious, jealous, shame, embarrassed, humiliated, cold or indifferent, numb, overwhelmed, spiteful, guilty.

Describe what you actually did in the situation. For example, did you pretend that everything was okay? Agree with the person despite silently disagreeing? Avoid going to the event? Work very hard to find a solution to fix the problem? Quickly come up with a reason why the suggestion wouldn't work? Change the topic to something else? Point out the other person's error? Isolate yourself or avoid talking about the issue? Think of ways to make the other person fail? Stay in bed and sleep? Work to make things perfect?

Describe the consequences of your behavior. For example, did you avoid having to go to the party and feel relieved? Work all night on the presentation and feel relieved to have made it perfect but miss your son's music recital? Feel relieved to have escaped thinking about the problem momentarily but later feel groggy and bad about yourself for sleeping all day?

Ask yourself: *How might the consequences have reinforced my behavior?* In other words, did your behavior help you feel better in the short run? What are the long-term consequences of your behavior?

Radical Openness Handout 8.1

Tribe Matters: Understanding Rejection and Self-Conscious Emotions

Tribes were essential for species survival

- **Safety in numbers.**
- **We are better when together.**
- **A tribe can consist of just two people.** Tribal bonds begin when two people commit to make self-sacrifices for the other person when they are in distress, without expecting anything in return.
- **Most people belong to many tribes** (for example, recreational clubs, work teams, family and kin, the nation we live in, a shared culture).

Social rejection and self-conscious emotions

- **For our early ancestors, social exclusion from the tribe meant almost certain death** from exposure, lack of nourishment, or predators in a matter of days or weeks.
- **We are biologically predisposed to care about whether we are in-group or out-group** because tribal banishment was essentially a death sentence.
- **We become self-conscious when we doubt our status in the tribe.**
- **Self-conscious emotions include shame, embarrassment, humiliation, and guilt**, emotional states often described as feeling uncomfortable, nervous, hesitant, timid, tentative, tongue-tied, unsure, sheepish, uneasy, disconcerted, flustered, mortified, discouraged, humbled, censured, chastened, discredited, disgraced, or dishonored.
- **Humans will do almost anything to avoid feelings of shame, humiliation, guilt, or embarrassment.** Examples include quick anger, immediately searching for someone else to blame, turning the tables on a real or imagined accuser via counteraccusations, walking away, distracting or confusing the issue by changing the topic or pretending ignorance, lying about what happened, shutting down, dissociating, or numbing out.

Despite being painful, shame is prosocial

- **Shame and similar self-conscious emotions evolved to provide painful corrective feedback** about behaviors that could potentially harm the well-being of the tribe.
- **When we feel ashamed, we desire to appease or submit to the other person** (or the tribe) in order to retain our social status, de-escalate aggression, and/or solicit sympathy.

Shame is warranted when...

- **An individual intentionally harms or deceives other tribal members for personal gain** (for example, stealing a neighbor's cow, lying or cheating to get ahead or win, exploiting weaker members of the tribe).
- **An individual's behavior threatens the well-being of the entire tribe** (for example, a guard falling asleep on their watch, the designated keeper of the fire misplacing the tribe's only source of firemaking, encouraging infighting among tribal members for personal gain).

Most shame is unwarranted or only partially warranted

- **Shame and other self-conscious emotions** can be warranted, partially warranted, or completely unwarranted.
- **We are evolutionarily biased to misinterpret the intentions of others as disapproving**, especially when social signals are ambiguous.
- **Shame evolved to "punish" extremely harmful acts that could damage tribal survival**, not to punish innocent mistakes, differences in opinion or expression, new ways of thinking, challenges to authority, or victims of abuse.

Radical Openness Handout 8.2

Prototypical Emotional Expressions



Angry



Neutral



Ashamed



Embarrassed



Amused

Adapted from Keltner, Young, & Bushwell, 1977, p 363.

Radical Openness Handout 8.3

Shaming Ritual



© Peter Jackson / courtesy Bridgeman Images.

Radical Openness Handout 8.4

Flexible Mind SAGE: Dealing with Shame, Embarrassment, and Feeling Rejected or Excluded

Flexible Mind SAGE

- S Use **Self-enquiry** to determine if shame is warranted
- A If shame is warranted or partially warranted, then **Appease**
- G If shame is unwarranted, then **Go opposite** to urges to hide
- E Show embarrassment to **Enhance** trust and socially connect

S Use **Self-enquiry** to determine if shame is warranted.

- Practice self-enquiry both during and after shame-evoking events in order to enhance openness, alert yourself to areas in your life that may need to change, take responsibility for your behavior, and develop a kind sense of humor about your own unique foibles and habits.
- In the heat of the moment, when immersed in a shame-eliciting social interaction, get into the habit of asking *What is it that I might need to learn from my emotion?* before you do anything else. Remember that the goal of self-enquiry is a good question, not a good answer.
- After the event, use the RO DBT Self-Conscious Emotions Rating Scale (see handout 8.5) to determine the extent to which your emotional reaction was warranted.

A If shame is warranted or partially warranted, then **Appease**.

- Take responsibility by admitting your wrongdoing, without justifying or defending yourself.
 - First, to yourself
 - Second, to close others
 - Third, to those who you have harmed
- Signal integrity by not falling apart.
 - Falling apart, sulking, pouting, and harsh self-blame are phony responsibility behaviors.
 - Expect to suffer, and then decide to learn from it. Warranted and partially warranted shame alert us to the very areas in our life that we may need to grow the most. Willingness to learn from shame (rather than avoid it) is an act of courage.

- **Out yourself by revealing your wrongdoing to others.**
 - **Cheerlead yourself**—people who openly admit warranted shame or guilt are universally perceived as prosocial.
 - **When you out yourself, block attempts by listeners to validate your behavior.** Explain that you are learning how to take responsibility for your actions and that outing yourself about warranted or partially warranted shame without immediate validation is a core means for accomplishing this.
 - **Use the Awareness Continuum when outing yourself** to block automatic tendencies to justify or explain your actions (see lesson 12).
- **Determine if you desire to maintain the relationship with the person(s) you have harmed. If yes, then...**
 - **Repair the transgression, without expecting anything in return, using these eight steps for relationship repair to guide your actions.**
 1. *Signal deference and relinquish control when you make a repair by being polite, not talking over them, keeping voice volume low, allowing them control over the pace and content of the conversation.*
 2. *Accurately identify the harm done and communicate this to the person(s) involved.*
 3. *Confirm your perception of the harm done as valid from the person(s) harmed. Let go of arrogantly assuming you already know what it was—practice listening to their perspective without interrupting.*
 4. *Block automatic rationalization or justification of your behavior.*
 5. *Make a genuine effort to repair the actual damage done (for example, not just saying “I’m sorry” if one has damaged a wall, but finding a way to repair the wall itself).*
 6. *Commit to genuinely working to not harm the person(s) again in a similar manner and promise to be more candid with them in the future.*
 7. *Actively take steps to prevent future harm (for example, bring in an independent auditor to check on your progress; take a class or get professional help).*
 8. *Forgive yourself for having harmed the other person(s), using Flexible Mind Has HEART skills to facilitate this (see lesson 29).*
- **Vary your social signaling to match the severity of your transgression.**
 - **Signal shame if your shame was warranted** by lowering your head, averting your gaze, and frowning when apologizing.
 - **Signal appeasement and regret if your shame was only partially warranted** by slightly bowing your head, displaying prolonged shoulder shrugs, and using openhanded gestures, while maintaining eye contact with the other person in order to signal your confidence and commitment to change.
- **Regularly signal nondominance and openness after you have successfully repaired the relationship** by combining **appeasement signals** (for example, slight bowing of head, slight shoulder shrug, openhanded gestures) with **cooperative-friendly signals** (for example, warm smile, eyebrow wags, eye contact). Nondominance

signals communicate equity, openness to critical feedback, and that you are not trying to manipulate the other person(s).

- **Nondominance signals are especially important if you are in a power-up position** to the person(s) harmed. See handout 8.6 (Signaling Nondominance).
- **Signal embarrassment when your transgression involves violation of a culturally specific social norm or convention** (for example, misspeaking, stepping on someone's toe, poor table manners, forgetting to put the toothpaste cap back on, forgetting to bow to a leader, farting in church—oops! ☺).

G *If shame is unwarranted, Go opposite to urges to hide or appease.*

- **Behave as if you haven't done anything wrong—because you haven't.**
 - **Don't apologize or appease.**
 - **Signal confidence.** Stand or sit with your shoulders back, keep your chin up, maintain eye contact, speak with a matter-of-fact tone of voice and normal volume of speech (that is, don't whisper).
- **Balance signals of dominance (confidence) with signals of nondominance** in order to make it clear to others that, despite your shame being unwarranted, you remain open to critical feedback.
- **Out yourself to a friend about your shame experience being unwarranted in order to identify blind spots.** Be open to critical feedback or disagreement about your shame being classified as unwarranted; see handout 22.1 (Being Open to Feedback from Others: Flexible Mind ADOPTS).
- **Identify potential disguised toxic social environments that may trigger unwarranted shame, using the following questions.** If there are more NO responses than YES responses, then your environment may be toxic.
 1. *Do I trust the other person's or persons' true intentions or motivations? YES/NO*
 2. *Do I trust them to tell me what they really think? YES/NO*
 3. *When in their presence do I generally feel calm and safe? YES/NO*
 4. *Do I have any evidence or past experience suggesting that they have my best interests at heart? YES/NO*
 5. *Do they allow me time to express my inner feelings or ideas? YES/NO*
 6. *Are they open to me giving critical feedback or differing opinions? YES/NO*
- **If you believe the environment may be toxic, then...**
 - **Expect to experience more unwarranted shame.**
 - **If possible, talk to the person(s) involved about your feelings** (remember to stay open to any feedback).
 - **Ask an independent person to be present with you** when you speak to them, if you fear an extreme reaction.

- **If the toxicity involves a long-term relationship, seek independent counsel** (for example, a marriage counselor).
- **Use self-enquiry to examine how you may have contributed to the problem, without harsh self-blame.**
- **Consider abandoning the relationship.** Some relationships can never be repaired. Make sure you seek independent counsel before taking this option.
- **Don't try to outdo them in niggling** if you believe they are purposefully attempting to make your life difficult.

E *Show **Embarrassment** to enhance trust and socially connect.*

- **Embarrassment displays** involve smiling or inhibited smiling and sometimes nervous face touching or blushing. Embarrassment is difficult to fake—it is hard to blush on command.
- **Feeling embarrassed is nothing to be embarrassed about.**
- **Feeling embarrassed means you care about other people (and your tribe).** If you didn't really care about anyone, you could not experience embarrassment—you could only fake it.
- **People trust and like people who show embarrassment.** We feel more connected with people who show embarrassment because it signals they care about social transgressions (for example, hurting someone, being insensitive).
- **Expressing embarrassment is appealing.** For example, people display embarrassment signals when flirting (coy smiles, blushing). People prefer to spend more time with people who reveal intense embarrassment rather than inhibit it.
- **The key point is: You don't have to feel safe on the inside to signal social safety and trust on the outside!**

Radical Openness Handout 8.5

The RO DBT Self-Conscious Emotions Rating Scale

Step 1. Identify the event, circumstance, or interaction triggering shame or other self-conscious emotions that you wish to evaluate.

Step 2. Identify the specific behavior you displayed or failed to display during the event that you believe may have caused or contributed to your shame or self-conscious emotional response.

Step 3. Use the event and specific behavior you have just identified to answer each of the questions that follow with YES or NO.

Step 4. Add up the number of YES responses, and use the scoring guidelines at the end of the handout to determine the extent to which your shame was warranted, partially warranted, or unwarranted.

- | | |
|--|--------|
| 1. Did I purposefully lie, fabricate, or fail to disclose important information in order to achieve a goal or benefit myself? | YES/NO |
| 2. Did my behavior significantly damage an important relationship and/or result in serious injury to other tribal members or the community itself but benefit myself? | YES/NO |
| 3. Did my behavior result in severe physical or psychological injury to another person and/or my tribe as a result of my negligence, greed, envy, malice, or overconfidence? | YES/NO |

Note: If you answered YES to any one of the three preceding questions, your shame or other self-conscious emotion IS WARRANTED. If you answered NO to all three questions, then answer the questions that follow to determine the extent to which your shame or other self-conscious emotion is likely warranted, partially warranted, or completely unwarranted.

- | | |
|---|--------|
| 4. Have I been (or would I be) reluctant to make public and/or reveal, to the other persons involved, my hidden intentions during the event that triggered shame to get what I want or make things difficult? | YES/NO |
| 5. Have I avoided repairing the damage my behavior may have caused the other person(s) involved? | YES/NO |
| 6. Do I believe it would be important to correct a child if they had behaved similarly to how I did? | YES/NO |
| 7. Did my behavior betray or violate a prior agreement, commitment, or unspoken understanding between myself and the other person(s) involved? | YES/NO |
| 8. Was I in a position of power or authority over the person(s) involved when the event that triggered my shame or other self-conscious emotions occurred? | YES/NO |
| 9. Have I tried to justify or defend my actions or lack of action that resulted in harm or an unfair advantage with people who were not present at the event or who were at the event but are in a power-down relationship with me? | YES/NO |

- | | |
|---|--------|
| 10. Would my greater community or objective observers consider my behavior inappropriate, irresponsible, or unethical, given my position, my role, or my job at the time it occurred? | YES/NO |
| 11. Does my shame, embarrassment, or guilt refer to the actual situation I was in rather than to similar past events? | YES/NO |
| 12. Have I engaged in this type of behavior before and been told by others (or known myself) that it was inappropriate or morally/ethically wrong? | YES/NO |
| 13. Have I in any way purposefully avoided answering YES to any of these questions? | YES/NO |

Scoring Guidelines

- If a **YES** response was recorded for items 1, 2, or 3 (the first three questions), then shame or other self-conscious emotions are warranted.
- Add up the **YES** responses for the remaining questions (items 4–13).
 - A score of 7 to 10 **YES** responses = shame and other self-conscious emotions are *most likely warranted*.
 - A score of 4 to 6 **YES** responses = shame and other self-conscious emotions are *partially warranted*.
 - A score of 0 to 3 **YES** responses = shame and other self-conscious emotions are *most likely unwarranted*.

Radical Openness Handout 8.6

Signaling Nondominance



Radical Openness Handout 8.7

Main Points for Lesson 8: Tribe Matters

Understanding Rejection and Self-Conscious Emotions

1. We are better when together: being part of a tribe was essential for personal survival.
2. A tribe can consist of just two people.
3. Tribal bonds begin when two people commit to make self-sacrifices for the other person when they are in distress, without expecting anything in return.
4. Most people belong to many tribes.
5. For our early ancestors, social exclusion from the tribe meant almost certain death.
6. We are biologically predisposed to care about whether we are in-group or out-group because tribal banishment was essentially a death sentence.
7. Self-conscious emotions include shame, embarrassment, humiliation, and guilt. When we become self-conscious, we doubt our status in the tribe.
8. Shame is warranted when we have intentionally harmed or deceived other tribal members for personal gain or we have engaged in a behavior that could threaten the well-being of the entire tribe.
9. Use Flexible Mind SAGE skills when feeling shame, embarrassed, rejected, or excluded.

Radical Openness Worksheet 8.A

Flexible Mind SAGE Skills

Flexible Mind SAGE

- S Use **Self-enquiry** to determine if shame is warranted
- A If shame is warranted or partially warranted, then **Appease**
- G If shame is unwarranted, then **Go opposite** to urges to hide
- E Show embarrassment to **Enhance** trust and socially connect

Be alert for times you experience shame, embarrassment, guilt, humiliation, or similar self-conscious emotions. SAGE skills can be used with recent or past events that triggered shame and similar self-conscious emotions.

Pick an event to practice your SAGE skills.

Describe the event (for example, who was present, what their relationship was with you, and what the primary purpose of the interaction was).

Describe the specific behavior you displayed or failed to display that you believe may have caused or contributed to your shame or self-conscious emotional response.

S Use **Self-enquiry** to determine if shame is warranted.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skill you practiced.

- ☐ Used **self-enquiry in the heat of the moment** before I attempted to regulate, accept, or deny my emotional experience by asking *What is it that I might need to learn from my emotion?* Record here what happened.

- ☐ Remembered that the goal of self-enquiry is a good question, not a good answer
- ☐ Practiced self-enquiry about my shame or self-conscious experience over several days to weeks.

Record here the question or questions that you found most helpful.

- ☐ Used the RO DBT Self-Conscious Emotions Rating Scale to determine whether my shame was warranted or unwarranted.

Record your score(s) here.

Total number of YES responses for questions 1–3 _____

Total number of YES responses for questions 4–13 _____

A If shame is warranted or partially warranted, then **Appease**.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Signaled integrity by not falling apart.
- ☐ Recognized that I did not wish to damage the relationship with the person I wronged and/or that I desired to regain entry into the tribe.
- ☐ Practiced outing myself about my transgression.
- ☐ Blocked attempts by others to explain away, justify, or validate my behavior or emotional reactions. I explained to the other person that my practice of outing myself is part of learning how to take responsibility for my actions and emotions without falling apart or immediately blaming others.

- ☐ **Repaired the transgression, without expecting anything in return, using the eight steps for relationship repair.** *Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.*
 - ☐ *Signaled deference and relinquished control.*
 - ☐ *Accurately identified what I had done to harm the relationship or the other person and communicated this to them.*
 - ☐ *Confirmed that my perception of the harm I caused was valid from the other person's perspective.*
 - ☐ *Blocked automatic rationalization or justification of my behavior.*
 - ☐ *Made a genuine effort to repair the actual damage done.*
 - ☐ *Committed to genuinely work to not harm the person again in a similar manner.*
 - ☐ *Actively took steps to prevent future harm.*
 - ☐ *Forgave myself for having harmed someone or for having made a mistake.*
- ☐ **Varied my social signaling to match the severity of my transgression.**
 - ☐ *Signaled shame if shame was warranted.*
 - ☐ *Signaled appeasement and regret if shame was partially warranted.*
 - ☐ *Balanced appeasement signals with cooperative-friendly signals after successfully repairing the transgression, to communicate openness and willingness to stand by my commitment to not harm again.*

Record here other observations or skills used.

G *If shame is unwarranted, Go opposite to urges to hide or appease*

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skill you practiced.

- ☐ **Assessed whether I was in a toxic environment** and used Flexible Mind SAGE skills to work to improve the situation, protect myself, or end the relationship.

Record here the specific skills you practiced.

- ☐ **Signaled confidence.** I purposefully stood with my shoulders back, posture straight, and chin up, and I maintained eye contact and spoke in a normal tone and volume of speech.
- ☐ **Blocked apologizing or appeasing.**
- ☐ **Balanced signals of dominance (confidence) with signals of nondominance** in order to signal openness.
- ☐ **Outed myself to a friend about my unwarranted shame** in order to identify potential blind spots.

Describe here any other skills you practiced, and the outcomes.

E *Show **Embarrassment** to enhance trust and socially connect.*

- ☐ **Signaled embarrassment** when my transgression involved a violation of a social norm.
- ☐ **Remembered that feeling embarrassed is nothing to be embarrassed about.**
- ☐ **Remembered that people trust and like people who show embarrassment.**
- ☐ **Revealed my embarrassment rather than hiding it.**
- ☐ **Practiced showing and loving blushing.**
- ☐ **Watched how my outing myself and expressing embarrassment impacted relationships.**

Record here other observations or skills used.

Radical Openness Handout 9.1

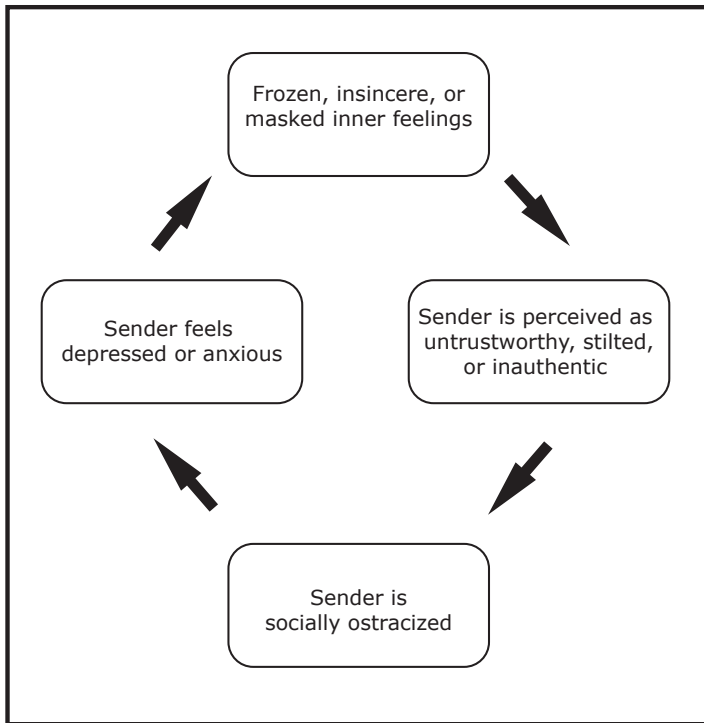
Open Expression = Trust = Social Connectedness

- **Humans are expert social safety detectors.** We are able to sense whether another person is feeling genuinely safe and relaxed during interactions, based on voice tone, body posture, and facial expression.
- **We are suspicious of people who hide their inner feelings.** We feel tense when around them and are more likely to avoid them.
- **People like people who openly express their emotions.** They are perceived as more genuine and trustworthy, compared to those who suppress or mask them.
- **Open expression *does not mean* simply expressing emotions without awareness or consideration.** Effective emotional expression is always *context*-dependent. Sometimes constraint or controlled expression is what is needed to be effective, avoid unnecessary damage, and/or live by one's values (for example, a police officer arresting a suspect; during a game of poker; a charged discussion with one's adolescent child).
- **Nor does it mean uncontrolled venting or blaming of others for one's emotions.** It involves openly revealing emotions in a manner that acknowledges our responsibility in creating them. It takes responsibility for what we have brought to the table rather than blaming our experience on others.
- **Plus, open expression *does not mean* pretending that everything is okay when it's not.**
- **Importantly, there is no right or optimal way to socially signal.** Each of us has our own unique style of expression.
- **What is important is for your style to actually function to communicate your intentions and inner experience** to the other person, especially when it comes to people you desire to be close to.
- **Yet to form long-lasting intimate bonds, you must reveal vulnerability. This transmits two powerful social signals to the other person:**
 1. **We trust them.** When we don't trust someone, we hide our true intentions and mask our inner feelings.
 2. **We are the same because we share a common bond of human fallibility.** True friendship begins when two people are able to share not only their successes but their secret doubts, fears, and past mistakes with the other.

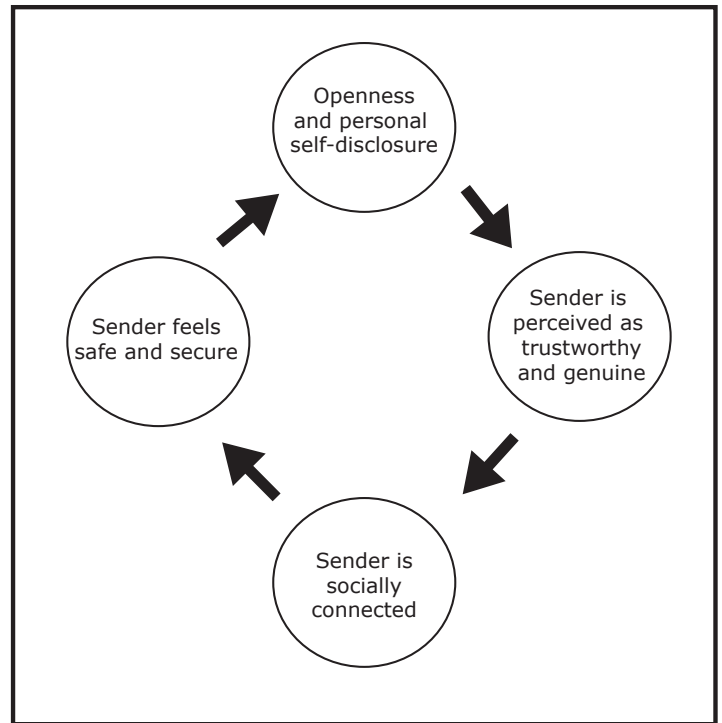
Radical Openness Handout 9.2

Emotions Communicate to Others

Inhibited Expression



Open Expression



- Remember, open expression does *not* mean expressing emotions without awareness or consideration.
- On the contrary, effective emotional expression always depends on the situation.

Radical Openness Handout 9.3

Main Points for Lesson 9: Social Signaling Matters!

1. People cannot know who you are unless you reveal who you are.
2. We trust what we see, not what is said.
3. People like people who openly express their emotions; they are perceived as more genuine and trustworthy compared to those who suppress or mask.
4. Open expression does *not* mean simply expressing emotions without awareness or consideration; on the contrary, effective expression is always context-dependent.
5. To form long-lasting intimate bonds, you must reveal vulnerability.
6. Openly expressing vulnerability transmits two powerful social signals: (1) We trust the other person. When we don't trust someone, we hide our true intentions and mask our inner feelings. (2) We are the same because we share a common bond of human fallibility.

Radical Openness Worksheet 9.A

Practicing Enhancing Facial Expressions

In the next week, look for opportunities to try out various emotional expressions.

1. Notice the emotion you want to express to another person during an interaction.
2. Practice enhancing the expression of the emotion a little bit more than you normally would.
3. What did you do to enhance it?
4. Describe what happened after you enhanced your expression.

	Record the emotion you wanted to express.	What did you do to enhance it?	What happened after you enhanced your expression?
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

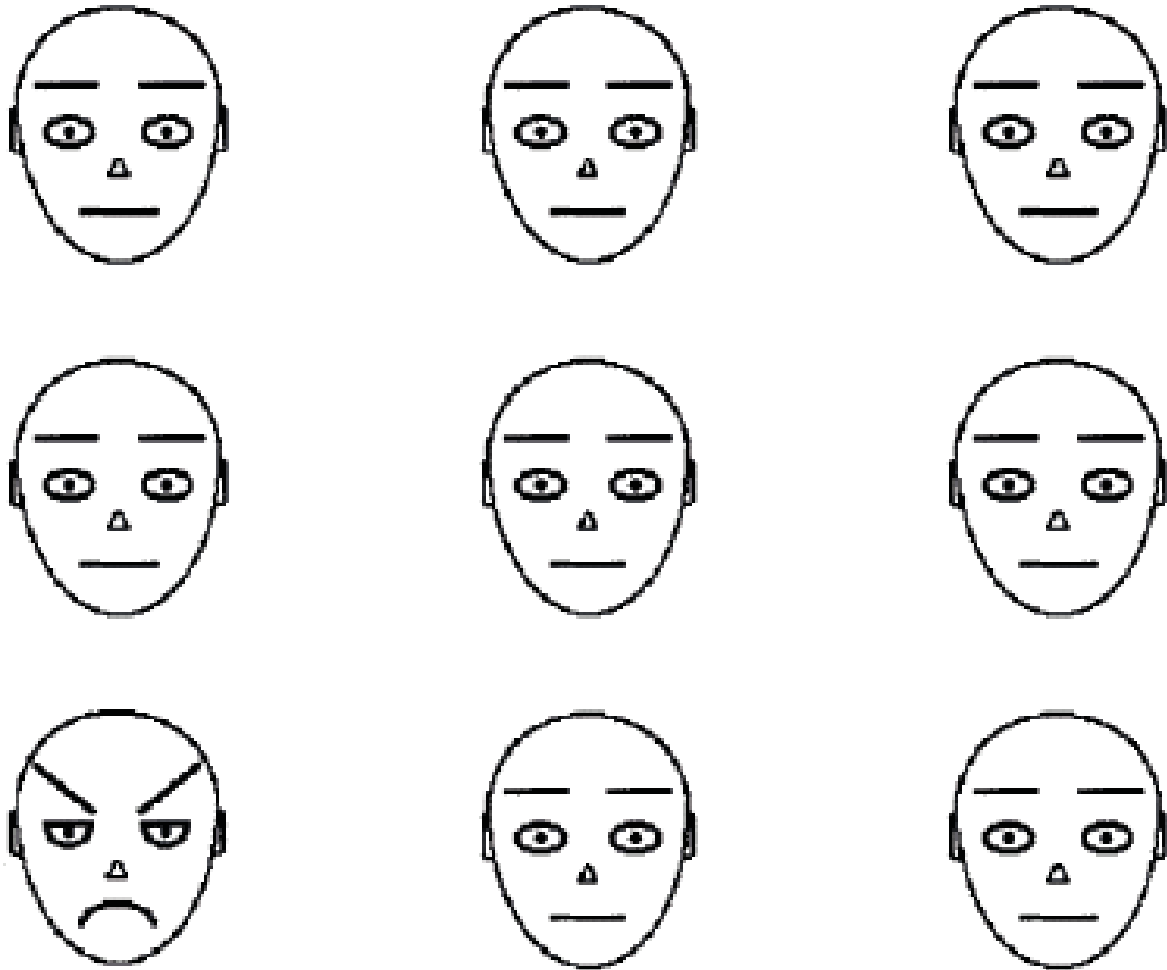
Radical Openness Handout 10.1

The Three Channels of Emotion Expression

- Emotions have three broad channels of expression: *status*, *survival*, and *intimacy*.
 - The *body channel* promotes social status emotions (for example, embarrassment, humiliation, shame, and pride).
 - The *face channel* supports survival emotions (for example, anger, disgust, fear, enjoyment-happiness, and sadness).
 - The *touch channel* supports intimate emotions (for example, love, sympathy, empathy, compassion).

Radical Openness Handout 10.2

Face in the Crowd



Adapted from Öhman, Lundqvist, & Esteves (2001), fig. 2, p. 384.

Radical Openness Handout 10.3

Using Social Signaling to Live by Your Values

Flexible Mind Is DEEP

Flexible Mind Is DEEP

- D **Determine** your valued goal and the emotion you wish to express
- E **Effectively Express** by matching nonverbal signals with valued goals
- E Use self-**Enquiry** to **Examine the outcome** and learn
- P **Practice** open expression, again and again

Before the Interaction

D Determine *your valued goal and the emotion you wish to express.*

- **Reflect on the level of intimacy you would like to have with the other person.** Use the Match + 1 Intimacy Rating Scale (see lesson 21) to rate both the current level of intimacy in the relationship and the desired level of intimacy.
- **Identify the valued goals you will need to live by in order to achieve your desired level of intimacy,** and use worksheet 10.A (Flexible Mind Is DEEP: Identifying Valued Goals) to help facilitate this process.
- **When there are multiple valued goals, determine the one most important for the type of relationship you desire in the current situation.**
- **Determine the emotion linked to your most important valued goal** (for example, guilt linked to a valued goal to behave ethically, sadness linked to a valued goal to admit when I am wrong, embarrassment linked to a valued goal to not violate social norms needlessly).
- **Identify the primary channel linked to the emotion you wish to express** (status, survival, or intimacy).
 - **Social status emotions are expressed through the body** (for example, embarrassment, humiliation, shame, and pride).
 - **Survival emotions are expressed through the face** (that is, anger, disgust, fear, enjoyment-happiness, and sadness).
 - **Intimacy emotions are expressed through touch** (for example, love, sympathy).

During the Interaction

E Effectively Express *by matching nonverbal signals with valued goals.*

- **Practice expressing without expecting anything in return.** Give the other person time to react—don't assume that a lack of response means they didn't notice, they don't care, or they disliked what you did. They may be happily astounded by your change in behavior, may struggle with open expression themselves, and/or may simply have not known how to respond.
- **Give the other person the benefit of the doubt,** especially if you have had conflict in the past with the person you are being open with.
- **Use the primary expressive channel—*body, face, or touch*—linked with the emotion you wish to convey during the interaction** to maximize the likelihood that what is transmitted is what is actually received.
- **Match your nonverbal signals with your valued goals.**
 - **If your valued goal is to be taken seriously, signal gravity and confidence** (for example, by looking the other person in the eye, speaking calmly but firmly, keeping your shoulders back and chin up).
 - **If your valued goal is to establish a close social bond with someone, signal friendliness** (for example, via eyebrow wags, warm smiles, openhanded gestures, adopting a musical tone of voice, head nodding, taking turns when conversing, and/or gently touching them on the arm).
 - **If your valued goal is to be forthright and honest, then when the situation calls for it, express what you are feeling inside on the outside** (for example, when sad after a loss, cry; when uncertain about something, shrug; when you like what you hear, nod your head; when praised, smile warmly and express thanks).
 - **If your valued goal is to be fair-minded, signal openness** (for example, while listening to feedback, use an eyebrow wag; if sitting, lean back in your chair; slow the pace of the conversation by taking a deep breath; allow time for the other person to respond to questions or complete observations before you speak; validate their experience by matching the intensity of their expression rather than trying to appear calm; use openhanded gestures; signal nondominance by shrugging shoulders when uncertain; maintain a musical tone of voice).
 - **If your valued goal is to not be arrogant, then signal humility** (for example, while maintaining eye contact, slightly bow your head and shrug your shoulders, use openhanded gestures and a compassionate voice tone).

After the Interaction

E Use self-Enquiry to Examine the outcome and learn.

- **Take responsibility for your emotional reactions** rather than blaming them on the other person because the interaction was not perfect or did not go exactly as you had hoped or expected.
- **Use self-enquiry to examine your experience** and record your observations in your self-enquiry journal.
 - *Did your openness appear to change the other person's openness during the interaction? If so, how did they express it? What might this tell you?*

- *Did the interaction go as you might have hoped or expected? If not, then what is it you might need to learn?*
- *Do you feel closer or further away from them after the interaction? What might this tell you?*
- *Is there a part of you purposefully trying to make this difficult? For yourself? For the other person? What might this mean? What is it that you need to learn?*
- **Practice celebrating diversity.** Let go of expecting others to think or behave like you.
- **Appreciate your own unique style of expression without assuming your way is better.** For example, appreciate your dry sense of humor or soft-spoken manner, yet be willing to go beyond your comfort zone of expression in order to match the expressive level of your interacting partner. Use Match + 1 principles to guide your level of disclosure (see Flexible Mind ALLOWs, lesson 21).
- **Celebrate expression success** when you achieve your relationship goal or live according to your values after open expression. Make sure you take the time to highlight this and reward yourself. This makes it easier to remember the benefits of expression the next time you practice.

P Practice open expression, again and again.

- **Make a commitment to practice open expression again and again.**
- **If the relationship is highly conflictual but also highly important...**
 - **Once is not enough;** that is, one instance of openness is unlikely to repair years of damage or distrust.
 - **Commit to open expression again and again,** no matter what the outcome.
 - **Patience, persistence, and forbearance are in your favor.**
 - **Seek feedback from a neutral person to help evaluate and challenge your progress and perceptions.** Encourage your helper to question your description of events rather than automatically validating or attempting to soothe you (recall the core RO principle “We don’t see the world as it is, we see it as we are”). Explain to them that part of radical openness living is to actively search for our edge, or our personal unknown, in order to learn.
 - **Consistency and willingness to go all the way are essential for reestablishment of trust in a damaged relationship,** meaning once you start to openly express, you cannot stop if you truly wish to improve a damaged relationship.
- **People worth getting to know like and trust you for who you are.** Use Flexible Mind SAGE skills to evaluate whether the relationship may be toxic (see lesson 8). Avoid quick decisions. Seek advice from someone you know will be able to remain neutral before you decide anything.
- **Look for opportunities to stretch your expressive limits.** For example, instead of sitting silently in church while everyone else is singing, join in; rather than avoiding a person you are attracted to, ask them to join you for coffee; rather than begrudging others for not caring, practice expressing how you care, without expecting anything in return.

Radical Openness Handout 10.4

Main Points for Lesson 10: Using Social Signaling to Live by Your Values

Flexible Mind Is DEEP

1. Emotional expressions in humans can be grouped into three broad functional domains: *status*, *survival*, and *intimacy*.
2. Use the primary expressive channel—*body*, *face*, or *touch*—linked with the emotion you wish to convey during the interaction to maximize the likelihood that what is transmitted is what is actually received.
3. Use Flexible Mind Is DEEP to improve relationships and live by your values.

Radical Openness Worksheet 10.A

Flexible Mind Is DEEP

Identifying Valued Goals

- Identify the relationship you wish to improve.
- Reflect on the level of intimacy you would like to have with the other person. Use the Match + 1 Intimacy Rating Scale as a guide (see lesson 21).
- Identify your valued goals linked with your desired level of intimacy, using the following checklist.
- When there are multiple valued goals, determine the one most important for the type of relationship you desire in the current situation.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to any valued goals that you think are important to live by during the upcoming interaction in order to achieve the type of relationship you desire.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> To be candid and forthright | <input type="checkbox"/> To acknowledge when I succeed, without arrogance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To be honest and truthful | <input type="checkbox"/> To care about the well-being of others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To be ethical and fair-minded | <input type="checkbox"/> To care about my own well-being |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To respect myself and others | <input type="checkbox"/> To contribute to my tribe, my family, my community, and my society, without always expecting something in return |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To be taken seriously | <input type="checkbox"/> To be self-directed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To have an easy manner | <input type="checkbox"/> To appreciate direction from others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To be kind to myself and others | <input type="checkbox"/> To take responsibility for my actions, emotions, and reactions to the world rather than blaming them on others or getting down on myself |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To treat other people as I would like to be treated | <input type="checkbox"/> To accept those things that I cannot change |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To do the right thing, even if it causes distress in others | <input type="checkbox"/> To seek change when it is within my power |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To be seen as a loving parent, spouse, partner, or friend | <input type="checkbox"/> To stand up for what I believe |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To attend to relationships | <input type="checkbox"/> To admit when I fail but not let it stop me |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To be faithful to my vows and prior commitments | <input type="checkbox"/> To not always assume I am right |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To be willing to break a promise when warranted | <input type="checkbox"/> To not always assume I am wrong |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To apologize to those I have harmed and repair the damage if possible | <input type="checkbox"/> To be able to play, laugh, and relax |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To forgive those who have harmed me | <input type="checkbox"/> To be open-minded |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To acknowledge fallibility without falling apart | |

- ☐ To be willing to question everything, including myself
- ☐ To trust myself and others
- ☐ To let others know when I admire them, love them, or feel happy in their presence
- ☐ To be disciplined and orderly
- ☐ To be undisciplined and disorderly
- ☐ To think before I act
- ☐ To act before I think
- ☐ To be self-controlled when the situation calls for it
- ☐ To have the capacity to relinquish control
- ☐ To fight tyranny
- ☐ To be able to stand up against powerful others, with humility, in order to prevent unwarranted harm or unethical behavior
- ☐ To be able to express vulnerability and accept help from others when I need it
- ☐ To seek what may be uncomfortable in order to learn
- ☐ To avoid what I dislike, with awareness
- ☐ To cultivate healthy self-doubt
- ☐ To cultivate healthy self-confidence
- ☐ To celebrate my successes without becoming arrogant
- ☐ To revel in the success of others without resentment
- ☐ To allow others to win when winning or losing doesn't matter to me
- ☐ To not allow others to take advantage of me
- ☐ To appreciate the efforts of others who have contributed to my well-being
- ☐ To relinquish control when the situation calls for it
- ☐ To trust my intuitions without assuming they are true
- ☐ To be open to new experience and value the unexpected
- ☐ To passionately participate in life
- ☐ To be content with my life
- ☐ To appreciate knowledge, education, and learning
- ☐ To see all humans as equal
- ☐ To signal humility, nonarrogance and openness to those who are different from me
- ☐ To experience compassionate love toward myself and others
- ☐ To celebrate problems as opportunities for growth
- ☐ To live here and now
- ☐ To be humble and nonarrogant
- ☐ To make self-sacrifices in order to benefit the lives of others, without expecting anything in return
- ☐ To challenge authority
- ☐ To respect authority
- ☐ To be considerate of other people's feelings or way of thinking
- ☐ To be nonreactive and calm
- ☐ To be reactive and disinhibited when the situation calls for it
- ☐ To understand myself, others, and the world
- ☐ To be dutiful
- ☐ To delight in the pleasure of the moment
- ☐ To plan ahead
- ☐ To act on impulse
- ☐ To appreciate the importance of rules
- ☐ To live without rules
- ☐ To be peaceful, calm, and composed
- ☐ To be excited, enthusiastic, and expressive
- ☐ To feel socially connected with others

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> To value diversity | <input type="checkbox"/> To love and be loved |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To do what is needed in the moment | <input type="checkbox"/> To avoid harming others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To be able to question myself without falling apart | <input type="checkbox"/> To be spiritually minded |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To behave responsibly | <input type="checkbox"/> To be a leader |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To admit when I have been wrong or harmed someone, without expecting anything in return or resorting to harsh self-blame | <input type="checkbox"/> To be productive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To express love to those I care about | <input type="checkbox"/> To be powerful and influence others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To not expect others to solve my problems | <input type="checkbox"/> To contribute to society |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To help others without expecting anything in return | <input type="checkbox"/> To achieve something important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To live with integrity | <input type="checkbox"/> To enjoy the work I do |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To continually strive to improve myself | <input type="checkbox"/> To raise a family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To be physically healthy | <input type="checkbox"/> To establish a long-term romantic relationship or partnership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To be financially stable | <input type="checkbox"/> To raise children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To live in a safe environment | <input type="checkbox"/> To experience true romantic love |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To care for nature and the natural environment | <input type="checkbox"/> To be creative |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> To seek personal growth and self-discovery |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> To be willing to try new things |

Record other valued goals that were not included in the preceding list.

Decide which valued goal best represents how you would like to behave with the other person in order to achieve the relationship and level of intimacy you desire. Take into account how you want to behave with the other person in general, as well as how you might have to adjust your valued goals to flexibly respond to circumstances in the current moment.

What valued goals, globally, are most important for the relationship with this other person?

What valued goal is most important to live by in the upcoming interaction?

Notice when your valued goals appear to be in opposition. For example, a parent might value being peaceful, calm, and composed when interacting with their daughter yet also value being excited, enthusiastic, and expressive when around them.

Opposite valued goals usually mean that the context or situation of the moment will most likely be the deciding factor about how to behave effectively. Thus, being calm and composed with your daughter may matter most when she is relating a personal crisis or when you are with her in a potentially dangerous situation (for example, walking down a dark tunnel late at night on the way to the subway), whereas excitement, enthusiasm, and expressiveness may be called for when she wins a race, receives an honor, or shares her latest interest with you.

- *What valued goals do I hold that are exact opposites?*
- *To what extent am I able to flexibly take into account the situation or circumstances of the moment when deciding which valued goal may be most important?*
- *To what extent do these opposites impact other areas of my life or other relationships? What is it that I might need to learn?*

Record questions and observations that emerged from your practice.

Radical Openness Worksheet 10.B

Flexible Mind Is DEEP

Be alert in the coming week for opportunities to practice Flexible Mind Is DEEP during your everyday interactions.

Purposefully seek out an interaction with someone with whom you would like to have a better relationship or would like to become closer, and practice Flexible Mind Is DEEP.

Describe the situation in which you practiced Flexible Mind Is DEEP (for example, who was present, what their relationship is with you, and what the primary purpose of the interaction was).

Before the Interaction

D Determine *your valued goal and the emotion you wish to express.*

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Identified the emotion(s) I desired to express during the interaction.
 - ☐ Describe the emotion(s) and sentiment(s) you desired to express, and rank-order them according to importance if there was more than one emotion or sentiment.

- ☐ Identified the primary channel of expression linked to the emotion that I wanted to express (or the channel for the highest priority emotion). Place a checkmark in the box next to the channel you identified.
 - ☐ The *body channel*, linked to social status and self-conscious emotions (for example, embarrassment, humiliation, shame, and pride)
 - ☐ The *face channel*, linked to survival emotions (for example, anger, disgust, fear, enjoyment-happiness, and sadness)
 - ☐ The *touch channel*, linked to intimate emotions (for example, love, sympathy, compassion, empathy)

During the Interaction

E Effectively Express by *matching nonverbal signals with valued goals.*

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Practiced expressing without expecting anything in return.
 - ☐ Gave the other person the benefit of the doubt.
 - ☐ Used the primary expressive channel—*body, face, or touch*—during the interaction.
 - ☐ Matched my nonverbal expressions with my valued goals. *Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.*
 - ☐ Signaled gravity and confidence in order to live according to my valued goal to be taken seriously.
 - ☐ Signaled friendliness in order to live according to my valued goal for intimate social bonds and cooperative relationships.
 - ☐ Expressed what I was feeling inside on the outside in order to live according to my valued goal to be forthright and honest in situations that call for it. *Describe what you expressed.*
-
-

- ☐ Signaled openness in order to live according to my valued goal to be fair-minded.
 - ☐ Signaled humility in order to live according to my valued goal to not be arrogant.
 - ☐ Expressed other valued goals. *Describe.*
-
-

After the Interaction

E Use self-Enquiry to Examine the outcome and learn.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Practiced taking responsibility for my emotional reactions rather than blaming them on others.
 - ☐ Used self-enquiry to examine my experience and recorded my observations in my self-enquiry journal. *Write the self-enquiry question you found most likely to elicit your edge and/or you found most helpful.*
-
-

- ☐ Practiced celebrating diversity by letting go of expectations that others should think or behave like I do.
- ☐ Appreciated my style of expression, without assuming it was better.
- ☐ Celebrated expression success. *Record how you rewarded yourself.*

Other skills used.

P Practice open expression, again and again.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Made a commitment to practice open expression again and again.
- ☐ Remembered that one instance (or even several instances) of open and vulnerable expression of emotion on my part may not result in similar displays of openness or vulnerability by the other person, especially when the relationship has been highly conflictual in the past.
- ☐ Encouraged feedback from neutral others to help evaluate my progress and challenge my perceptions.
- ☐ Sought independent and nonbiased advice when I believed the relationship might be toxic and/or used Flexible Mind SAGE skills to evaluate the level of toxicity (see lesson 8). *Record what you did.*

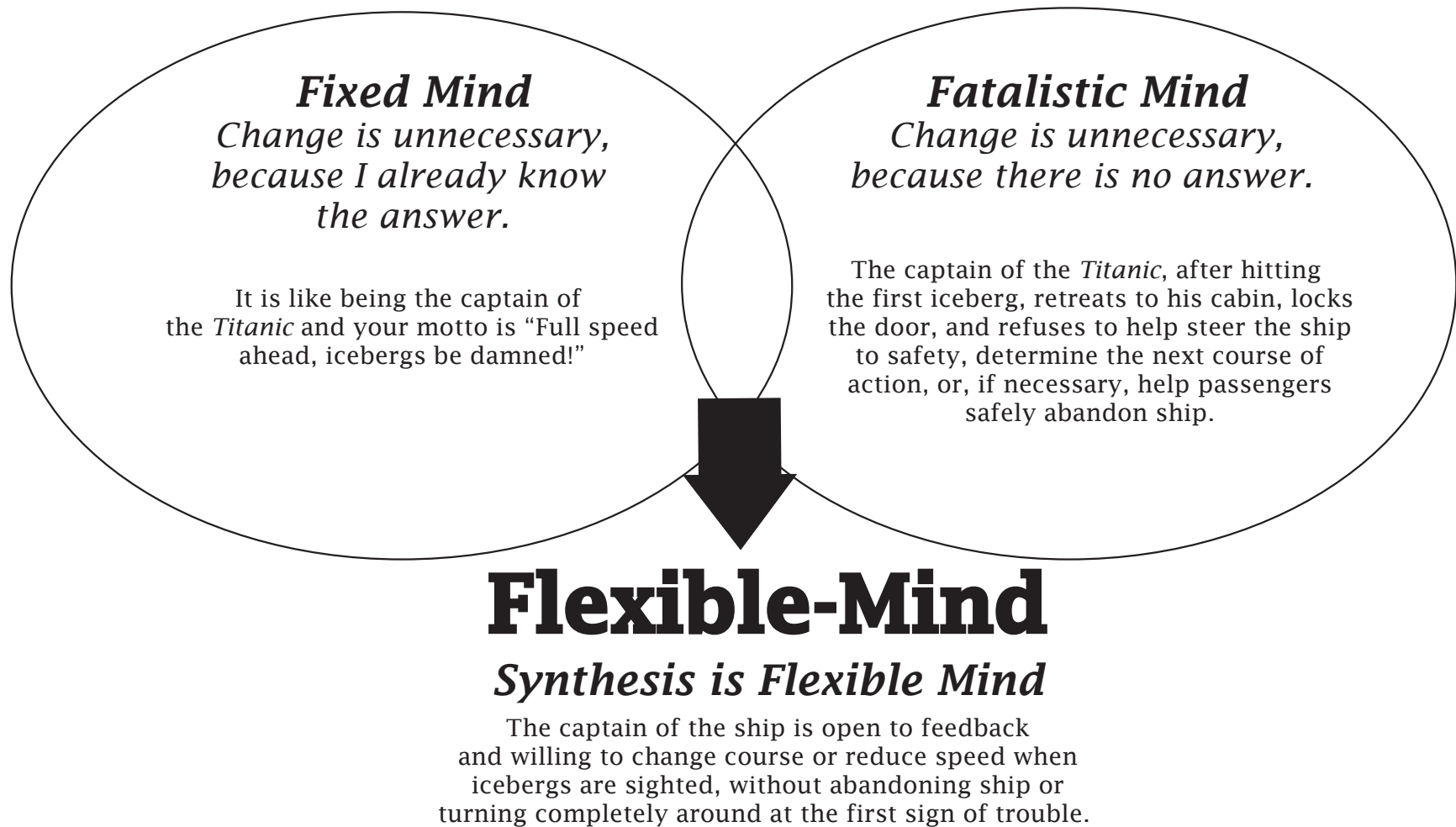
- ☐ Looked for opportunities to stretch my expressive limits.

Record what you did or plan to do.

Radical Openness Handout 11.1

Overcontrolled States of Mind

When one is challenged, OC states of mind emerge



Radical Openness Handout 11.2

Being Kind to Fixed Mind

Step 1. When challenged, observe emotions, action urges, and thoughts that may be linked to Fixed Mind.

- Feeling irritated, resentful, indignant, spiteful, paranoid, frustrated, anxious, nervous, angry, numb, frozen, or empty; urges to quickly explain, justify oneself, or discount what is happening
- Thinking that it would be morally wrong for others to question your point of view, confident you know the answer or that the other person is mistaken, unethical, misguided, or wrong

Step 2. Acknowledge the possibility of being in Fixed Mind.

- **Physical tension in the body means feeling threatened.** When threatened, we either fight or flee. Fixed Mind is our “fighter”—it can help keep us protected but it can keep us stuck.
- **Use self-enquiry to facilitate self-awareness;** see worksheet 11.A (Being Kind to Fixed Mind) for examples.
- **Acknowledge that you are fighting or resisting something,** without mindlessly letting go of your point of view.
- **Gently remember that when in Fixed Mind,** your thoughts, emotions, urges, and sensations are determined by your past learning.
- **Remind yourself that Fixed Mind alerts us to those things in our life we need to be more open to in order to improve ourselves or learn.**

Step 3. Don't try to fix Fixed Mind; be kind instead.

- **Practice being open to what is happening in this moment.** Let go of assuming you have the correct answer while encouraging yourself to be more open. Use handout 22.1 (Being Open to Feedback from Others: Flexible Mind ADOPTS) to help yourself be more open to the feedback and determine if you should adopt it.
- **Change physiology:** Closed-mouth smile while breathing deeply; use eyebrow wags.
- **Rather than resisting, fixing, or defending your Fixed Mind, allow it to be.** Open and soften to the experience of Fixed Mind and give yourself time to discover what your Fixed Mind might be saying. You never know what you might learn. Trying to fix or control Fixed Mind is like criticizing yourself for being too self-critical—it just doesn't work.
- **Use a loving kindness practice** by repeating silently to yourself: *May my Fixed Mind find peace, may my Fixed Mind be content, may my Fixed Mind be safe and secure.*
- **Forgive yourself for being in Fixed Mind;** remember that we all have a Fixed Mind.

Radical Openness Handout 11.3

Learning from Fatalistic Mind

Step 1. When challenged, observe emotions, action urges, and thoughts that may be linked to Fatalistic Mind.

- Feeling unappreciated, invalidated, misunderstood, helpless like a small child, like a martyr, or like a victim AND/OR resentful, bitter, or cynical about change AND/OR numbed out or shut down
- Thinking that everything will be fine, despite repeated feedback that there is a serious problem needing your attention. Believing that change is impossible (“Why bother?”), that others must change first before you can, or magically hoping problems will disappear
- Having secret urges to punish the person suggesting change; a desire to pout, cry, walk away, deny, or to make unrealistic promises for self-improvement in order to stop the feedback

Step 2. Acknowledge the possibility of being in Fatalistic Mind by remembering that Fatalistic Mind is the opposite of resisting or fighting.

- **Fatalistic Mind is our “escape artist.”** Rather than openly resisting or fighting, abandonment is its solution. It thrives on denial and self-deception; it allows us to feel justified when we walk away, virtuous for giving up, or to avoid admitting we are avoiding something.
- **Fatalistic Mind is not bad.** Nonjudgmental awareness of Fatalistic Mind can help us recognize times when we are pushing ourselves too hard or may need to grieve a loss, as well as alert us to areas in our life that require change.

Step 3. Listen and learn from Fatalistic Mind by using the following skills.

- **Take the first step by acknowledging you don’t want to** (take the first step). Admit that you are choosing to operate from Fatalistic Mind—no one can force you to behave fatalistically.
- **Welcome despair, anxiety, and hopelessness as teachers, not enemies.** Greet them as helpful guides who are preparing you for new learning. Go opposite to desires to numb out or give up. Open your mind to what your pain might be trying to tell you.
- **Let go of longing for the world to change or secretly hoping that the problem will go away.** Accept responsibility for creating your own reality. Practice recognizing the possibility of growth in each moment.
- **Remember, Fatalistic Mind does not mean that you are necessarily doing anything wrong**—you may be working too hard and need a rest and/or you may need to grieve a loss. Alternatively, Fatalistic Mind may also be alerting you to something important that needs to change in your life, something you don’t want to acknowledge. Take the time to listen to your Fatalistic Mind. What is its message?
- **Turn your mind toward your predicament.** Closed-mouth smile, eyebrow wag, and breathe deeply while thinking about the problem or feedback your Fatalistic Mind has labeled unsolvable.

- **Turn your mind to the possibility of change** and listen fully to the feedback using handout 22.1 (Being Open to Feedback from Others: Flexible Mind ADOPTS).
- **Clarify the steps needed to solve the problem and then take the first step.** Focus on mindfully taking one step at a time and block worries about the future. Remember past successes.
- **Fatalistic Mind thrives on secrecy.** Take the power away from Fatalistic Mind by revealing to the other person your urges to pout, stonewall, or give up. Stop blaming others for “making” you miserable. Go all the way opposite action to Fatalistic Mind by admitting to yourself (and others) how you contributed to the problem, and then actively take steps to solve it.
- **Remember that rejecting help from others keeps you stuck in Fatalistic Mind.** Practice allowing others to assist you, thank them for their help, and look for ways to actively reciprocate.
- **Forgive yourself** for operating from Fatalistic Mind (see lesson 29).

Radical Openness Handout 11.4

Main Points for Lesson 11: Mindfulness Training, Part 1

Overcontrolled States of Mind

1. Problematic states of mind for overcontrolled individuals are most often closed-minded.
2. These states function to block learning from new information or disconfirming feedback and can negatively impact interpersonal relationships.
3. A closed mind is a threatened mind. Though frequently triggered by nonemotional predispositions for detail-focused processing and inhibitory control, OC problematic states of mind are emotionally driven.
4. Fixed Mind signals that change is unnecessary because I already know the answer. Fixed Mind is like the captain of the *Titanic*, who, despite repeated warnings, insists, “Full speed ahead, and icebergs be damned.”
5. Fatalistic Mind says change is unnecessary because there is no answer. Fatalistic Mind is like the captain of the *Titanic*, who, after hitting the fatal iceberg, retreats to his cabin, locks the door, and refuses to help passengers abandon ship.
6. Flexible Mind represents a more open, receptive, and flexible means of responding. It is like a ship captain who is willing to forgo previous plans and change course or reduce speed when icebergs are sighted. There is no abandoning ship or turning completely around at the first sign of trouble.

Radical Openness Worksheet 11.A

Being Kind to Fixed Mind

Step 1. Describe a challenging situation linked to Fixed Mind behaviors.

What behaviors, thoughts, action urges, and emotions did you notice?

Step 2. Acknowledge Fixed Mind via self-enquiry.

Check the box next to the items you found helpful, and record your answers or other questions you used in the space provided.

- ☐ *Am I finding it hard to question my point of view or even engage in self-enquiry?*
- ☐ *Do I find myself wanting to automatically explain, defend, or discount the other person's feedback or what is happening?*
- ☐ *Has my rate of speech changed? What is driving me to respond so quickly or to pick my words so carefully?*
- ☐ *Am I discounting the feedback to purposefully displease or punish someone? If so, what does this tell me about my level of openness?*
- ☐ *Am I resisting being open to this feedback because part of me believes that doing so will change an essential part of who I am?*
- ☐ *Am I able to truly pause and consider the possibility that I may be wrong or may need to change?*
- ☐ *Am I saying to myself, "I know I am right," no matter what they say or how things seem?*
- ☐ *Do I believe that further self-examination is unnecessary, because I have already worked out the problem, know the answer, or have done the necessary self-work about the issue being discussed?*
- ☐ *What am I afraid might happen if I were to momentarily drop my perspective?*

Step 3. Go opposite to Fixed Mind.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Practiced mindful awareness of bodily sensations linked to Fixed Mind (for example, muscle tension, numbness, flushed face, heart racing) rather than automatically discounting, ignoring, or denying their potential significance.
- ☐ Opened and softened to emotions linked to Fixed Mind (such as embarrassment, irritability, anger, indignation) rather than immediately trying to fix them or pretend they were not there.
- ☐ Allowed myself to fully consider the possibility that I was incorrect or misinformed, and/or that “my way” might not work, without harsh self-blame or immediate abandonment of my prior beliefs.
- ☐ Allowed myself time (for example, a day) to mindfully examine my responses, emotions, and urges to correct, improve, plan, or fix the situation before actually doing anything.
- ☐ Reminded myself that there is always something new to learn because the world is in constant change.
- ☐ Went opposite to Fixed Mind rigidity by relaxing my body and face, using half smiles, eyebrow wags, slow breathing, and sitting back.
- ☐ Tried out something small that was related to the new behavior or way of thinking.
- ☐ Reminded myself that you have to crack an egg to make an omelet—that new learning requires breaking down old ways of thinking or doing.
- ☐ Reminded myself that exhibiting a strong preference does not mean that one is necessarily closed-minded or operating from Fixed Mind.
- ☐ Practiced loving my Fixed Mind instead of judging or fixing it. For example, repeated silently three times to myself: *May my Fixed Mind find peace. May my Fixed Mind be happy. May my Fixed Mind be safe and secure.*
- ☐ Forgave myself for being in Fixed Mind while resolving to be more open and flexible.

Other skills and comments.

Radical Openness Worksheet 11.B

Going Opposite to Fatalistic Mind

Step 1. Describe a challenging situation linked to Fatalistic Mind behaviors.

What behaviors, thoughts, action urges, and emotions did you notice?

Step 2. Acknowledge Fatalistic Mind via self-enquiry.

Check the boxes next to the items you found helpful, and record your answers or other questions you used in the space provided.

- ☐ *Do I feel like shutting down, quitting, or giving up?*
- ☐ *Do I feel invalidated, unappreciated, or treated as not “special” by the person giving me feedback, yet choose not to tell them?*
- ☐ *Do I secretly believe that the other person must change, rather than me?*
- ☐ *Do I secretly hope that any change efforts will fail because it will prove that I was right in believing that change is impossible, because there is no answer?*
- ☐ *Do I feel strong urges to acquiesce simply to avoid conflict rather than because I actually agree?*
- ☐ *Do I fantasize that the problem will somehow magically go away if I do nothing?*
- ☐ *Do I secretly want to punish the other person by pouting, being silent, or withdrawing?*
- ☐ *Am I acting like I am hurt or fragile in order to stop the feedback and avoid dealing with the situation?*
- ☐ *Do I think that everything will be fine, despite repeated feedback that there is a serious problem needing my attention?*

Step 3. Go opposite to Fatalistic Mind.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Practiced mindful awareness of bodily sensations linked to Fatalistic Mind (for example, muscle tension, numbness, flushed face, heart racing) rather than automatically discounting, ignoring, or denying their potential significance.
- ☐ Gently reminded myself that Fatalistic Mind is a learned behavior.
- ☐ Closed-mouth smiled, eyebrow wagged, and took slow deep breaths while thinking about the problem that Fatalistic Mind wanted to avoid.
- ☐ Turned my mind toward the problem while opening and softening to the uncomfortable sensations in my body.
- ☐ Remembered that when I reject help from others, I may keep myself stuck in Fatalistic Mind
- ☐ Turned my mind away from thoughts telling me that I couldn't do it or that the problem was insolvable. Reminded myself that I am competent and have solved many problems in the past.
- ☐ Let go of rigid beliefs that I must do everything myself. Remembered that asking for help doesn't mean I am incompetent.
- ☐ Blocked self-invalidation or self-blame and turned to work on the problem in a flexible and easy manner.
- ☐ Took responsibility by acknowledging that I am choosing to behave fatalistically rather than blaming Fatalistic Mind on others or the world.
- ☐ Let go of desires for the world to change or for the problem to go away and instead looked for ways I might change.
- ☐ Went opposite to urges to pout, shut down, stonewall, sabotage, or take revenge and directly communicated my concern to the other person and took responsibility for how I was feeling.
- ☐ Clarified what I needed to attend to in order to solve the problem.
- ☐ Determined the steps that needed to be taken to solve the problem.
- ☐ Took the first step toward solving the problem and practiced one thing at a time.
- ☐ Forgave myself for operating from Fatalistic Mind.

Other skills and comments.

Radical Openness Handout 12.1

“Describe with Integrity” Skills: The Awareness Continuum

- The *Awareness Continuum* is a mindfulness “describe with integrity” practice in RO DBT.
- An *Awareness Continuum* practice can be done...
 - Alone, with each step spoken silently
 - Alone, and spoken aloud
 - With another person, and spoken aloud
 - With a small group, taking turns, and spoken aloud
- It is useful because it helps us take responsibility for our perceptions about ourselves, others, and the world, rather than blaming our experience on other people or the world.
- It teaches us to notice and label differing forms of inner experience (thoughts, sensations, emotions, and images).
- It provides an opportunity for us to practice describing our perceptions, without needing to explain, justify, or defend ourselves. This frees up energy to notice other things in our life and helps us create a non-defensive sense of self.
- It provides a structured means to practice revealing our inner experience to another person in a manner that is both self-effacing and self-respecting.
 - It is *self-effacing* because an *Awareness Continuum* practice signals to the other person that our perceptions are potentially fallible; they are not absolute truths.
 - It is *self-respecting* because an *Awareness Continuum* practice signals to others that we are taking responsibility for our own perceptions rather than blaming them on others or the world. It helps us remember that we choose our reality; no one can force us to perceive, think, or feel in a particular way.

Four Steps for an Awareness Continuum Practice

Step 1. Begin by saying the word “I.”

- This signals to yourself and others that you are the source of the observation.

Step 2. Clarify that you are mindfully observing by adding the words “am aware of.”

Step 3. Label what is being observed by classifying it as one of four different forms: sensation, emotion, image, or thought.

- **Sensations** include any experience involving the five senses (sound, taste, touch, hearing, or sight).
- **Emotions** include emotional experiences, mood states (for example, fear or anxiety), urges, impulses, and/or desires (for example, a feeling of desire to walk out of a room).
- **Images** generally fall into observations about the past (for example, a memory), the future (for example, what might happen), or mind reading of others (for example, imagining what another is thinking or feeling).
- **Thoughts** are cognitive experiences of the current moment (for example, thinking about learning the Awareness Continuum, thinking about a math problem).

Step 4. Describe the content of your experience, without explanation, rationalization, or justification.

- **Avoid clumping**, or combining two or more forms into one statement. For example...
 - **Nonclumping:** “I am aware of an emotion of sadness” consists of one form—an emotion.
 - **Clumping:** “I am aware of an emotion of sadness because I just thought about my lost dog that ran away three weeks ago” is an explanation about the initial experience of sadness that clumps several forms together (the emotion of sadness is clumped with thoughts and memories about a lost dog).
- **“Editing” is okay.** Feel free to choose what you label or reveal. The choice to keep certain parts of our life private is an important part of independent living.
- **Use the Awareness Continuum during an argument or conflict.** Instead of saying “You make me angry,” use the Awareness Continuum to take responsibility for your perceptions by saying, “I am aware of a feeling of anger” or “I am aware of imagining that you are purposefully trying to make me angry.”

Radical Openness Handout 12.2

Main Points for Lesson 12: Mindfulness Training, Part 2

The “What” Skills

1. In RO DBT, there are three mindfulness “what” skills, each of which represents a differing aspect or way to practice mindfulness. They are *observe openly*, *describe with integrity*, and *participate without planning*.
2. “Urge-surfing” mindfulness practices facilitate learning how to not respond to every urge, impulse, and desire, such as urges to fix, control, reject, or avoid.
3. The Awareness Continuum is the core RO “describe with integrity” practice and can also be used as an “outing oneself” practice. It helps the practitioner take responsibility for their inner experiences, block habitual desires to explain or justify oneself, and learn how to differentiate between thoughts, emotions, sensations, and images. It is a core means for learning how to step off the path of blame (habitual blaming of self or others).
4. Learning the “participate without planning” skill means learning how to passionately participate in one’s life and in one’s community and let go of compulsive planning, rehearsal, and/or obsessive needs to get it right.

Radical Openness Worksheet 12.A

“Observe Openly” Skills

Aware and Focused on the Present Moment



Look for opportunities to practice mindful observing.

Place a checkmark in the box next to the statement that best describes your experience.

- ☐ Remembered that our lives are lived *now*—all we have is the present moment.
- ☐ Practiced being aware of each and every moment, without trying to change or label it.

Examples of “Observe Openly” Practices

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the statements that best describe your experience.

- ☐ Practiced mindful awareness, using one or more of my five senses. Smell (light an aromatic candle), touch (stroke a rough surface), sight (gaze at the horizon), hearing (listen to sounds around you), taste (notice different flavors).
- ☐ Practiced sitting quietly for five minutes each day and observing my breath. Turn your attention to the sensations of your breathing, not trying to do anything with it or change it in any way, just being fully present, as best you can, with the full duration of your inbreath and the full duration of your outbreath. When you notice your mind wandering, gently guide your attention back to your breath, again and again. Use this practice to help remember that you can choose where you focus your attention.
- ☐ Went to an art museum. Practiced observing various paintings close up and then far away. Notice how each viewpoint impacts what you see.
- ☐ Practiced observing times when I was naturally more open-minded. Record what you notice in your RO self-enquiry journal.

- ☐ **Mindfully observed how my tone of voice impacted those around me.** Record what you notice in your RO self-enquiry journal.
- ☐ **Mindfully observed what happened when I raised my eyebrows and smiled during interactions.**
- ☐ **Mindfully observed who talked more when interacting with someone.** Observe what happens when you go opposite to what you were doing (that is, talk more or listen more).
- ☐ **Observed how other people responded when they realized I was allowing myself some time for relaxation.**
- ☐ **Mindfully observed how closed-mouth smiling combined with eyebrow wags influenced the person I was interacting with.**
- ☐ **Observed my bodily sensations** (for example, suddenly feeling hot or sweaty) and then used self-enquiry to deepen my practice.
- ☐ **Practiced urge-surfing** by mindfully observing urges, impulses, and desires, without getting caught up in the thoughts or giving in to the urges. Notice how the urge rises and falls and eventually passes with time.
 - ☐ **Urges to control or correct:** Observe what happens when you don't immediately attempt to fix or control a situation.
 - ☐ **Urges to walk away during a conflict:** Notice the urge to abandon or walk away during a disagreement. Practice remaining engaged instead.
 - ☐ **Urges to tidy or clean.**
 - ☐ **Urges to correct, improve, or tell another person what to do or how to do it.**
 - ☐ **Urges to change the topic when you don't like what is being discussed.**
 - ☐ **Urges to redo someone's work** (for example, restack a dishwasher because it wasn't done according to your standards, or rewrite the minutes from a meeting).
 - ☐ **Urges to check** (for example, whether a door is locked, a light is switched off, hands are clean).
 - ☐ **Urges to gossip about a rival.**
 - ☐ **Urges to restrict food intake, retch, or expel food after eating.**

Record other skills practiced.

Radical Openness Worksheet 12.B

Making Participating Without Planning a Daily Habit

- When we feel self-conscious, we experience a sense of separation from both our tribe and the present moment. We lose our easy manner and are less able to genuinely signal friendly or cooperative intentions.
- Participating without planning sends a powerful cooperative social signal that helps facilitate genuine social engagement and helps us to regain our sense of belonging and connection to our tribe.
- Participating without planning is not something that can be grasped solely via intellectual means; it is experiential, and for most adults it requires direct and repeated practice.
- Practice participating without planning daily and use worksheet 12.C (The Three “What” Skills: Daily Practice Log for the “Observe Openly,” “Describe with Integrity,” and “Participate Without Planning” Skills) to record your observations.
- Record other observations.

Radical Openness Worksheet 12.C

The Three “What” Skills: Daily Practice Log for the “Observe Openly,” “Describe with Integrity,” and “Participate Without Planning” Skills

- Practice one “observe openly” skill every other day, and record your observations in the space provided.
- Practice the Awareness Continuum on the other days. Record in the space provided how difficult it was to not explain, justify, or rationalize what you labeled. (That is, how much did you clump?) What functions did you tend to use the most (for example, thoughts, sensations, images, or emotions)?
- To minimize planning, practice “participate without planning” skills on any day you wish (tee hee ☺).
- Record in the following daily practice log what you practiced each day, and your observations (even if it was “The Art of Practicing Without Practicing”—tee hee ☺).

Day	Observation
Sunday	
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	

Radical Openness Handout 13.1

The Core Mindfulness “How” Skill: With Self-Enquiry

What Is Self-Enquiry?

- **Self-enquiry involves a willingness to challenge our core beliefs**—things we might normally consider facts or truths.
- **Self-enquiry recognizes that...**
 1. *We don't know what we don't know.*
 2. *We don't see things as they are but instead we see things as we are.*
- **Self-enquiry alerts us to areas of our life that may need to change and helps us be more open and receptive to an ever-changing environment.**
- **Practicing self-enquiry is particularly useful whenever we find ourselves strongly rejecting, defending against, or agreeing with feedback that we find challenging or unexpected.** Self-enquiry begins with asking *Is there something to learn here?*
- **Self-enquiry seeks self-discovery and yet is suspicious of quick answers.** Quick answers to self-enquiry questions often reflect old learning and/or desires to avoid distress by coming up with an explanation or solution.
- **Self-enquiry acknowledges that, on some level, we are responsible for our perceptions and actions, in a manner that avoids harsh blame of self, others, or the world.**
- **Self-enquiry involves questioning our habits and a willingness to reveal to others what we discover** so that they can reflect back our blind spots.
- **Self-enquiry is able to question self-enquiry.** It recognizes that every query (or answer) emerging from a practice of self-enquiry, regardless of how seemingly profound, wise, or insightful it may appear, is subject to error.

What Self-Enquiry Is Not

- **Self-enquiry is NOT about finding a good answer; it is about finding a good question** that helps bring us to our edge—our personal unknown—in order to learn.
- **Self-enquiry is NOT ruminating about a problem** because it is not looking to solve it or avoid discomfort.
- **Self-enquiry is NOT regulation, acceptance, distraction, denial, rationalization, or resignation.**
- **Self-enquiry does NOT mean that truth does not exist, or that we should never trust our intuitions.** For example, when in a room with a hungry tiger, believing in what is true (that is, I see a tiger) is more effective than believing in what is false (that is, I see a bunny), especially if you don't want to be dinner!
- **Self-enquiry does NOT mean getting down on oneself,** yet it can be painful, at least temporarily, because it often requires surrendering long-held convictions or cherished beliefs.

Radical Openness Handout 13.2

Cultivating Healthy Self-Doubt

- One secret of healthy living is the cultivation of healthy self-doubt.

What Is Healthy Self-Doubt?

- Healthy self-doubt is able to consider that one may be wrong or incorrect, without falling apart or harshly blaming others.
- Healthy self-doubt doesn't take itself too seriously—it has a sense of humor. It can laugh at its own foibles, strange habits, and/or unique quirks with a sense of kindness. It acknowledges that all humans are fallible.
- Healthy self-doubt takes responsibility for one's actions and emotions by not giving up when challenged.
- Healthy self-doubt is relationship-enhancing because it signals a willingness to learn from the world.
- It is neither Fixed nor Fatalistic Mind thinking.

What Is Unhealthy Self-Doubt?

- Unhealthy self-doubt fears self-examination.
- Unhealthy self-doubt may appear on the surface to be willing to question oneself and/or admit a mistake in order to grow.
- Unhealthy self-doubt often implies that the doubter has been wrongly accused and/or unjustly forced to reexamine themselves (for example, by implying that further self-examination would be damaging because it would automatically undermine their newly earned sense of self-confidence and/or would trigger hidden memories of abuse that they are unprepared to deal with, leading to shutdown, collapse, or relapse).
- Unhealthy self-doubt is characterized by a secret desire to “not change or be challenged.” It is a social signal that often functions to block further feedback (see the information about “don't hurt me” responses in lesson 16).
- Unhealthy self-doubt often involves secret anger or resentment directed toward the persons or events that the doubter believes are responsible for triggering uncertainty or unhelpful self-examination.
- Unhealthy self-doubt powerfully impacts social relationships despite being passively expressed (for example, via sulking, pouting, walking away, giving up, or behaving helplessly).
- If unhealthy self-doubt could speak, it might say, “See? I am admitting that I am a bad person, so you can now stop expecting me to change, because I have already told you I am no good.”
- OR it might say, “See what you've made me do? Your questioning has now made me question myself. I'm now miserable. Are you happy?”
- Thus, unhealthy self-doubt represents Fatalistic Mind thinking.

Radical Openness Handout 13.3

Practicing Self-Enquiry and Outing Oneself

- **Get in the habit of sharing your self-enquiry practices with other people**—a process known in RO DBT as *outing oneself*. Outing oneself means practicing self-enquiry in the presence of another person.
- **We need other people to reflect back our blind spots** because we don't know what we don't know, things are constantly changing, and there is a great deal of experience occurring outside of our conscious awareness.
- **Outing oneself enhances relationships because it models humility and willingness to learn from what the world has to offer.** When we reveal vulnerability, we signal to others that we are the same as them (not superior), and that we are open to new learning.
- **Outing oneself helps us take responsibility for our perceptions and actions.** It blocks habitual avoidance and denial.
- **Outing oneself goes opposite to unwarranted shame or embarrassment that may arise when self-enquiry reveals parts of our personality we are not proud of or might wish to deny.**
 - Shame is unwarranted because acknowledging fallibility after resisting doing so, or because of being afraid of others' reactions, is a courageous and noble pursuit. It is the opposite of complacency, passivity, or resignation, and it brings people closer together.
 - By outing yourself, you are telling your brain that there is nothing to be ashamed of, whereas hiding signals tells your brain that you must be doing something wrong.
- **Self-enquiry “outing oneself” practices grant permission to the practitioner to speak candidly.**

Radical Openness Handout 13.4

Main Points for Lesson 13: Mindfulness Training, Part 3

The Core Mindfulness “How” Skill: With Self-Enquiry

1. In RO DBT, there are four mindfulness “how” skills that represent the kind of attitude or state of mind to bring to a practice of mindfulness. They are *with self-enquiry*, *with awareness of harsh judgments*, *with one-mindful awareness*, and *effectively and with humility*. Lesson 13 focuses on the first of these four skills, *with self-enquiry*.
2. *With self-enquiry* is the core RO DBT mindfulness “how” skill. It is the key to radically open living. It means actively seeking the things one wants to avoid or may find uncomfortable in order to learn, and cultivating a willingness to be wrong, with an intention to change, if needed.
3. Self-enquiry involves both willingness for self-examination and willingness to reveal to others what self-examination has uncovered. This process is known as *outing oneself* in RO DBT.

Radical Openness Worksheet 13.A

Practicing the Core Mindfulness “How” Skill: With Self-Enquiry

Use the “with self-enquiry” skill to enhance how you practice mindfulness.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Practiced purposefully cultivating a sense of healthy self-doubt, without falling apart or automatically giving in.
- ☐ Acknowledged that I don’t know what I don’t know.
- ☐ Remembered that self-enquiry means finding a good question that brings me closer to my personal edge, rather than being obsessed about finding a good answer.
- ☐ Practiced being suspicious of quick answers to my self-enquiry questions.
- ☐ Kept my self-enquiry practices short (for example, five minutes in duration).
- ☐ Recorded what arose from my self-enquiry practices in my self-enquiry journal.
- ☐ Practiced outing myself to another person in order to learn from their feedback.
- ☐ Used the self-enquiry questions from handout 1.3 (Learning from Self-Enquiry) to facilitate my self-enquiry practice.

Radical Openness Handout 14.1

The Four RO “How” Skills

1. With self-enquiry
2. With awareness of harsh judgments
3. With one-mindful awareness
4. Effectively and with humility

Use the following skills to enhance how you practice mindfulness.

With Self-Enquiry

- **With self-enquiry** means actively seeking the things one wants to avoid or may find uncomfortable in order to learn, and cultivating a willingness to be wrong, with an intention to change, if needed.
- Self-enquiry involves both willingness for self-examination and willingness to reveal to others what self-examination uncovered. This process is known as *outing oneself* in RO DBT.
- See handout 13.1 (The Core Mindfulness “How” Skill: With Self-Enquiry) for more details about *with self-enquiry*.

With Awareness of Harsh Judgments

Judgments are a problem when...

- They are rigidly believed as accurate perceptions of reality or literal truth.
- They lead to **unhelpful rumination**. When we ruminate, we are not trying to learn; we are trying to find a solution that allows us to stay the same (for example, to prove to ourselves that we are right, and they are wrong).
- They make us less open to feedback or new information. When we harshly judge ourselves or others, our brain has already evaluated a situation as a potential threat, making us less open. Our social safety system has been disengaged, and our empathic and prosocial signaling becomes impaired.
- They negatively impact how we socially signal or express our intentions and experience to others. For example, they trigger pouting, walking away, phony smiling, sabotaging, harsh gossip, sarcastic comments, insincere praise, pretending to agree, not talking, and so on.

With One-Mindful Awareness

- ***With one-mindful awareness* means purposefully turning one's attention toward the present moment, without getting caught up in unrelated thoughts, emotions, images, or sensations. It requires repeated practice.**
- ***With one-mindful awareness* recognizes that we can never be fully or completely aware.**
- ***With one-mindful awareness* means allowing oneself to slow down and relish the moment. It is learning how to let go of compulsive goal-focused coping and self-improvement.**

Effectively and with Humility

- **Adapt to changing circumstances, in a manner that accounts for the needs of others.**
- **No one is an island.** Our personal well-being is dependent on other people.
- **Be savvy about people, but not arrogant.** There are many ways to solve a problem or perceive the world; rarely is there only one correct way.
- **Flexible Mind is humble.** It acknowledges our essential fallibility and is willing to practice healthy self-doubt.
- **Celebrate both disinhibition and inhibition.**
- **Recognize that what is effective in one moment may not be in the next.**
- **Break a rule when necessary.**

Radical Openness Handout 14.2

Using Self-Enquiry to Examine Harsh Judgments

- *Am I secretly pretending that I am not judgmental? Am I hoping that if I don't challenge others or put myself down first that they won't challenge me? What is it I need to learn?*
- *Is there a possibility that I may not really want to change a harsh judgment?*
- *What am I trying to communicate when I harshly blame myself, others, or the world?*
- *To what extent does my harsh self-blame fit my valued goals? Do I ever secretly hope that my harsh self-blame will stop someone from giving me feedback I don't want to hear? Do I ever use harsh self-blame in order to avoid taking responsibility, achieve a desired goal, or get another person to take care of me?*
- *What prevents me from directly telling another person that I am blaming them (or blaming myself)?*
- *To what extent do I directly reveal my judgmental thoughts to others? When revealing my judgments to others, to what extent do I acknowledge to the other person that my judgment may be wrong or inaccurate?*
- *How does my harsh judgment of myself or others impact my relationships?*
- *Where did I ever get the idea that hiding my judgments or pretending that I was not judging others was the way to live?*
- *Do I ever secretly enjoy judging others?*
- *Have I ever been secretly proud that I can appear nonjudgmental when in fact I am highly judgmental?*
- *Do I ever purposefully use judgmental behavior to control or dominate others, block unwanted feedback, or achieve a goal? What might this tell me about myself and how I think about the world? Would I encourage a young child to think similarly? What might I need to learn?*
- *How would I feel if I were to suddenly discover that others actually knew my true intentions or secret thoughts about them? What is it that I might need to learn?*

When I am judging my judging, use self-enquiry by asking...

- *What am I trying to tell myself or signal to others by judging my judging?*
- *Is there a possibility that my harsh self-judgment represents another way for me to punish myself, stay depressed, or avoid taking responsibility?*
- *To what extent is my judging my judging leading me to Fatalistic Mind?*

Radical Openness Handout 14.3

Main Points for Lesson 14: Mindfulness Training, Part 4

The “How” Skills

1. In RO DBT, there are four mindfulness “how” skills that represent the kind of attitude or state of mind to bring to a practice of mindfulness. They are *with self-enquiry*, *with awareness of harsh judgments*, *with one-mindful awareness*, and *effectively and with humility*. The core mindfulness “how” skill, *with self-enquiry*, was taught in lesson 13. Lesson 14 focuses on the other three “how” skills.
2. The second “how” skill is *with awareness of harsh judgments*. Judgments become harsh and/or problematic when they are rigidly believed as accurate perceptions of reality; they lead to unhelpful rumination, they make us less open to feedback or new information, and/or they negatively impact how we socially signal or express our intentions and experience to others.
3. *With one-mindful awareness* is the third mindfulness “how” skill. It means doing one thing at a time by purposefully and repeatedly turning one’s attention toward the present moment. In RO, *one-mindfulness* means practicing awareness, with humility. We need humility because what we are aware of in any given moment is an edited version of the present moment, not a true representation of it.
4. *Effectively and with humility* is the fourth RO DBT mindfulness “how” skill and means being able to adapt one’s behavior to ever-changing circumstances in order to achieve a goal or live according to one’s values, in a manner that accounts for the needs of others. For OC clients, it can mean learning how to *not* always play by the rules, to be less political, to not always base decisions on winning or achievement, to let go of compulsive striving and obsessive self-improvement, and to learn how to celebrate ineffective moments as opportunities for growth.

Radical Openness Worksheet 14.A

Practicing the “How” of RO Mindfulness

Instructions: Use the following prompts to practice RO mindfulness “how” skills.

With Awareness of Harsh Judgments

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ I noticed times when I behaved as if my judgments were better or more accurate than those made by other people.
- ☐ I noticed times when my body was tense (headache, upset stomach, constipation) and used them as a reminder to look for hidden judgments.
- ☐ I practiced observing how harsh other-blame impacted my social signaling. Write in the following space what you discovered (for example, *I displayed a flat face, scowled, looked away, laughed or chuckled, sought agreement from others, told the other person it was for their own good, stared, puffed out my chest, talked faster, adopted a commanding voice, rolled my eyes, pouted, went silent, acted disgusted, or smiled while giving backhanded praise*).

- ☐ I practiced observing how harsh self-blame impacted my social signaling, without getting down on myself. Write in the following space what you discovered (for example, *I hid my face, avoided eye contact, slumped my shoulders, lowered my head*). Did you speak with a lower volume or slower pace? Or did you tell others that you were overwhelmed, unable to cope, or that it was “too much”?

- ☐ I used the Awareness Continuum to take responsibility for my harsh judgments by labeling them. For example, *I am aware of a judgmental thought about my neighbor* or *I am aware of a feeling of resentment about my neighbor*.
- ☐ Rather than keeping judgments a secret, I used the Awareness Continuum to practice outing them to a friend. The Awareness Continuum automatically blocks harsh gossip because it acknowledges that our perceptions and interpretations are our personal creations, not literal truths. Place a checkmark next to the examples that best represent what you did.

- ☐ *I am aware of imagining that this other person is purposefully trying to hurt me, not I know they want to hurt me.*
 - ☐ *I am aware of a thought that I am right and they are wrong, not I know I'm right and they are wrong.*
 - ☐ *I am aware of a feeling of desire for you to agree with my judgmental thinking (for example, how bad the other person is or how bad I am), rather than Don't you think I'm right?*
 - ☐ **I practiced self-enquiry about my harsh judgments and used handout 14.2 (Using Self-Enquiry to Examine Harsh Judgments) to deepen my practice.** Record the self-enquiry questions or new learning that emerged from your self-enquiry practices.
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- ☐ **I practiced activating my social safety system to help loosen the grip of harsh judgments**—for example, by using the skills in handout 3.1 (Changing Social Interactions by Changing Physiology) or via a brief loving kindness meditation with worksheet 4.A (Daily Practice of Loving Kindness Meditation).
 - ☐ **I practiced giving people the benefit of the doubt and actively looked for benign, reasonable, and valid explanations for another person's behavior before assuming the worst.**
 - ☐ **I practiced grieving my harsh judgments rather than seeing them as truth.** Place a checkmark next to the skills that you used.
 - ☐ **I identified and labeled the expectation or belief that I needed to grieve.**
 - **Examples of beliefs or expectations:** a belief that other people will treat you with respect; a belief that the world should be stable or orderly; a conviction that one is able to accurately predict what will happen in the future; an expectation that people will always be honest; a belief that you will always do the right thing; a belief that others will be polite. Record the unmet expectation or belief.
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- ☐ **I allowed myself to experience the sadness or disappointment associated with my harsh judgment, and then let it go, without falling apart.**
- ☐ **I remembered that sadness helps me let go of harsh judgmental thinking because it acknowledges that I am not always right.**
- ☐ **I repeated my grief work over multiple days (or weeks).**
- ☐ **I purposefully kept my grief practices brief, recognizing that longer practices often represent disguised attempts to regain control or fix the problem.**

- ☐ I used self-enquiry when I found myself ruminating or brooding about my grief practices (for example, by asking *What is it that I might need to learn?* rather than using this as another opportunity to get down on myself or blame others).
- ☐ I remembered that grief work is a process, not an end point, and that it requires ongoing commitment and practice.
- ☐ I used the following script to facilitate my grief work.

I am learning to face the pain of my loss of expectations or beliefs about how things should or ought to be when events don't go as planned or when other people don't behave as expected, without getting down on myself, falling apart, or automatically blaming others. I am learning to recognize that my harsh judgments often stem from a desire to avoid self-examination, take responsibility, or accept that I cannot control the world. For today's practice, I need to grieve the loss of my expectations that...[insert your unmet expectation or belief here]. My sadness helps me recognize that the world is not always as I expect it to be. By allowing myself to experience the sadness of this loss, I am learning to let go of my unhelpful judgments.

- ☐ I forgave myself for having a harsh judgment—for example, by using the forgiveness skills in worksheet 29.A (Flexible Mind Has HEART).
- ☐ I practiced noticing whether I was operating from Fixed Mind or Fatalistic Mind when harshly judging, and then I used handout 11.2 (Being Kind to Fixed Mind) or handout 11.3 (Learning from Fatalistic Mind) to help loosen their grip.
- ☐ I used handout 22.1 (Being Open to Feedback from Others: Flexible Mind ADOPTS) when I noticed my harsh judgments were triggered by critical feedback.
- ☐ I practiced Flexible Mind DARES skills, using worksheet 27.A (Opposite Action to Unhelpful Envy: Flexible Mind DARES [to Let Go]), to let go of unhelpful envy when I recognized that my harsh judgments pertained to feeling that another person had unjustly received a reward that I believed should have been mine or that the person had an advantage over me.
- ☐ Rather than trying to stop judging my judging, I practiced self-enquiry by using the questions in handout 14.2.

Judging is something humans do (it is not good or bad). Judgmental thinking is our way of life; even when we think we are being nonjudgmental, we are judging. Record the self-enquiry questions or new learning that emerged from your self-enquiry practices.

With One-Mindful Awareness

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ After accomplishing a goal, I one-mindfully allowed myself to feel the pleasure of my success rather than automatically moving on to the next task.

- ☐ I purposefully let go of compulsive multitasking by allowing myself to relish my present moment.
- ☐ I used self-enquiry to explore the differences between multitasking and one-mindful attention to my present experience. For example, you asked yourself...
 - *How did multitasking impact my emotional well-being? How did one-mindful attention impact my emotional well-being? Were there any differences? What might this tell me?*
- ☐ I practiced one-mindful rumination by purposefully setting aside time each day (twenty minutes) to one-mindfully brood or ruminate. Record what you noticed or learned.

- ☐ I practiced urge-surfing compulsive desires to go faster, work harder, or do more by slowing down rather than speeding up. For example, you one-mindfully took a deep breath and leaned back in your chair, raised your eyebrows and closed-mouth smiled, and then observed what happened next rather than quickly trying to move on. Record what you noticed or learned.

- ☐ I practiced doing one thing at a time. For example, when making your bed, you focused on making your bed rather than ruminating about the past or planning for the future.
- ☐ I practiced one-mindful multitasking by attending fully to each task in the current moment and watching how and when my attention shifted to another task.
- ☐ I practiced one-mindfully seeking boredom and noticed what happened. I used self-enquiry when I found this difficult. For example, if you found yourself resisting or disliking even the idea of seeking boredom, you asked yourself what this might mean about who you are or how you see the world, and what it was that you might need to learn.
- ☐ I practiced remembering that all I have is now—the past is gone, and the future has yet to be—in order to experience my life more fully.

Effectively and with Humility

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ I practiced being flexible when encountering something new or unexpected.

- ☐ **When doing what I believed was effective, I did so with humility by remembering that what is effective for one person or one situation might not be effective for all people or all situations.**
 - ☐ **I practiced embracing my dependence on others rather than seeing it as a sign of weakness.** For example, you reminded yourself that our species' success depended on our learning how to work together and live in tribes, or you noticed the multitude of everyday experiences (such as your TV working properly, your car starting, your bank keeping your money safe, and so on) when you depend on the goodwill or work of other people. Record what you did.
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- ☐ **I celebrated diversity by remembering that there are many ways to solve a problem or perceive the world, and that rarely is there only one correct way.**
 - ☐ **I practiced acknowledging fallibility and healthy self-doubt when challenged, in order to more effectively adapt to changing conditions or live by my values.**
 - ☐ **I practiced celebrating both disinhibition and inhibition.** For example, you were candid when asked for an opinion by a friend rather than being political, you persisted in a task when your goal was in reach rather than giving up, you danced with abandon when out with friends rather than watching from the sidelines, or you whispered in church but yelled wildly to stop a mugger after the service. Record what you actually did.
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- ☐ **I practiced breaking a rule—especially my own—when necessary, and when the situation I was in suggested that the rule would no longer be effective.**
 - ☐ **I practiced going opposite to what I would normally do in a situation, for the fun of it, and then observed how this impacted my personal well-being and my relationships with others.** For example, rather than always looking for the potential errors or mistakes in a new idea, you practiced looking for potential advantages. Record what you actually did—and feel free to be creative!
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Radical Openness Handout 15.1

Main Points for Lesson 15: Interpersonal Integrity, Part 1

Saying What We Really Mean

1. How we say something matters more than what we say.
2. When apparently innocent questions become disguised demands, relationship problems often follow.

Radical Openness Worksheet 15.A

Recognizing Indirect Communication

Look for three times you communicated indirectly in the coming week, and record them in the following table.

What was the disguised demand or indirect communication?	What did you intend to communicate?	How did the other person react to the indirect communication? Describe what they said and did.	How could you have communicated your intentions more directly?
1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3

Radical Openness Handout 16.1

Identifying “Pushbacks” and “Don’t Hurt Me” Responses

Both “pushback” and “don’t hurt me” responses...

- *Represent hidden intentions or disguised demands* that negatively impact relationships
- *Function to block unwanted feedback* or requests to join with others; they are nonengagement signals
- *Function to secretly control others*, yet the indirect manner in which they are expressed makes it plausible for the sender to deny this
- *Function to allow one to avoid taking responsibility* for how one may have contributed to a problem or difficulty by implying that the fault lies with the other person or elsewhere
- *Are experienced as aversive* or punishing by those on the receiving end
- A “don’t hurt me” response contains two disguised social signals:
 1. *You don’t understand me.*
 2. *You are hurting me.*
- “Don’t hurt me” responses are **signaled nonverbally** via pouting, sulking, moping, pursed lips, frowning, head down, hiding face, downcast eyes, brooding, sighing, whining, whimpering, moaning, beseeching, and begging.
- Despite their apparently compliant or submissive nature, “don’t hurt me” responses **function to covertly control the behavior of others**, most often by blocking unwanted feedback and/or by disrupting requests for change.
- They are extremely effective because they **function to elicit caregiving responses from the tribe rather than confrontation**—for example, desires to soothe, help, or apologetically reassure.
- Their secret or covert nature makes it difficult for someone to challenge their authenticity.
- Most people tend to avoid individuals who habitually use “don’t hurt me” responses (for example, walking on eggshells whenever around them, for fear of upsetting them) **and/or may perceive them as incompetent, unwell, or fragile.**
- A “pushback” response contains two disguised social signals:
 1. *I’m not telling you what to do.*
 2. *But you’d better do what I want.*

- **“Pushback” responses are signaled nonverbally** via flat and stony facial expressions, the silent treatment; scowling; hostile stares; walking away; contemptuous expressions; eye rolls; disgust reactions; cold, sharp, sarcastic, patronizing, and monotonic voice tones; callous smiles, burglar smiles; dismissive gestures; sneering, snickering, mockery, scornful giggling, laughing disdainfully.
- **“Pushback” responses are likely to elicit “pushback” responses from the recipient.** Most people don’t like being pushed, and the most common reaction is retaliation or hostility, triggering “pushback” wars or feuds. The end result can be a severely damaged relationship. Ask yourself: *Is this the type of reaction I want to elicit?*
- **“Pushbacks” are social dominance signals stemming from Fixed Mind thinking.** They function to control others and/or block unwanted feedback, without the sender having to take responsibility for doing so. They are designed to elicit compliance, capitulation, submission, obedience, and/or apologies from others.
- **Most people tend to avoid individuals who frequently use “pushback” responses to get what they want because they fear reprisal** (for example, they may walk on eggshells in order to avoid annoying, upsetting, or appearing to oppose them).

Describe other social signaling habits that you have developed over the years.

Radical Openness Handout 16.2

Using Self-Enquiry to Explore “Pushback” and “Don’t Hurt Me” Behaviors

- **Remember, self-enquiry involves a willingness to question ourselves when we feel threatened or challenged** rather than automatically defending ourselves.
- **It means finding a good question, in order to learn,** and then allowing an answer (if there is one) to be self-discovered by the practitioner. This is why self-enquiry practices should be expected to last over days or weeks.
- **It begins by asking: *What is it that I might need to learn [from this painful experience]?***
- **Remember to keep your practices short and to be suspicious of quick answers.** Record what emerges from your practice in your self-enquiry journal. Use the following questions to help guide your practice.
 - *To what extent am I proud of the way I am behaving? Would I encourage another person or a young child to behave similarly when they interact with me? What might this tell me about my values and/or how I feel about the way I am behaving or thinking? What is it that I might need to learn?*
 - *If I am proud of how I am behaving or thinking, then what is preventing me from more openly revealing my true intentions to the other person or persons?*
 - *Would I feel embarrassed, distressed, or annoyed if my intentions or desires were to be revealed to others or made public?*
 - *To what extent do I engage in “don’t hurt me” responses? How and when do they show up?*
 - *To what extent do I engage in “pushback” responses? How and when do they show up?*
 - *Have I ever purposefully used a “don’t hurt me” response to get someone to do what I wanted or stop them from doing something I didn’t want? What might this tell me about my style of social signaling?*
 - *Have I ever purposefully used a “pushback” response to get someone to do what I wanted or stop them from doing something I didn’t want? What might this tell me about myself?*
 - *Is a “don’t hurt me” social signal more vague and ambiguous OR more candid and up-front? Is a “pushback” social signal direct and forthright OR evasive and indirect? Which type of social signaling do I prefer or value? What might this tell me about my values or my style of social signaling?*
 - *What am I trying to say to others when I engage in a “don’t hurt me” response? What prevents me from being more direct?*
 - *What am I trying to say to others when I engage in a “pushback” response? What prevents me from being more open and direct about my intentions?*

- *What type of message does a “don’t hurt me” response send to others? Does a “don’t hurt me” signal competence or incompetence to another person? How confident would I feel about flying with an airline captain who signaled a “don’t hurt me” response just before takeoff? Or putting myself in the hands of a surgeon who signaled a “don’t hurt me” response just before performing heart surgery? What might this tell me about how “don’t hurt me” responses impact relationships?*
- *What type of message does a “pushback” response send to others? How does it feel when another person uses a “pushback” on me? Is it a pleasurable experience? Do I feel warmhearted toward them? Do I want to spend more time with them? Does it lead to greater trust between us? What might this tell me about how pushbacks impact relationships?*
- *If a person frequently engages in “don’t hurt me” behaviors—for example, head down, shoulders slumped, eyes downcast, dejected facial expressions—what type of message are they sending to themselves? How might this impact their sense of well-being?*
- *How might habitual use of “pushback” responses impact a person’s sense of self or their emotional well-being?*
- *How do I feel when another person engages in a “don’t hurt me” response around me? Do I like it? Do I feel sorry for them? Do I ever feel manipulated?*
- *How might “don’t hurt me” responses impact relationships?*
- *What are the advantages of “don’t hurt me” responses? What do I fear might happen if I stopped engaging in “don’t hurt me” behaviors? Is there something here for me to learn?*
- *How do I feel when another person engages in a “pushback” response around me? Do I like it? Do I feel bullied or belittled? Do I ever feel manipulated?*
- *How might “pushback” responses impact relationships?*
- *What are the advantages of “pushback” responses? What do I fear might happen if I stopped engaging in “pushback” behaviors? Is there something here for me to learn?*
- *To what extent am I resisting, avoiding, or disliking self-enquiry about “don’t hurt me” and “pushback” responses? Does my resistance signal that there is something important for me to acknowledge or recognize about myself?*
- *What might my resistance say to me if it could speak? Is it possible that I am numbing out or shutting down in order to avoid taking responsibility or make important changes in my life? What am I afraid might happen if I let my guard down? What is it that I might need to learn?*
- *What is it that I need to learn from how I communicate my needs, wants, and desires to others? To what extent am I willing to truly examine my social signaling behaviors? What might this tell me?*
- *What am I trying to say or signal to others when I engage in a “pushback” or “don’t hurt me” response? What is preventing me from being more open and direct about my intentions, needs, or wants? What is it that I might need to learn?*
- *Where did I ever get the idea that being direct or open about one’s inner experience is wrong, inappropriate, ineffective, or dangerous?*
- *Is it possible that my automatic distrust or suspicion of others creates a self-fulfilling prophecy? What am I afraid of?*

- *To what extent do I expect others to treat me as special? What might this tell me about my social signaling?*
- *How often do I feel that my efforts or self-sacrifices go unrecognized by others? What prevents me from telling others about my disappointment or desires for appreciation? How might my lack of disclosure impact my personal well-being and my relationships with others? What is it that I might need to learn?*
- *To what extent do I believe others should know what I am thinking, wanting, or expecting to happen, without me having to tell them? How often do I assume that I have been direct with someone about what I wanted, only to find out later that the other person did not actually know what it was that I wanted? What might this tell me about my assumptions about the world? What might this tell me about my style of communication? Is there something to learn here?*

Other self-enquiry questions.

Radical Openness Handout 16.3

Main Points for Lesson 16: Interpersonal Integrity, Part 2

Flexible Mind REVEALS

1. There are two common OC disguised demands, referred to as “*pushback*” and “*don’t hurt me*” responses.
2. Both are disguised demands, or maladaptive social signals, that negatively impact relationships.
3. Both function to block unwanted feedback or requests to join with others; they are nonengagement signals.
4. Both function to control others, yet the indirect manner by which they are expressed makes it plausible for the sender to deny this.
5. Both function to avoid taking responsibility for how one may have contributed to a problem or difficulty by implying that the fault lies with the other person or elsewhere.
6. Both are experienced as aversive or punishing by those on the receiving end.
7. Use Flexible Mind REVEALS to let go of habitual “*pushback*” and “*don’t hurt me*” responses.

Radical Openness Worksheet 16.A

Flexible Mind REVEALS

Flexible Mind REVEALS

- R **Recognize** secret desires for control
- E **Examine** your social signaling and label what you find
- V Remember your core **Values**
- E **Engage** with integrity by outing yourself
- A Practice Flexible Mind **ADOPTS**
- L **Learn** through self-enquiry

R **Recognize** *secret desires for control.*

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Noticed times when I wanted to control a social interaction but did not want the other person to know about my secret intentions (for example, to influence, direct, stop, or change their behavior or the outcome of a social event).

Describe an example of a secret desire for control.

- ☐ Used self-enquiry to help identify times when I might want to hide my intentions from others or secretly control or manipulate the situation or behavior of others.

Record the self-enquiry question you found most helpful.

E **Examine** *your social signaling and label what you find.*

“Don’t Hurt Me” Responses

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Noticed desires to be treated as special.
- ☐ Noticed hidden beliefs that it is unfair for others to challenge, question, or criticize me without my approval, or unless it is delivered in just the right way.
- ☐ Recognized nonverbal signals linked to “don’t hurt me” responses: head hanging, shoulders slumped, lack of eye contact, sighing, tearfulness, pouting.

Write in the space provided how your “don’t hurt me” response was nonverbally signaled.

“Pushback” Responses

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Noticed secret desires to prove the other person wrong, sabotage their efforts, and/or dominate what is happening.
- ☐ Noticed times I felt offended by what I imagined to be an inappropriate challenge.
- ☐ Recognized times I strongly desired to correct or punish others for perceived wrongdoing.
- ☐ Recognized nonverbal signals linked to “pushback” responses: flat facial expression, intense stare, curling my lips, or rolling my eyes whenever the other person spoke; voice tone clipped, cold, or sarcastic.

Write in the space provided how your “pushback” response was nonverbally signaled.

V Remember your core Values.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Used self-enquiry to identify my core values that conflict with desires to manipulate or control other people.

Write in the space provided the self-enquiry questions you found most helpful.

- ☐ Stopped pretending to myself that others didn't already know most or many of my secrets.
- ☐ Practiced living by my values by going opposite to my manipulative social signal.

When Signaling a "Don't Hurt Me"...

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Went opposite to desires to appear weak, submissive, or helpless by being direct, candid, and open.
- ☐ Went opposite to urges to hide my face or slump my shoulders by puffing out my chest, standing tall, sitting upright, and holding my head and chin high.
- ☐ Activated my social safety system.
- ☐ Remembered that I am competent (for example, recalled times when I made self-sacrifices or persisted in difficult tasks in order to help others or benefit society).

When Using a "Pushback"...

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Went opposite to desires to appear dominant, unflappable, or invulnerable by signaling vulnerability, openness, and humility.
- ☐ Activated my social safety system.
- ☐ Went opposite to urges to stand tall and stare them down by rounding my shoulders, using openhanded gestures, and/or raising my eyebrows with a slight smile when I spoke.
- ☐ Remembered my core values for fair-mindedness and truthfulness.

E Engage with integrity by outing yourself.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Practiced outing myself rather than hiding my true intentions.
- ☐ Blocked attempts by the listener to reassure, validate, or soothe me when I outed myself.
- ☐ Disclosed my desire to either push back or signal a “don’t hurt me” to the person I was interacting with instead of keeping it secret.
- ☐ Practiced taking responsibility for my personal reactions by revealing them.
- ☐ Practiced noticing what happened when I was more forthcoming with people.
- ☐ Took responsibility for my emotional reactions rather than blaming them on others or expecting the world to change.
- ☐ Practiced being more direct and candid with people in general.
- ☐ Used Flexible Mind Is DEEP skills in order to link my open expression with my valued goals.
- ☐ Practiced revealing dislike or disagreement, without expecting the other person to change.
- ☐ Encouraged others to feel free to reveal their inner feelings or reactions when interacting with me.
- ☐ Practiced revealing my desires for the other person to be soothing, validating, or give me what I wanted.

A Practice Flexible Mind ADOPTS.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Used handout 22.1 (Being Open to Feedback from Others: Flexible Mind ADOPTS) to enhance my receptivity to feedback.
- ☐ Used the twelve steps for evaluating feedback in Flexible Mind ADOPTS to determine whether to accept or decline feedback.

L Learn through self-enquiry.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Remembered that self-enquiry involves a willingness to question my intentions, beliefs, or behavior, without falling apart.
- ☐ Used the questions in handout 16.2 (Using Self-Enquiry to Explore “Don’t Hurt Me” and “Pushback” Behaviors) to facilitate my self-enquiry practice.

Write in the space provided the self-enquiry questions you found most helpful.

Radical Openness Worksheet 16.B

Identifying Secret Desires for Control

Use the following examples to help identify secret desires for control.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the desires that you have or have had and have struggled to reveal or disclose to others directly.

- ☐ Desires for someone to stop giving you feedback (for example, criticism or praise) or expressing how they feel (for example, how angry they are with you)
- ☐ Desires to punish someone for not behaving according to your standards or for failing to complete a task in the manner or time frame you believe appropriate
- ☐ Desires for someone to help you and/or expectations that they should either already be helping or know when you need it
- ☐ Desires for someone to acknowledge how hard your life has been and as a consequence not push you to make needed changes or expect much from you
- ☐ Desires for the world or others to change in order to suit how you think things should be or enable you to get what you want
- ☐ Desires for the other person to be nice to you, soothing, or validating
- ☐ Desires to walk away or for another person to walk away or leave you alone
- ☐ Desires for someone to behave or think like you do
- ☐ Desires to get what you want, prove another wrong, and/or dominate a situation or another person
- ☐ Desires to sabotage the efforts of others in order to prove a point or win
- ☐ Desires to change the topic in order to avoid a potential conflict
- ☐ Desires for others to recognize your good intentions, acknowledge your hard work, and appreciate your self-sacrifices
- ☐ Desires for vengeance and/or to pay back another person for what you perceive to be wrongdoings and/or moral failings on their part

Radical Openness Handout 17.1

Enhancing Interpersonal Kindness, Effectiveness, and Connectedness, Using Flexible Mind ROCKs ON

Flexible Mind ROCKs ON

- R **Resist** the urge to control other people
- O Identify your interpersonal effectiveness goals and degree of **O**penness
- C **Clarify** the interpersonal effectiveness goal that is your priority
- K Practice **K**indness first and foremost
- ON Take into account the **O**ther person's **N**eeds

Prior to the Interaction

R Resist *the urge to control other people.*

- Plan a little, then let it go.
- Stop expecting the other person to think, feel, or act like you do.
- When urges to plan, check, or rehearse are high, practice self-enquiry in order to learn.
 - *What are my desires to plan, rehearse, or check trying to tell me? If they could speak, what would they say? Am I down on myself for wanting to check, rehearse, or plan?*
 - *Where did I ever get the idea that planning, rehearsing, or checking is the only way to behave? Where did I ever get the idea that planning, checking, or rehearsing is bad? What am I afraid would happen if I were to let go of my planning, checking, or rehearsal? What is it I might need to learn?*
 - *To what extent am I willing to take responsibility for my thoughts and behaviors around planning, rehearsing, and checking? Is there a part of me not wanting to stop or change? Is it possible that I am more controlling of other people than I would care to admit? What might this tell me?*
- **Explain your situation to a neutral person**, and ask them how much preparation they might recommend. Use Flexible Mind ADOPTS skills to enhance openness to feedback.
- **You will have pain if you plan and pain if you don't.** *Which pain gets you closer to how you want to live?*

○ Identify your interpersonal effectiveness goals and degree of Openness.

- Identify interpersonal effectiveness goals and degree of openness, using the following steps.
 1. **Objective effectiveness** pertains to what you hope to achieve during the interaction.
 - ✓ **Ask:** *What results or changes do I want to occur during or after the interaction?*
 2. **Relationship effectiveness** pertains to the type of relationship you desire with the other person.
 - ✓ **Ask:** *How do I want the other person to feel about me after the interaction is over (independent of achieving or not achieving my personal objective)?*
 3. **Self-respect effectiveness** pertains to the core valued goals you will need to attend to during the interaction.
 - ✓ **Ask:** *How do I want to feel about myself after the interaction is over (independent of achieving or not achieving my personal objective)?*
- Identify the valued goals you will need to live by in order to maintain your self-respect during the interaction. Use worksheet 10.A (Flexible MIND Is Deep: Identifying Valued Goals) to help facilitate this process.
- 4. **Self-enquiry effectiveness** pertains to the extent to which you are willing to question your beliefs, convictions, or perceptions about the other person. Use the following questions to facilitate awareness and self-enquiry.
 - *What do I imagine the other person's needs, wants, or desires will be during the interaction? What do I imagine will be their primary objective? How might my beliefs impact my perceptions or behavior during the interaction?*
 - *How open am I to considering the possibility that I may be wrong about how I perceive the other person?*
 - *Am I discounting or minimizing positive things about the person or situation in order to obtain what I want, or am I punishing them for prior wrongs? Is it possible that I am not really giving them a chance?*
 - *Am I refusing to consider alternative explanations for the other person's behavior? Is it possible I am neglecting potential factors or causes outside of the other person's control that may have led to the painful event? What am I afraid might happen if I were to momentarily drop my perspective?*
 - *Do I have evidence that the relationship may be toxic? Have I evaluated the potential toxicity of the relationship? (See Flexible Mind SAGE skills.)*
 - *To what extent am I resisting, avoiding, or disliking self-enquiry about my beliefs, judgments, or appraisals of the other person? What might my resistance say to me if it could speak? What is it that I might need to learn?*

C Clarify the interpersonal effectiveness goal that is your priority.

- Determine the interpersonal effectiveness factor you consider most important in the upcoming interaction, and then use that to guide your behavior.
 1. **Objective effectiveness** is your priority if you believe that achieving your goal or the changes you desire is most important (for example, getting the raise, saying no to a request), even if doing so might cause some damage to the relationship, could undermine self-respect, and/or could prevent you from learning from the interaction.
 2. **Relationship effectiveness** is your priority if you consider your relationship with the other person most important (for example, establishing or maintaining intimacy, proving your commitment to the other person), even if it might mean not achieving your objective, losing some self-respect, or disregarding an opportunity for self-growth.
 3. **Self-respect effectiveness** is your priority if you believe that living by your valued goals and doing what you believe morally correct are most important (for example, to protect those in need, to fight tyranny), even if it might mean not achieving your objective, damaging your relationship, and being seen as arrogant.
 4. **Self-enquiry effectiveness** is your priority if you believe that self-examination is most important (for example, to avoid arrogance, complacency, or self-satisfaction; to learn from what the world has to offer), even if it might mean not achieving your goal, damaging your relationship, or experiencing embarrassment as a result of losing your sense of mastery.

During the Interaction

K Practice **K**indness first and foremost.

- Practice kindness toward self and others as your first response, and as your go-to response when unsure about how to respond. Use worksheet 17.B (Kindness First and Foremost) to facilitate this practice.
- Use valued goals to guide behavior, and when they conflict, decide which value is more important (for example, a conflict between a valued goal for rest and a valued goal for good parenting).
- Use the Match + 1 skills in Flexible Mind ALLOWs to establish or deepen intimacy (see lesson 21).
- Use Flexible Mind SAGE DEEP(ly) REVEALS skills to improve trust, social closeness, and signal nondominant friendliness (see lessons 8, 10, and 16).
- Cultivate an easy manner by letting go of rigid desires to control the outcome.

ON Take into account the **O**ther person's Needs.

- Remember that getting what you want is more likely to happen if you recognize that others may want something different.
- Use Flexible Mind ADOPTS to facilitate open listening and learning from the other person (see lesson 22).

- **In the *heat of the moment***, be alert for **bodily tension, uncomfortable emotions, or strong action urges**, and when they arise, practice self-enquiry by asking yourself: *What is it that I might need to learn?* Use the following self-enquiry questions to help facilitate this.
 - *Is it possible that my bodily tension means that I am not fully open to what's happening right now? What is it that I need to learn?*
 - *Do I find myself wanting to automatically explain, defend, or discount the other person's feedback or what is happening? If yes or maybe, then is this a sign that I may not be truly open?*
 - *Am I talking more quickly, or immediately responding to the other person's feedback or questions?*
 - *Am I holding my breath or breathing more quickly? Has my heart rate changed? If yes or maybe, then what does this mean? What is driving me to respond so quickly? Is it possible I am feeling threatened?*
- **When tension is present, use nonverbal social signaling to slow the pace, and chill out** by leaning back in your chair (if you are sitting), taking a deep breath, raising your eyebrows, and engaging a warm closed-mouth smile (that is, the Big Three + 1). See lesson 3; see also handout 17.3 (Signaling an Easy Manner).
- **Take the heat off when things seem extremely tense** by allowing the other person (and yourself) the *grace* of not having to understand, resolve, or fix a problem or issue immediately.

Radical Openness Handout 17.2

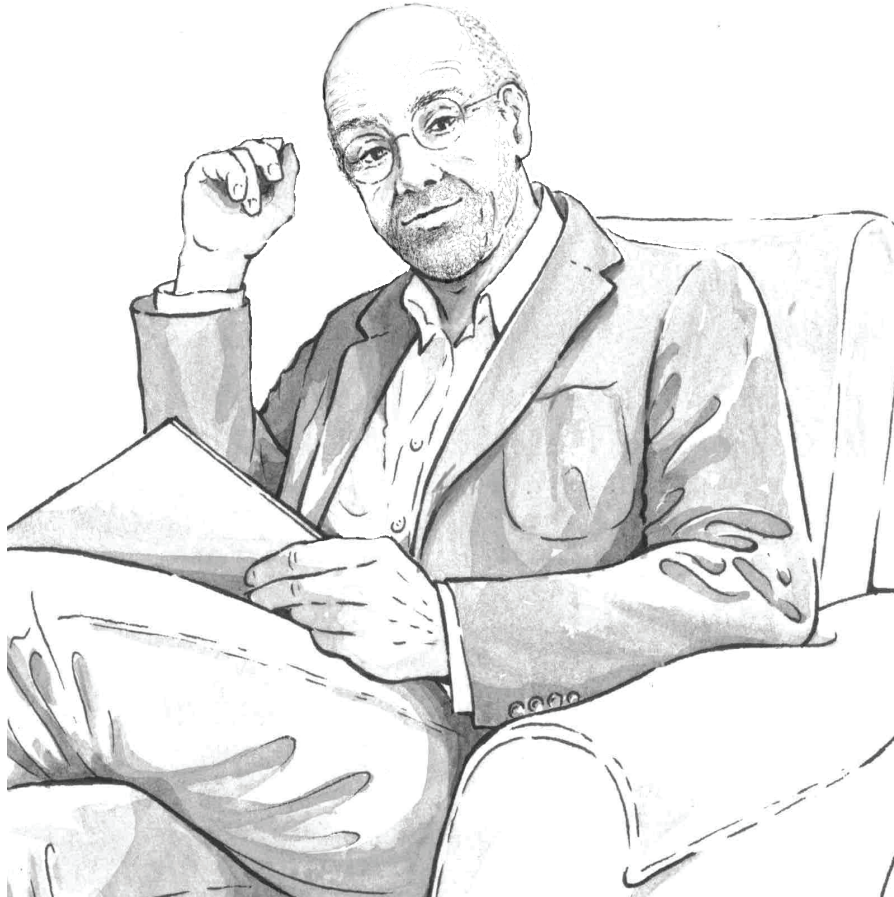
New Year's Resolutions



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Radical Openness Handout 17.3

Signaling an Easy Manner



Radical Openness Handout 17.4

Main Points for Lesson 17: Enhancing Interpersonal Effectiveness

Kindness First and Foremost

1. Prior to an interaction, clarify your goals and objectives, and determine which one takes priority—that is, your personal objective, your relationship objective, or your self-respect objective.
2. Block excessive rehearsal of what you will say or how you will act, particularly when the interaction is purely social (for example, a picnic, a party).
3. Identify the valued goals you will need to live by when interacting with others. Use worksheet 10.A (Flexible Mind Is DEEP: Identifying Valued Goals) to help facilitate this process.
4. During the interaction, practice kindness first and foremost.
5. Kindness signals affection and openness—it involves contributing to the well-being of others, without expecting anything in return.
6. Use Flexible Mind ROCKs ON to enhance interpersonal kindness, effectiveness, and connectedness.

Radical Openness Worksheet 17.A

Overcontrolled Myths About Interpersonal Relationships

Place a checkmark in the box next to each myth that you believe is true or somewhat true.

- ☐ If you give someone an inch, they will take a mile.
- ☐ Love is fake, and romance is for fools.
- ☐ Dependence means you are weak.
- ☐ People can't be trusted.
- ☐ Compliments are used to manipulate others.
- ☐ If someone wrongs me, it is important to always pay them back, no matter how long it takes.
- ☐ Feeling detached and alone is normal.
- ☐ No one can ever truly understand another person.
- ☐ Being dependent on another person is foolish.
- ☐ People are nice to others only when they want something.
- ☐ When conflict occurs, it is best to walk away.
- ☐ If you reveal your true feelings to another person, they will use it against you.
- ☐ There is a right and a wrong way to interact with others.
- ☐ People only truly care about themselves.
- ☐ In the long run, people will always let you down.
- ☐ Being correct is more important than being liked.
- ☐ Always smile, even when you are miserable.
- ☐ Talking about inner feelings is a waste of time.
- ☐ If I show vulnerability, others will take advantage of me.
- ☐ I have to sacrifice my time and energy to get it right because others are incompetent.
- ☐ It is a sign of weakness to ask for help.
- ☐ I must be inadequate if I can't get what I want.
- ☐ People are always secretly gossiping about others behind their backs.

- ☐ No one is capable of understanding me.
- ☐ I am not like other people.
- ☐ Holding on to a grudge is necessary because people cannot be trusted.
- ☐ Relationships are not meant to be fun.
- ☐ If I don't do it myself, then it will never get done or done properly.
- ☐ When phone calls or emails are not returned promptly, it is a sign of disrespect or lack of caring.
- ☐ Keeping experiences to oneself will improve relationships.
- ☐ Having a friend means being obligated.
- ☐ People must be punished for mistakes.
- ☐ When I am wronged by someone, it is a sign of weakness to forgive and forget.
- ☐ People don't appreciate my self-sacrifices.
- ☐ Other people do not deserve my help.
- ☐ I feel that people do not understand me because I am better than they are.

In the space provided, write out any other myths you may have that were not already mentioned.

- Remember to record the images, thoughts, emotions and sensations that emerge when you practice self-enquiry in your self-enquiry journal.

Next, pick one of the preceding myths that you believe in strongly, and practice self-enquiry about the myth over the next week.

- Remember, self-enquiry does not automatically assume that a myth is wrong, bad, or dysfunctional. Use the following questions to enhance your practice.
 - *What might I need to learn from this myth?*
 - *What might this myth be telling me about myself and my life?*
 - *Am I feeling tense doing this exercise?*

- *Am I feeling tense right now? If so, then what might this mean? What is it that I might need to learn?*
- *How open am I to thinking differently about this myth or changing the myth?*
- *If I am not open or only partly open, then what might this mean?*
- *How does holding on to this myth help me live more fully?*
- *How might changing this myth help me live more fully?*
- *What might my resistance to changing this myth be telling me?*
- *Is there something to learn from my resistance?*
- *What does holding on to this myth tell me about myself?*
- *What do I fear might happen if I momentarily let go of this myth?*
- *What is it that I need to learn?*

Use the space provided to record additional self-enquiry questions or observations that emerged from your practice.

- **Remember, keep your self-enquiry practices short in duration**—that is, not much longer than five minutes. The goal of self-enquiry is to *find a good question* that brings you closer to your edge, or personal unknown (the place you don't want to go), in order to learn. After a week, move to another myth, and repeat your self-enquiry practice.
- **Remember to record** the images, thoughts, emotions, and sensations that emerge when you practice self-enquiry about your myths about emotions in your self-enquiry journal.
- **Remember to practice being suspicious of quick answers** to self-enquiry questions. Allow any answers to your self-enquiry practice to emerge over time.

Radical Openness Worksheet 17.B

Kindness First and Foremost

- During interpersonal interactions, practice cultivating a state of being that reflects kindness toward self and others as your first response, and as your go-to response when unsure about how to respond.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the acts of kindness that you practiced.

- ☐ *Kindness first and foremost* means treating other people as we would like to be treated.
- ☐ *Kindness first and foremost* means giving the other person the benefit of the doubt. It acknowledges that our perceptions, beliefs, and convictions can be (and often are) invalid.
- ☐ *Kindness first and foremost* recognizes that we are better when together; it celebrates our tribal nature.
- ☐ *Kindness first and foremost* is willing to suffer pain or make self-sacrifices for another person, without always expecting something in return.
- ☐ *Kindness first and foremost* recognizes that all humans have personality quirks and loves them for this rather than expecting perfection or harmony.
- ☐ *Kindness first and foremost* recognizes it is arrogant to expect the world or others to conform to our personal beliefs or bend to our needs.
- ☐ *Kindness first and foremost* is able to stand up against powerful others, with humility, in order to prevent unwarranted harm or unethical behavior.
- ☐ *Kindness first and foremost* means being kind to oneself by blocking automatic self-blame or self-hatred while retaining an ability to question oneself in order to learn from what the world has to offer.
- ☐ *Kindness first and foremost* means admitting when one is wrong or has harmed another.
- ☐ *Kindness first and foremost* means telling a good friend (or close other) a painful truth in order to help them achieve their valued goals, in a manner that acknowledges one's own potential for fallibility.
- ☐ *Kindness first and foremost* means hoping that the best will come to others and, when it does, celebrating their success, without resenting their advantage.
- ☐ *Kindness first and foremost* is willing to let another person win (and never tell them), simply because it matters more to them than it does to you.
- ☐ *Kindness first and foremost* recognizes that when I lend a hand, it is because I choose to, not because I have been forced. My self-sacrifices are freely chosen; thus, those I help don't owe me. I alone am responsible for my decisions to help or not help.

Record other acts of kindness.

Radical Openness Worksheet 17.C

Using Flexible Mind ROCKs ON to Enhance Interpersonal Effectiveness

Look for opportunities in the coming week to practice Flexible Mind ROCKs ON.

Pick a relationship with someone you care about or would like to get to know better, if possible. Describe the relationship that you chose.

What is your current level of intimacy? Use handout 21.2 (Match + 1 Intimacy Rating Scale), and write a number from 1 to 9. _____

What is your desired level of intimacy? Use handout 21.2 (Match + 1 Intimacy Rating Scale), and write a number from 1 to 9. _____

Practice Flexible Mind ROCKs ON, using the following skills.

Prior to the Interaction

R *Resist the urge to control other people.*

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

☐ Practiced letting go of obsessive planning or rehearsal, *and if they became intense...*

☐ Practiced self-enquiry. *Record the question you found most helpful.*

☐ Explained my situation to a neutral person, and asked them how much preparation they might recommend. *Record what you learned.*

- ☐ Remembered that I will have pain if I plan and pain if I don't, and then asked myself which type of pain will get me closer to how I want to live, and used this to guide my actions.
- ☐ Remembered to not expect the other person to behave like me, without judging it as good or bad.

○ Identify your interpersonal effectiveness goals and degree of Openness.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ **Identified my objective effectiveness by asking:** *What results or changes did I want to occur during or after the interaction?* Record your answer here.

- ☐ **Identified my relationship effectiveness by asking:** *How do I want the other person to feel about me after the interaction is over (independent of achieving or not achieving my personal objective)?* Record your answer here.

- ☐ **Identified my self-respect effectiveness by asking:** *How do I want to feel about myself after the interaction is over (independent of achieving or not achieving my personal objective)?* Record your answer here.

- ☐ **Identified the valued goals I will need to live by** in order to maintain my self-respect during the interaction. Use handout 10.A (*Flexible Mind Is DEEP: Identifying Valued Goals*) to help facilitate this process. Record what you discovered.

- ☐ **Identified my self-enquiry effectiveness by asking** the self-enquiry questions from handout 17.1 (*Enhancing Interpersonal Kindness, Effectiveness, and Connectedness, Using Flexible Mind ROCKs ON*). Record the self-enquiry question(s) you found most helpful.

C Clarify the interpersonal effectiveness goal that is your priority.

- ☐ **Determined the interpersonal effectiveness factor I consider most important to guide my behavior during the upcoming interaction.** Use the questions in handout 17.1 (*Enhancing Interpersonal Kindness, Effectiveness, and Connectedness, Using Flexible Mind ROCKs ON*) to facilitate this. Record the interpersonal factor you decided is most important.

During the Interaction

K Practice **Kindness** first and foremost.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ **Practiced kindness toward self and others**, and observed the effect it had on others. Write out what you noticed.

- ☐ **Examined valued goals to guide behavior, and when they were in conflict, decided which value was more important** (for example, a conflict between your valued goals for rest and your valued goals for good parenting). Record a conflict between valued goals.

- ☐ **Practiced MATCH + 1 skills** in Flexible Mind ALLOWs to establish or deepen intimacy (see lesson 21).

- ☐ **Cultivated an easy manner** by letting go of rigid desires to control the outcome.

- ☐ **Used Flexible Mind SAGE DEEP(ly) REVEALS skills** to improve trust, social closeness, and signal non-dominant friendliness. Record what you discovered.

ON *Take into account the* **Other** *person's* **Needs.**

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Remembered that getting what I want is more likely when I am able to acknowledge the validity of the other person's needs or expectations.
 - ☐ Used Flexible Mind ADOPTS to facilitate open listening and learning from the other person (see lesson 22).
 - ☐ Used self-enquiry when I experienced tension during the interaction. *Record the question you found most useful.*
-
-

- ☐ When tension was present, used nonverbal social signaling to slow the pace, and chilled out by leaning back in my chair (if I was sitting), taking a deep breath, raising my eyebrows, and engaging a warm closed-mouth smile.
 - ☐ Took the heat off both myself and the other person by allowing myself and the other person to not have to solve the problem immediately. *Describe how you made this happen.*
-
-

Radical Openness Handout 18.1

Self-Enquiry About Rumination After a Social Interaction

Practice self-enquiry if you find yourself ruminating about the interaction after it is over by asking the following sample questions; see also the self-enquiry questions in handout 1.3 (Learning from Self-Enquiry).

Carry a copy of this list with you, and write down in your self-enquiry journal new questions you discover.

- *What might my rumination be telling me about what I expected to happen that did not happen? What is it I might need to learn?*
- *Is it possible that I have learned something about the other person that I don't want to admit to myself? What might this mean?*
- *Is my rumination about being right or correct about an issue that was discussed? Or is my rumination more about being liked or disliked by the other person? What might that tell me about my relationship with this person? What do I need to learn?*
- *Is it possible that my rumination suggests that there is something important for me to learn about myself that I don't want to hear or acknowledge? What is it that I don't want to hear?*
- *Do I desire to find a way to discount their perspective? What might this mean about my relationship with them? What might this mean about myself?*
- *Is there a part of me that wants to get revenge or to hurt the other person? What might this mean?*
- *Am I able to truly pause and consider the possibility that I may be wrong or may need to change? Is it possible that I am in Fixed Mind?*
- *Do I feel like shutting down, quitting, or giving up? If yes or maybe, then is it possible that I am operating from Fatalistic Mind?*
- *Am I blaming the other person for my emotional reactions? If yes or maybe, then why am I finding it difficult to take responsibility for my personal reactions? What might this tell me about myself or the relationship?*
- *Is it possible that I was not really giving them a chance? What am I afraid might happen if I were to momentarily drop my perspective?*

Write out the questions you found most useful, or other questions that emerged.

Radical Openness Handout 18.2

Main Points for Lesson 18: Being Assertive with an Open Mind

1. When making requests or turning down requests, use Flexible Mind PROVEs skills to assert your needs with an open mind and maximize success.
2. Describe the circumstances triggering asking or saying no, and use qualifiers to signal open-mindedness.
3. Openly reveal emotions and perceptions about the circumstances or the other person.
4. Identify what might reinforce the other person to give you what you want or respond positively to your assertion, and then seek a means to provide it.
5. Assert with humility if you desire a close relationship with the other person by combining nondominance and cooperative-friendly signals.
6. Assert with confidence, *or even urgency*, if getting what you want is your most important objective and/or the situation is an emergency.
7. When the relationship is important, you are more likely to get what you want if you signal openness and social safety.
8. When the relationship is important, try not to repeat yourself too much—it can start to be experienced as coercive and/or that you are uninterested in the other person's needs.
9. Don't ignore personal criticism or attacks. Respond with kindness and self-enquiry instead.
10. Negotiate collaboratively by putting yourself in the other person's shoes.
11. Use self-enquiry after the interaction to learn, and use RO skills (for example, Flexible Mind SAGE or Flexible Mind Has HEART) to assess and manage self-conscious emotions, determine if the relationship is toxic, and/or practice forgiveness.

Radical Openness Worksheet 18.A

Being Assertive with an Open Mind: Flexible Mind PROVEs

Flexible Mind PROVEs

- P **Provide** a brief description of the underlying circumstances
- R **Reveal** emotions about the circumstances, without blaming
- O Acknowledge the **Other person's** needs, wants, and desires
- V Use your **Valued Goals** to guide how you socially signal your needs
- E Practice self-**Enquiry** to decide whether (or not) to repeat your assertion

Practice asking for what you want, or saying no to what you don't want, with someone in the coming week. Provide a brief description of the interaction around which you chose to practice Flexible Mind PROVEs skills.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

P *Provide a brief description of the underlying circumstances.*

- ☐ Described to the other person the circumstances leading me to ask for something or say no to their request.
- ☐ Used qualifiers to signal open-mindedness and respect (for example, *From what I can tell...* or *Is it possible that...?* or *I am aware of the thought that...*)

R *Reveal emotions about the circumstances, without blaming.*

- ☐ Expressed my feelings and opinions about the circumstances.
- ☐ Practiced openly revealing feelings and perceptions rather than masking them.
- ☐ Used the primary expressive channel (face, body, touch) linked with the emotion I wished to express to maximize the likelihood that what was transmitted was what was actually received.
- ☐ Used the Awareness Continuum when expressing opinions about the other person's intentions, in order to take responsibility for my perceptions.

○ Acknowledge the **Other person's needs, wants, and desires.**

- ☐ Practiced seeing the world from the perspective of the other person, in order to understand their needs, wants, desires, and struggles.
 - ☐ Looked for ways to help the other person achieve their valued goals rather than focusing solely on my own.
 - ☐ Directly asked the other person what they wanted in exchange for giving me what I wanted.
 - ☐ Sought a means to reinforce the other person for responding positively to my assertion.
 - ☐ Prioritized social safety reinforcers over material rewards (for example, by expressing warmth, appreciation, praise, gratitude, respect, trust, or love). *Record what you actually did and what the outcome was.*
-
-

- ☐ Asked them directly for help in solving the problem or resolving the impasse.
- ☐ Recognized secret desires to control the situation or the other person indirectly, and used Flexible Mind REVEALs skills to help me be more direct.

V Use your **Valued Goals** to guide how you socially signal your needs.

- ☐ Asserted with humility when I desired a close relationship with the other person by combining *nondominance* and *cooperative-friendly* signals when asserting my needs with a friend or close other.
- ☐ Was mindful of being polite, particularly when my request or refusal might place a burden on the other person.
- ☐ Asserted with confidence, or even urgency, when getting what I wanted was the most important objective or the situation was an emergency.
 - ☐ I signaled confidence by looking the other person in the eye, speaking calmly but firmly, and keeping my shoulders back and my chin up.
 - ☐ I signaled urgency by enhancing expressions of concern, using a commanding voice, speaking more rapidly, or pointing and gesturing more expansively.
- ☐ Signaled social safety and openness to the other person when the relationship was important. I remembered that people are more likely to help those they feel safe around.
 - ☐ I signaled openness via eyebrow wags, warm smiles, openhanded gestures, adopting a musical tone of voice, head nodding, taking turns when conversing, slowing the pace of the conversation by taking a deep breath, and allowing time for the other person to respond to questions or complete observations before I spoke.
 - ☐ I took the heat off by allowing the other person (and myself) the grace of not having to understand, resolve, or fix a problem or issue immediately.

- ☐ **In the heat of the moment**, I used nonverbal social signaling to slow the pace of the conversation and practiced signaling an easy manner, using nonverbal signaling (such as the Big Three + 1; see lesson 3).
- ☐ Avoided temptations to charm, cajole, sweet-talk, or flatter the other person.
- ☐ Avoided temptations to use disguised demands, such as “pushbacks” or “don’t hurt me” responses (see Flexible Mind REVEALS).

E Practice self-Enquiry to decide whether (or not) to repeat your assertion.

- ☐ When challenged in the heat of the moment, practiced self-enquiry before responding, by asking *Is there something here for me to learn?* Use the space provided to record your experience.
-
-

- ☐ Used my desired level of intimacy with the other person to help guide how intense or repetitive I made my assertion.
 - ☐ When the relationship did not matter, or when my valued goal was important, I repeated my assertion again and again (if necessary) in order to achieve my goal.
 - ☐ When the relationship mattered to me, I blocked repeating my request again and again and practiced listening to the other person’s response to my request with an open mind.
- ☐ Remembered that it is arrogant for me (or anyone else) to assume that other people should conform to my wishes or personal beliefs simply because I believe they are correct or that my needs are a higher priority.
- ☐ Rather than ignoring personal criticism or attacks, practiced kindness (for example, by treating the other person as I would like to be treated).
- ☐ Used the following questions to facilitate my self-enquiry work and recorded what I discovered in my self-enquiry journal. Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the questions you found most helpful.
 - ☐ What might my friend’s or colleague’s refusal to comply with my request tell me about the request itself? About our relationship? About myself? Is there something here to learn?
 - ☐ Do I find myself wanting to automatically explain, defend, or discount the other person’s feedback or what is happening? If yes or maybe, then is this a sign that I may not be truly open to considering their needs or circumstances?
 - ☐ Where did I ever get the idea that I should always get what I want? Is there a part of me that desires to blame the other person or punish them for not complying with my request? Would I encourage a child to behave similarly? What might this tell me about my valued goals?
 - ☐ Do I feel invalidated, hurt, unappreciated, or misunderstood by the person giving me the disconfirming feedback? If yes or maybe, then what is it that I need validated? Is there a chance that my desire for validation, feeling appreciated or understood, may make me less open to the criticism? Why am I expecting them to change rather than myself? Is there something here for me to learn?

- ☐ *Is it possible that I am not responding to the actual situation but am bringing into the situation past experiences that may be influencing my perception? If so, then can I allow myself time to explore my responses before I push further for what I want?*

Record in the space provided the questions you found most helpful and/or other questions that arose during your practice.

After the Interaction

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ I practiced self-enquiry when I found myself ruminating about what happened or when I was repeatedly replaying the event in my mind.
- ☐ I used handout 18.1 (Self-Enquiry About Rumination After a Social Interaction) to deepen my practice and help locate my edge.

Record the questions you found most useful and/or others that emerged during your practices.

- ☐ If I felt self-conscious, embarrassed, or ashamed during the interaction, I used handout 8.5 (The RO DBT Self-Conscious Emotions Rating Scale) to determine whether my self-conscious emotion was warranted or unwarranted. I practiced Flexible Mind SAGE skills (see lesson 8).
- ☐ I used Flexible Mind SAGE skills to identify potential disguised toxic social environments if I decided afterward that the relationship might be toxic.
- ☐ I practiced forgiveness when I found myself nurturing a grudge, using Flexible Mind Has HEART skills (see lesson 29).

Record other skills you used.

Radical Openness Handout 19.1

Main Points for Lesson 19: Using Validation to Signal Social Inclusion

1. We are both transmitters and receivers of information.
2. Ruptures in relationships occur when people feel misunderstood. Ruptures are inevitable in close relationships and can be intimacy-enhancing if repaired. Validation is a core means of achieving this.
3. Validation requires us to understand the other person AND to communicate this understanding.
4. The intended receiver must experience the communication as validating, or it is not actually validating.
5. Not everything requires validation—some behaviors are invalid (for example, stealing from others) and require corrective feedback. Plus, from an RO perspective, the discomfort of invalidation serves as a reminder to practice self-enquiry.

Radical Openness Worksheet 19.A

Flexible Mind Validates: The Seven Levels

Look for five opportunities to validate another person. Describe the situations in which you practiced validation, what you said or did, and the aftereffects.

- **Remember**, validation involves (1) understanding the other person, (2) communicating this understanding to them, and (3) the other person confirming that what you communicated was experienced by them as validating.

Level 1. Being Attentive: “You Are a Worthy Tribe Member”

This means using nonverbal signals to ensure that the other person is aware that you are interested and care about them.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Used head nods (up-and-down movement) to signal attentiveness.
- ☐ Matched the other person’s emotional expression to signal empathy.
- ☐ Used eyebrow wags and smiling to signal cooperation.
- ☐ Used a prolonged shoulder shrug combined with openhanded gestures to signal nondominance and openness.
- ☐ Turned my body toward them during the conversation to signal interest.
- ☐ Maintained eye contact to signal interest, caring, or concern.

Other skills.

Level 2. Reflecting Back: “We’re in the Same Tribe”

This means simply repeating back to the other person what we heard, with humility.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Listened and repeated back what I heard the person saying. I said...

- ☐ Was open to feedback suggesting that my reflection was not entirely accurate, and then tried again, using an easy manner.
- ☐ Used Flexible Mind ADOPTS to enhance my openness to the corrective feedback.

Level 3. Empathic Mind Reading: “Welcome Home!”

This means offering helpful guesses about what the other person may be trying to communicate.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Began my mind read by saying, “If I were in your shoes, I might be...” and then revealed what I imagined he or she might be experiencing or wanting.
- ☐ Began by using the Awareness Continuum (“I am aware of imagining that...”) and then described what I imagined they might be experiencing or wanting.
- ☐ Blocked offering solutions or asking questions.
- ☐ Practiced humility by remembering we don’t see things as they are—we see things as we are. Therefore, my mind read may be more about me than it is about them.
- ☐ Was open to feedback from the other person that my mind read was not entirely accurate or was even completely wrong, and then tried again, with an easy manner, or asked the person to help me understand better.
- ☐ Used Flexible Mind ADOPTS to be open to corrective feedback.
- ☐ Apologized if my mind read was experienced as hurtful to the other person, in order to signal that his or her feelings and reactions are important to me.
- ☐ Remembered that a successful mind read does not mean approval. I can understand someone yet still disagree.

Other skills.

Level 4. “Based on Your History...”

This means signaling to the other person that, given their background or biology, their experience or reaction makes sense.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Started by saying “It makes sense that you...,” then described my response and continued by saying, “...because of what happened to you in the past,” ending with a brief description of the past experience.
- ☐ Remembered that level 4 validation does not mean approval, and instead communicated, in a warm manner, that the behavior is understandable, given the person’s past history or biology.
- ☐ Was open to being inaccurate, and used Flexible Mind ADOPTS skills to help.
- ☐ Remembered that it is hard to validate at level 4 if I don’t know anything about the person’s past history.

Other skills.

Level 5. Normalizing: “You Never Left the Tribe”

This means signaling to the other person that anyone in the same situation would have behaved in a similar fashion.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Started by saying “It makes sense that you...,” then described the response, ending with “...because anyone would have responded the same.”
- ☐ Was open to feedback from the other person that what I said was not experienced as validating, and asked the person to help me better understand.

Other skills.

Level 6. Signaling Trust: “I Believe in You”

This means genuinely revealing our inner experience, without blaming or trying to control the other person or the situation, and trusting the other person to be able to deal with that.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Reminded myself that people trust and prefer to spend time with people who openly reveal their inner feelings, even when the emotions are negative.
- ☐ Expressed my genuine emotion and inner thoughts, and took responsibility for my reactions rather than blaming my experience on others or the world.
- ☐ Used the Awareness Continuum to help take ownership and describe my emotions, thoughts, sensations, and images when I was talking with the person (for example, “I am aware of a thought that...,” “I am aware of an emotion of...,” “I am aware of imagining that...,” or “I am aware of a sensation of...”).
- ☐ Trusted the person I was interacting with to be capable of finding his or her own solution rather than telling the person what to do.
- ☐ Blocked pretending that everything was okay, and revealed what I was genuinely experiencing in the moment, without blaming the other person.
- ☐ Went opposite to thinking “They won’t be able to handle what I truly think or feel” and revealed anyway.
- ☐ Went opposite to walking on eggshells or trying to control the other person’s reaction by revealing my genuine experience in the moment, without blaming the other person for my personal reactions.

Other skills.

Level 7. Reciprocity: “We Are the Same”

This means matching the other person’s level of emotional expression or vulnerability.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Remembered that people believe nonverbal expressions of emotion to be more truthful than what a person says.
- ☐ Remembered that matching expressions of emotions (whether positive or negative) communicates that the other person’s experience is valid because I am reacting in the same manner.
- ☐ Practiced matching the level of emotional intensity, vulnerability, or manner of expression of the person I was interacting with.

Other skills.

Radical Openness Handout 20.1

Self-Enquiry About Mistrust

Instructions: Use the following sample questions to enhance your practice of self-enquiry about mistrust.

Carry a copy of this list with you, and write down in your self-enquiry journal new questions you discover.

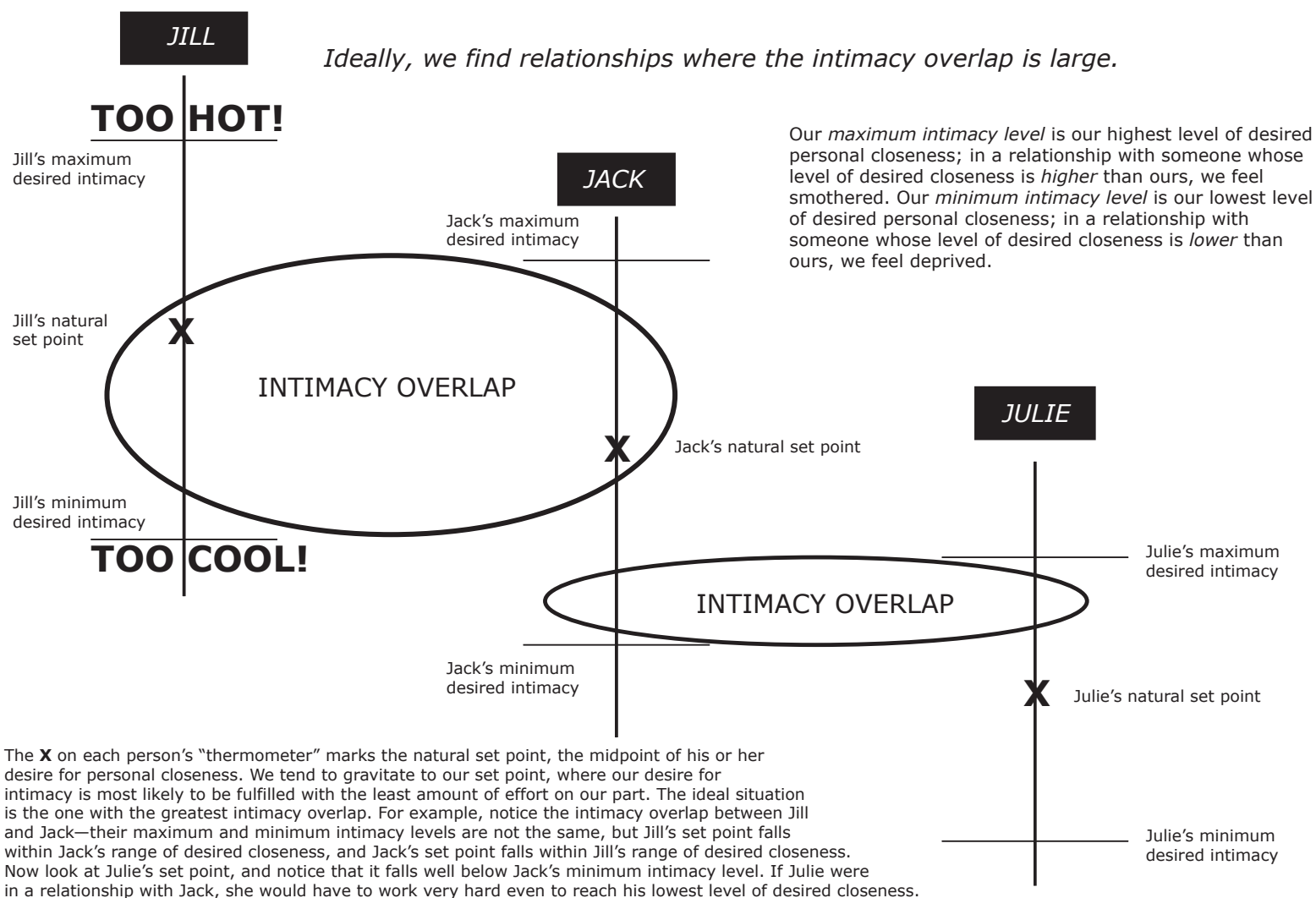
- *Is there an alternative explanation for their behavior? How might they describe their behavior?*
- *Do I find myself wanting to automatically explain or defend myself? If yes or maybe, is it possible that I am not open to being truly fair-minded?*
- *Do I believe the other person must apologize or make amends before I would be willing to consider how I have contributed to the conflict?*
- *How open do I want to be in this situation with the person I will be interacting with? What might be holding me back?*
- *What is the worst thing that could happen if I express myself more openly?*
- *Am I discounting or minimizing positive things about the person or situation in order to punish them? Is it possible that I am not really giving them a chance? What am I afraid might happen if I were to momentarily drop my perspective?*
- *Do I believe that further self-examination or work on the relationship is unnecessary because I have already done everything possible?*
- *If someone else were watching the person's behavior, would he or she see it differently than me? If yes or maybe, then what might this mean?*
- *If the other person appears tense or even hostile when interacting with me, is it possible it has nothing to do with me? Is it possible the person is struggling with other personal issues and not acting out of malice? If so, what might this mean? What is it I need to learn?*
- *Is it possible that this other person finds it difficult to regulate emotions or deal with conflict? If so, how might their behavior influence my perceptions of them, and in what way? What might I need to learn?*
- *Could the behavior I am seeing be due to past trauma or issues that I don't know about that have influenced their way of responding? Is it possible that they sometimes struggle with empathy toward others or may find it hard sometimes to appreciate how their behavior impacts others?*

Write out the question(s) you found most useful, or other questions that emerged.

- **Remember, keep your self-enquiry practices short in duration**—that is, not much longer than five minutes. The goal of self-enquiry is to *find a good question* that brings you closer to your edge or personal unknown (the place you don't want to go) in order to learn.
- **Remember to record** the images, thoughts, emotions, and sensations that emerge when you practice self-enquiry in your self-enquiry journal.
- **Remember to practice being suspicious of quick answers** to self-enquiry questions. Allow any answers to your self-enquiry practice to emerge over time.

Radical Openness Handout 20.2

The Intimacy Thermometer



Radical Openness Handout 20.3

What Characterizes a Genuine Friendship?

- A **genuine friendship** can occur anywhere, anytime, and at any age, although as we grow, the type of intimacy between two people that is possible changes as a function of brain development and personal experience.
- A **genuine friendship** often starts from a chance encounter between two people and, ideally, is an element of the relationship between lovers, spouses, and family members, including parents and children.

Genuine friends...

- Feel safe when together
- Trust each other
- Are willing to make self-sacrifices for each other, without expecting anything in return
- Look out for each other
- Stand by each other when the going gets tough
- Do not try to change each other
- Trust each other to do the right thing
- Respect each other's individual differences
- Care more about their relationship than material gain, personal achievement, or personal needs
- Are kind to each other
- Apologize to each other when unkind and strive to repair any damage that may have been done
- Take responsibility for their own emotions rather than blaming them on each other
- Are open to feedback, even when it hurts
- Are polite and respectful toward each other, especially during times of crisis or stress
- Are respectful of each other when they share inner feelings (for example, they don't yell, shout, belittle, or speak sarcastically toward each other)
- Do not betray their mutual agreements or commitments (for example, by having an affair if in a long-term monogamous relationship)
- Do not bully, threaten, lie, or attempt to manipulate each other to get what they want
- Do not expect each other to be perfect
- Give each other the benefit of the doubt

- Fight fair
- Do not automatically assume each other to be in the wrong when they are in conflict
- Admit to each other their own possible contributions to a conflict or disagreement
- Do not hold grudges
- Work out resentments, conflicts, or misunderstandings when they arise rather than walking away, holding on to them, or hoping they will go away
- Work together to solve problems, without keeping track of who has worked harder
- Respect each other's opinions
- Give each other time to express their views and openly listen to each other
- Don't feel self-conscious with each other and can be emotionally uninhibited and loose when together, especially when the context calls for it
- Can drop their guard and relax, and find each other easy to be around
- Look forward to seeing each other
- Protect each other but are also willing to tell each other when they think the other is doing something wrong
- Are open to being wrong about their own opinions
- Revel in and respect their differences rather than expecting to be the same
- Give each other the gift of truth, with kindness, and tell each other what they really think or feel
- See each other as equals
- Are able to tease each other
- Enjoy their time together and miss each other when separated
- Share their successes and failures with each other

Write other ideas.

Radical Openness Handout 20.4

Main Points for Lesson 20, Part 1

Enhancing Social Connectedness

1. We like people who like us, but to be liked we must take the risk of being disliked.
2. People vary in how much intimacy they desire, and that is okay.
3. We are all dependent on each other, whether we like it or not.
4. Being close to others requires practice. Intimacy requires vulnerability.
5. Old wounds can always be repaired by signaling that we are willing to reengage.

Radical Openness Handout 21.1

Enhancing Social Connectedness, Using Flexible Mind ALLOWs

- A **Assess** your commitment to improve the relationship
- L **Look** for concrete evidence that mistrust is justified
- L **Loosen** your grip on past hurts and fears
- O **Out yourself** by revealing inner feelings
- W **Welcome** feedback and continue to dialogue

A *Assess whether you are committed to improving the relationship and are willing to let go of mistrust.*

Practice self-enquiry—ask yourself the following questions.

- *Am I finding it hard to think about this relationship, question my point of view, or engage in self-enquiry about my feelings when it comes to this relationship? If yes or maybe, then what might this mean?*
- *Is there a part of me that believes it is important for the other person to acknowledge (or apologize) for a past grievance, and that is blocking my willingness to improve the relationship?*
- *What have I found useful or rewarding in the past about this relationship? What do I want from this other person?*
- *Would an improved relationship help me obtain an important goal or help me live by my values?*
- *What are the pros and cons of trusting this person? What are the pros and cons of mistrusting this person?*

L *Look for concrete evidence that mistrust is justified.*

- **Look for Fixed Mind or Fatalistic Mind biases**—for example, quick dismissal of the importance of the relationship or decisions about possible trustworthiness (Fixed Mind) or feelings of hopelessness or thoughts saying, *Why bother trying? Nothing will ever improve our closeness or the relationship* (Fatalistic Mind).
- **Remember that old hurts and current mood can color how we perceive another person.** We tend to pay attention most to those things that confirm our beliefs, and ignore or dismiss information to the contrary (that is, our perceptions are subject to confirmation bias).
- **Open yourself up to the possibility of misperceiving the other person's intentions, beliefs, feelings, or thoughts.** Use self-enquiry by asking...
 - *Is there an alternative explanation for their behavior? How might they describe their behavior?*
 - *Do I find myself wanting to automatically explain or defend myself? If yes or maybe, then is it possible that I am not open to being truly fair-minded?*

- *Do I believe the other person must apologize or make amends before I would be willing to consider how I have contributed to the conflict?*
- *How open do I want to be in this situation with the person I will be interacting with? What might be holding me back?*
- *What is the worst thing that could happen if I expressed myself more openly?*
- *Am I discounting or minimizing positive things about the person or situation in order to punish them? Is it possible that I am not really giving them a chance? What am I afraid might happen if I were to momentarily drop my perspective?*
- *Do I believe that further self-examination or work on the relationship is unnecessary because I have already done everything possible?*
- *If someone else were watching the person's behavior, would he or she see it differently than me? If yes or maybe, then what might this mean?*

L *Loosen your grip on past hurts and fears.*

- ✓ **Ask:** *Even if it is true that the person has harmed me in the past, would it be helpful to repair the relationship?*
- **Just because you distrust someone, this does not automatically mean that they distrust you.** He or she may not even know that you feel dislike or distrust; they may feel neutral, and/or they may even like you.
- **Practice giving them the benefit of the doubt, and assume the person is doing the best they can to cope with life.** Consider the possibility that the distrusted person *may* have benign or neutral intentions but is perhaps not very good at showing this.
- **Remember times you thought negatively about someone and later realized you had misjudged the person.**
- **Remind yourself “Just because I think it, doesn’t mean it’s TRUE.”** You might think you are seven feet tall, but this doesn’t make it so.
- **Accept the fact that you can never truly know what another person is thinking.**
- **Use Flexible Mind Has HEART and forgiveness practices (see lesson 29) to let go of past hurts before interacting with the person.** Remember, letting go of distrust does not mean agreement.

O *Out yourself by revealing inner feelings.*

- **Outing yourself** means taking responsibility for your perceptions by revealing your inner experience to another person.
- **Outing yourself enhances relationships** because it models humility and willingness to learn from what the world has to offer.
- **Use words to describe what you are feeling to the other person;** allow your facial expression to go with the feelings.
- **Remember, open expression of emotion is contagious and enhances relationships.**

- **Use “I” statements when revealing inner experience**, to signal that you are taking responsibility for your emotions, thoughts, and beliefs rather than blaming the other person. Instead of saying, “You make me annoyed when you...,” practice saying, “I feel annoyed when you...”
- **Use the Awareness Continuum to describe your inner experience and perceptions of the other person.** Begin by saying, “I am aware of imagining...” when talking about someone else’s inner experience. This signals you are *not* assuming you know with certainty what the person’s inner thoughts, emotions, or motivations are.
- **Admit to the other person how your actions may have contributed to a damaged relationship or misunderstanding.**
- **Practice curiosity instead of assuming you already know who another person is.** Listen with an open mind to find out who they see themselves to be, and then reflect back what you hear.
- **You may need to take the lead in revealing personal information, and keep revealing on multiple occasions, if you want to improve the relationship.** This may be particularly important for relationships that have been difficult. Consistency in open-minded and expressive behavior is essential rather than quick decisions to give up because an expected positive response did not occur immediately.
- **Use Match + 1 skills when forming new relationships or wanting to improve a relationship.** Match + 1 enhances mutual self-disclosure and provides a means for estimating the overall level of intimacy in a relationship.

W Welcome *feedback and continue to dialogue.*

- **Adopt a body stance that signals openness and willingness to hear what the other person has to say.** For example, use the Big Three + 1 skills (see lesson 3)—that is, lean back, take a deep breath, closed-mouth smile, and eyebrow wag.
- **Let go of rehearsing a response while mindfully listening to the other person.** When we fully listen to another, we are more likely to naturally know how to reply, and we are less likely to misinterpret what they are saying.
- **Give the other person time to adjust when you disclose something new about yourself.**
- **Do not give up if the interaction does not go as planned—instead, remain engaged and continue signaling openness.** Remember that intimacy and trust take time to develop. Block automatic action urges to walk away or abandon the relationship. Schedule another time to talk.
- **Remember that conflict can be intimacy-enhancing.** By staying engaged and working to understand the person from their perspective, we get to know the person better—a process that is essential for deepening a bond with another.
- **Use stall tactics to slow the pace of highly emotional exchanges.** Stall tactics allow individuals to save face by not insisting on an immediate solution when a disagreement has occurred. But make sure you schedule a time to come back to the discussion.
- **Use Flexible Mind ADOPTS skills to enhance openness to feedback**, and the twelve questions to determine whether to accept or decline the feedback (see lesson 23).

Radical Openness Handout 21.2

Match + 1 Intimacy Rating Scale



Examples of Levels 1-2	Examples of Levels 3-4	Examples of Levels 5-6	Examples of Levels 7-8	Examples of Level 9	Examples of Level 10
Talking about everyday nonemotional events (the weather, traffic conditions, or the taste of a meal) and/or stating opinions about nonemotional topics (the service at a restaurant or the color of a room)	Making nonemotional disclosures about personal goals or values (politics, parenting, philosophy) and/or making emotional or passionate disclosures about nonpersonal topics (world peace) and/or revealing socially acceptable personal preferences (“I love to go mountain biking”)	Revealing private feelings or emotional judgments about personal events (one’s true feelings about the boss or a coworker) and/or revealing possibly socially unacceptable opinions, judgments, or preferences (“I detest disorganized people”)	Revealing personal opinions or thoughts about the relationship (“I really like you”) and/or revealing private feelings or judgments about highly emotional personal events (giving details about one’s unhappy marriage) and/or engaging in open expression (tears, uninhibited laughter, more eye contact)	Revealing feelings of affection or desire for more intimacy (“I want to spend more time with you”) and/or sharing stories of shameful or embarrassing experiences that could be damaging if known publicly and/or being willing to be highly vulnerable (sharing extreme self-doubt or weaknesses)	Expressing love or intense feelings of caring and desire for a committed long-term relationship and being willing to reveal deep-seated vulnerable emotions that one may never have expressed before and to make serious personal sacrifices for the relationship

Radical Openness Handout 21.3

Using Match + 1 to Establish New or Improve Existing Relationships

Match + 1 refers to a simple principle: we must reveal personal information in order to get close to another person.

Step 1. Revealing Personal Information

- **Greet the person**—for example, “Hi. How are you?”
- **Begin Match + 1 by revealing to the other person something about your day, week, or life**—for example, “I went on a really nice bike ride today—but PHEW! What a workout!”
- **Mindfully listen to how the person responds.**
- **If you want to get to know the person better, match his or her level of self-disclosure and go one level higher (Match + 1) by revealing more personal details, genuine opinions, and emotions about yourself.**
- **Keep it up! Don’t stop providing details about your life just because the other person does not immediately respond similarly.** Remember that getting to know someone takes time, AND the more you reveal, the more likely a person will reciprocate.
- **Match + 1 means revealing personal information about yourself, NOT asking personal questions about another person’s life** (though asking questions is okay).

Step 2. Estimating the Level of Intimacy

The second step in Match + 1 is helpful but not essential. This step allows us to nonjudgmentally evaluate what we imagine was the level of intimacy of the interaction.

- **After an interaction with someone you would like to get to know better, use the following questions to encourage self-enquiry.**
 - *How much personal information did I reveal?*
 - *What level of intimacy do I believe best describes the interaction I had with this person? Use handout 21.2 (Match + 1 Intimacy Rating Scale).*
 - *Did the person I was interacting with match my level of self-disclosure? What did they specifically do or say that helped me make this determination?*
 - *Is there a chance that I am operating from Fixed Mind or Fatalistic Mind when I evaluate the interaction? If so, what might I do to determine this more fully?*
 - *At what levels of intimacy are most of my other relationships?*
 - *What skills do I need to practice to go higher on the Match + 1 Intimacy Rating Scale in my relationships?*

- **Next, use the Match + 1 Intimacy Rating Scale** to estimate what level of intimacy you experienced with the other person during the interaction. See handout 21.2 (Match + 1 Intimacy Rating Scale).
- **Remember that closeness takes time.** Practice Match + 1 with someone multiple times in order to obtain a better sense of how close the person may want to be with you.
- **Finally, these ratings are NOT truth, only estimates.** So don't give up on a relationship you really want—keep revealing!

Radical Openness Handout 21.4

Main Points for Lesson 21, Part 2

Enhancing Social Connectedness

1. It is not how many friends you have that matters, it is the quality of your social connectedness.
2. You only need one person in your life who is willing to make self-sacrifices to care for you when you are in distress and make you feel socially safe. Higher levels of intimacy increase social safety.
3. Match + 1 represents a core skill needed to form close social bonds—revealing personal feelings to others fosters reciprocal revelations.
4. Intimate relationships mean knowing not only about the things a person is proud of or does well but also about those areas in life they struggle with and about their inner fears or doubts.

Radical Openness Worksheet 21.A

Practicing Flexible Mind ALLOWs

Think of a relationship that you find difficult and would like to improve, and then practice Flexible Mind ALLOWs. *Describe the problematic relationship.*

A *Assess whether you are committed to improving the relationship and willing to let go of mistrust.*

Answer the self-enquiry questions under A (“assess”) in handout 21.1 (Enhancing Social Connectedness, Using Flexible Mind ALLOWs), and complete the pros and cons of trusting the person and/or improving the relationship in the following.

Pros of Trusting or Improving	Cons of Trusting or Improving

L *Look for concrete evidence that mistrust is justified.*

Place a checkbox in the boxes below that best describe the skills you used.

- ☐ Mindfully observed and described my suspicious and mistrustful thoughts. *Describe what you observed.*

- ☐ Looked for signs of Fixed Mind or Fatalistic Mind that may have influenced how I evaluated the relationship.
 - ☐ Remembered that old hurts and current mood might influence my perception of the person or the relationship. Used the self-enquiry questions under the first L (“look”) in handout 21.1 (Enhancing Social Connectedness, Using Flexible Mind ALLOWs) to understand what might be influencing my perception. *Describe what was learned.*
-
-

L Loosen your grip on past hurts and fears.

Place a checkbox in the boxes below that best describe the skills you used.

- ☐ Remembered that letting go of distrust does not mean agreement.
 - ☐ Remembered that the person may not feel the same way that I do about the relationship, and accepted the fact that I can never be certain of what he or she might be thinking or feeling without explicitly being told.
 - ☐ Practiced trusting (to some degree) how the person described the situation, intentions, or personal experience of the relationship rather than automatically assuming that he or she was being deceptive, manipulative, or wrong.
 - ☐ Practiced giving the person the benefit of the doubt.
 - ☐ Remembered times when I thought negatively about someone and later realized that I had misjudged the person.
 - ☐ Tried to see things from the person’s point of view. *Describe what you imagined was the point of view.*
-
-

- ☐ Reminded myself that just because I think it, doesn’t mean it’s TRUE.
- ☐ Used Flexible Mind Has HEART and forgiveness practices to let go of past hurts or grievances before interacting with the person (see lesson 29).

O Out yourself by revealing inner feelings.

Place a checkbox in the boxes below that best describe the skills you used.

- ☐ Used words to describe what I was feeling, and practiced allowing my facial expressions to match my inner feelings.
- ☐ Remembered that open expression of emotion is contagious and enhances relationships.

- ☐ Used “I” statements or the Awareness Continuum when revealing inner experience.
- ☐ Acknowledged to the other person that my actions may have contributed to the misunderstanding or damaged the relationship.
- ☐ Continued practicing open expression and personal self-disclosure with the other person, even during times I thought it might not work.
- ☐ Used Match + 1 skills.

W *Welcome feedback and continue to dialogue.*

Place a checkbox in the boxes below that best describe the skills you used.

- ☐ Adopted a body stance that signals openness and willingness to hear what the other person has to say.
- ☐ Blocked habitual rehearsals of my response when listening to the other person.
- ☐ Gave the other person time to reply by not immediately saying something when silence occurred during the interaction.
- ☐ Did not give up, even though the interaction did not go as I had anticipated. Instead, I remained engaged in the interaction.
- ☐ Reminded myself that conflict can be intimacy-enhancing.
- ☐ Used stall tactics to slow the pace of highly emotional exchanges.
- ☐ Used Flexible Mind ADOPTS skills to enhance openness to feedback, and the twelve questions to determine whether to accept or decline the feedback (see lesson 23).

Other skills.

Radical Openness Handout 22.1

Being Open to Feedback from Others: Flexible Mind ADOPTS

Flexible Mind ADOPTS

- A **Acknowledge** that painful feedback is occurring
- D **Describe** and observe emotions, bodily sensations, and thoughts
- O **Open** to new information by cheerleading and fully listening
- P **Pinpoint** what new behavior is being recommended by the feedback
- T **Try out** the new behavior
- S **Self-soothe** and reward yourself for being open and trying something new

A Acknowledge that *painful feedback is occurring.*

- **Pause and notice** that something painful, disconfirming, unexpected, or novel is occurring.
- **Remember, painful feedback can be verbal, nonverbal, or situational.** It may not involve other people. Sometimes feedback comes from the world.

D Describe and observe emotions, bodily sensations, and thoughts.

- Use **self-enquiry to compassionately question** automatic responses that might suggest lack of openness.
 - *Am I talking more quickly—immediately jumping to respond to the other person's feedback or questions?*
 - *Do I feel a strong desire to explain myself?*
 - *Do I find myself brooding or ruminating about what happened more than is typical?*
 - *Am I holding my breath or breathing more quickly? Has my heart rate changed?*
 - *Am I feeling numb or emotionally shut down?*
 - *Am I automatically blaming the other person or the environment for my reactions?*

O Open to new information by cheerleading and fully listening.

- **Remember, bodily tension means that it is time to practice being open.**
- **Change body posture to facilitate openness**—lean back rather than forward, slow deep breathing, closed-mouth smile, use eyebrow wags.

- **Practice FULLY listening.** Let go of assuming that you know what they are going to say, or stop planning a rebuttal, bringing up past hurts or injuries, or insisting that the other listen to you before you will listen.
- **Stay engaged.** Go opposite to urges to abandon the relationship, walk away, or avoid. Remain in the situation, and thank the person for an opportunity to learn.
- **Encourage openness by silently repeating...**
 - *There may be something to learn from this feedback or what is happening.*
 - *There may be some truth in what is being said.*
 - *Being open does not mean approval or that I must abandon prior beliefs.*

P *Pinpoint what new behavior is being suggested by the feedback.*

- **Clarify exactly what the person would like you to change or do differently.** Use an easy manner; ask for examples.
- **Repeat back what you have heard, to confirm that your perception is accurate.** Be open to the possibility that it is not. Ask the other person to help you understand.
- **Once you have pinpointed the feedback, use handout 22.2 (Steps for Evaluating Feedback: Deciding Whether to Accept or Decline) to determine whether you should accept or decline the feedback.** If your score is 5 or higher, then it is time to try out the new behavior.

T *Try out the new behavior.*

- Use skills from Flexible Mind VARIEs (lesson 5) to enhance your effectiveness.
- Practice the new behavior, again and again.

S *Self-soothe and reward yourself for being open and trying something new.*

- Let go of judging yourself for not knowing the new information.
- Remember, the goal is to *practice* being open, not being perfect.

Radical Openness Handout 22.2

Steps for Evaluating Feedback: Deciding Whether to Accept or Decline

- **Criticism or feedback from another person is not *truth*** but a belief held by the other person that may be true, partially true, or not true at all.
- Use **Flexible Mind ADOPTS** skills to evaluate the feedback you have been given, without automatically rejecting it (Fixed Mind) or automatically accepting it (Fatalistic Mind).

Step 1. Ask the following twelve questions to help determine whether to *accept* or *decline* the feedback.

- | | |
|---|--------|
| 1. Does the person have more experience than I do in this area? | YES/NO |
| 2. Will accepting the feedback help maintain my relationship with the person giving me feedback? | YES/NO |
| 3. Will accepting the advice help me maintain or improve other important relationships? | YES/NO |
| 4. Am I discounting the feedback to purposefully displease or punish the person? | YES/NO |
| 5. If necessary, am I capable of making the changes that are being suggested? | YES/NO |
| 6. Will accepting the feedback help me steer clear of significant problems (for example, financial loss, employment difficulties, problems with the law)? | YES/NO |
| 7. Was the person providing the feedback using a calm and easy manner? | YES/NO |
| 8. Does the feedback refer to the actual situation I am in, as opposed to the past or future? | YES/NO |
| 9. Am I in a long-term caring relationship with this person? | YES/NO |
| 10. Is the feedback I am being given something that I have heard from others before? | YES/NO |
| 11. Am I tense or frustrated about this feedback? | YES/NO |
| 12. Am I saying to myself, <i>I know I am right</i> , no matter what the other person says or how things seem? | YES/NO |

Step 2. Total up the number of YES responses and the number of NO responses.

Then use the following key to guide Flexible Mind in deciding whether to accept or decline the feedback.

11 to 12 YES responses = accept the feedback as accurate and effective, no matter what

9 to 10 YES responses = accept the feedback as likely accurate and effective

7 to 8 YES responses = accept the feedback as possibly accurate and effective; continue to evaluate whether it is useful or true

5 to 6 YES responses = accept the feedback, but very tentatively

3 to 4 YES responses = tentatively decline the feedback, but with an open mind

1 to 2 YES responses = decline the feedback

Radical Openness Handout 22.3

Main Points for Lesson 22: Learning from Corrective Feedback

1. Highly effective people are open to critical feedback or new information and are able to flexibly alter their behavior (when needed) in order to *learn from* or *adapt to* an ever-changing world.
2. Tension in the body signal that it is time to practice being open.
3. Being radically open to feedback requires a willingness to be wrong, without losing one's perspective or automatically giving in.
4. Use Flexible Mind ADOPTS to facilitate learning from corrective feedback.
5. Use the twelve steps for evaluating feedback to determine whether to accept or decline the feedback.
6. Reward yourself for being open to new information.

Radical Openness Worksheet 22.A

Practicing Flexible Mind ADOPTS

- Use Flexible Mind ADOPTS whenever you receive critical or corrective feedback you do not agree with, are told to change or do something different, or are told something about yourself that you do not like (for example, by your boss, partner, friend, family member, neighbor, therapist). Flexible Mind ADOPTS can also be used with past memories of critical feedback, so if you cannot find a recent event, use an old one to practice.
- As you get more practice, you can start using Flexible Mind ADOPTS with nonverbal feedback (a frown or scowl on someone's face after you voice an opinion) or situations where the world is giving you feedback (for example, you have twice failed a test needed for promotion at work).
- Use handouts 22.1 and 22.2 to guide your practice and record your observations.

A Acknowledge *that feedback is occurring.*

Pause, notice, and acknowledge the painful feedback, without judging yourself or the other person. Briefly describe the event and the feedback.

D Describe *emotions, bodily sensations, and thoughts.*

Label emotions (for example, *anger, annoyance, sadness, fear*) and action urges (for example, *urge to walk away, urge to retaliate, urge to deny, or urge to shut down*). Use the self-enquiry questions from handout 22.1 to help block avoidance or blaming of the other person, the situation, or the world. Record your observations here.

○ Open to the feedback.

Place a checkmark in the boxes that best describe the skills you used. Remember, bodily tension means it's time to practice being open.

☐ **Cheer yourself on in practicing openness, using statements like these:**

- *There may be something to learn from this feedback or what is happening.*
- *There may be some truth in what is being said.*
- *Being open does not mean approval or that I must abandon prior beliefs.*
- *Write your own cheerleading statements here.* _____

☐ **Change body posture.** Use eyebrow wags, closed-mouth smile, slow breathing, lean back, open hands, and so on. Describe what you did and how changing your posture influenced you (for example, your emotions, your willingness to listen, your thoughts). *Describe what you did.*

☐ **Practice fully listening.** Let go of assuming that you know what the person is going to say. Let go of planning a rebuttal, bringing up past hurts or injuries, or insisting that the person listen to you before you will listen. *Describe what you did.*

☐ **Stay engaged.** Go opposite to urges to abandon the relationship, to walk away, or to avoid. Remain in the situation. Practice thankfulness by remembering that being open to corrective feedback is how we learn. *Describe how you stayed engaged.*

P Pinpoint *specifically what the feedback is suggesting, and determine whether you should accept or decline the feedback.*

Check the skills you used.

- ☐ Clarified what specific behaviors the feedback was about and, with an easy manner, asked for examples.
- ☐ Repeated back what I heard, and confirmed that it was accurate. If needed, asked them to help me understand better what they were saying.
- ☐ Used handout 22.2 (Steps for Evaluating Feedback: Deciding Whether to Accept or Decline) after I pinpointed the feedback, to determine whether to accept or decline it. How many YES responses? _____ How many NO responses? _____ Was your score different than you expected? *Record what you decided, and any new learning that emerged.*

T Try out *the new behavior if your score on handout 22.2 (Steps for Evaluating Feedback) was 5 or higher.*

Use Flexible Mind VARIEs to enhance your effectiveness. Practice the new behavior, again and again. What happened when you tried it out (either at the time of the feedback or later)? *Record how many times you were able to practice the new behavior. What have you learned?*

S Self-soothe *and reward yourself for being open and trying something new.*

Let go of judging yourself for not having known the new information. How did you know that you were less judgmental? *Describe how you plan to use what you have learned in the future. Describe what you did to reward and soothe yourself.*

Radical Openness Handout 27.1

Main Points for Lesson 27: Envy and Resentment

1. Envy is experienced whenever someone compares themselves unfavorably to others, and unhelpful envy emerges when we believe their advantage over us is unwarranted.
2. Envy is *helpful* when it motivates us to try harder to *achieve our personal goals*, but it can cause problems when it motivates us to *prevent another person from achieving their goals*.
3. Unhelpful envy involves a painful blend of two emotions, *shame and anger*, with action urges for *secret revenge*.
4. Changing envy requires going opposite to both shame's urge to hide and anger's urge to attack.
5. To go all the way opposite action to envy, a person must let go of ill will and reveal envious feelings to the envied person.

Radical Openness Worksheet 27.A

Opposite Action to Unhelpful Envy: Flexible Mind DARES (to Let Go)

Flexible Mind DARES

- D **Determine** if you are experiencing unhelpful envy
- A **Admit** your envy and decide whether you want to change it
- R **Recognize** envious thoughts and action urges
- E Go opposite to **Envious** anger
- S Go opposite to **Shameful** envy

D Determine if you are experiencing unhelpful envy.

Place a checkmark in the boxes that apply. (Note: The more boxes checked, the greater the likelihood you are experiencing unhelpful envy.)

- ☐ Do I feel that I have been wronged, neglected, or passed over by this person or others?
- ☐ Have I found myself thinking negative thoughts about this person (or group)?
- ☐ Do I find myself thinking that this person has an unfair advantage over me?
- ☐ Do I find myself gossiping about this other person frequently?
- ☐ Do I consider this person a rival or a competitor?
- ☐ Have I fantasized about getting back at them?
- ☐ Have I tried to make their life difficult?
- ☐ Do I desire to punish them, beat them, or prove them wrong?
- ☐ Do I find myself sometimes secretly enjoying any misfortune that befalls this other person or fantasizing about misfortune occurring?
- ☐ Do I seek confirmation from others that the person deserves to be punished or has an unfair advantage?

A *Admit your envy by labeling it and decide if you want to let it go.*

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you used.

- ☐ Repeated silently: *I am aware of an emotion of envy or The emotion I am feeling is called “envy.”*
- ☐ Examined the pros and cons of achieving what the other person or group has achieved.
- ☐ Reminded myself of times when winning or being right may not have worked.
- ☐ Remembered times when I achieved goals, only to discover that their importance faded over time.
- ☐ Used self-enquiry to determine whether what was envied is something I truly value or desire.

R *Recognize and nonjudgmentally label action urges of unhelpful envy.*

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the urges you observed, and record your observations in the space provided.

- ☐ Action urges to get even with the envied person, to make his or her life difficult, and to expose his or her weaknesses and failings.
- ☐ Urges to avoid using the word “envy,” to hide my feelings of inferiority, and to keep my desires for revenge secret.
- ☐ Action urges to avoid contact with the envied person and to shut down or numb out when the person is around.
- ☐ Action urges to harshly gossip about the envied person and seek validation from others that my rival doesn't deserve his or her advantage over me.

Other observations.

E *Go opposite to **Envious** anger and desires for revenge.*

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you used, and record observations in the space provided.

1. Taking care of myself

- ☐ Closed-mouth smiled, used eyebrow wags, and slowed my breathing when thinking about the person I am envious of.
- ☐ Practiced being grateful for the things that I have by counting my blessings, and mindfully practiced living in the present moment to more fully enjoy my life.
- ☐ Used self-enquiry to determine whether what was envied was something I truly valued or desired, and, if so, took the first step toward achieving it.

Describe what steps you took and what other steps will be needed.

2. Going opposite to action urges of anger

- ☐ Practiced putting myself in the other person's shoes and seeing the world from the other's perspective.
- ☐ Looked for valid reasons why the other person deserves his or her advantage.

3. Going all the way opposite action

- ☐ Blocked looking for negative traits or moral failings about the envied person.
- ☐ Blocked pleasurable fantasies involving the envied person failing or suffering.
- ☐ Blocked negative gossip about the envied person.
- ☐ Practiced being nonjudgmental and kind and behaving decently toward the envied person.

Other observations.

S Go opposite to **Shameful** envy and desires to hide your envy from others.

Mark the skills you used, and record observations in the space provided.

1. Practiced living within my values

- ☐ Behaved truthfully by labeling my emotion as envy and went opposite to urges to justify or pretend the emotion was something else.
- ☐ Repeated the word “envy” aloud to myself multiple times.
- ☐ Reminded myself that envy is a normal human emotion and that it does not mean I am doing something wrong.

2. Going opposite to shame

- ☐ Revealed my envy to an objective, caring person and used the word “envy” when describing my situation.
- ☐ Blocked attempts by the caring person to label the emotion as something other than envy; blocked his or her attempts to justify my feelings of injustice.

3. Turning unhelpful envy into admiration if I desire a closer relationship with the envied person

- ☐ Remembered that revealing vulnerable (even shameful) emotions to others is relationship-enhancing.
- ☐ Selected a private place to reveal my feelings to the envied person and used the word “envy” to describe my experience.
- ☐ Apologized for prior negative actions, thoughts, or desires to cause them harm or see the person fail.
- ☐ Turned unhelpful envy into admiration by allowing myself to celebrate the person’s success.
- ☐ Rewarded myself for living within my values.

Other observations.

Radical Openness Handout 28.1

Main Points for Lesson 28: Cynicism, Bitterness, and Resignation

1. Cynicism is an inclination to believe that people are motivated primarily by self-interest and respond with skepticism to new ideas.
2. Cynics help societies grow by challenging the status quo.
3. Cynics are not easily impressed—they are the skeptics of the world. Yet their natural tendencies to doubt and ask questions help societies grow by challenging the status quo.
4. Pervasive and rigid cynicism often leads to bitterness.
5. Bitterness is characterized by a pessimistic, hateful, discouraged, and resentful outlook on life, a mood that emanates from failures to achieve important goals and/or perceptions that entitlements were wrongfully obtained by others.
6. To change bitterness, one must practice kindness first and foremost, learn how to give and receive help, and practice being thankful for what one has.

Radical Openness Worksheet 28.A

Changing Bitterness: Flexible Mind Is LIGHT

Flexible Mind Is LIGHT

- L** **Label** your bitterness, using self-enquiry
- I** Notice bitter **I**ntentions by examining action urges
- G** **Go opposite** to bitter beliefs
- H** **Help** others, and allow others to **H**elp
- T** **Practice** kindness and being thankful

L *Label bitterness, using self-enquiry.*

Place a checkmark next to any of the following questions that apply to you, or that you think others might believe apply to you. (Note: A greater number of checkmarks = a greater amount of bitterness.)

- ☐ Do I find it difficult to accept help from others (or give help)?
- ☐ Do people close to me think that I hold a grudge too long? Is there a past injury that I cannot let go of?
- ☐ Do I find it difficult to give compliments to others (or receive them)?
- ☐ Do I feel my efforts often go unrecognized?
- ☐ Do I find myself ruminating when people don't appreciate what I have done?
- ☐ Do I sometimes tell myself that trying to get what I want is just not possible?
- ☐ Do I feel resigned to my fate or say to myself, "Why bother?"
- ☐ Do I feel that enthusiasm about life or love is misguided or naive?
- ☐ Am I a cynic?
- ☐ Is it hard to impress me?
- ☐ Do I feel that I have not achieved what I should have in life?
- ☐ Do I feel life has treated me unfairly and that this happens most of the time?
- ☐ Do I frequently find myself questioning the intentions of others?
- ☐ Do I find it hard to have empathy for someone who has suffered similar traumatic experiences as I have?
- ☐ Do I frequently find myself believing that others judge me or are out to cause me harm?

I Notice bitter **Intentions** by examining actions, thoughts, and emotions.

Pick a recent event when you thought bitterness was present. Place a checkmark next to statements that apply to what you experienced, or use the space provided to describe other experience in your own words.

- ☐ Blocked expressions of happiness or love by others or by myself.
- ☐ Experienced an urge to tell a person that his or her optimism, love, or desire for happiness was a waste of time, childlike, or naive.
- ☐ Attempted to avoid people who were expressing hope, optimism, or enthusiasm.
- ☐ Surrounded myself with cynical, negative, or judgmental stories or entertainment (for example, newspapers, books, TV) or spent time purposefully brooding or writing about melancholic issues.
- ☐ Rebuffed help from someone.
- ☐ Secretly desired another person to experience a fate similar to mine.
- ☐ Found it difficult to feel empathy toward someone who had suffered similarly to the way that I have.

Describe other experiences.

G Go opposite to *unjustified isolation and cynicism*.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Looked for uplifting news stories or events demonstrating altruism, kindness, and compassion toward self and others.
- ☐ Practiced loving kindness meditation in order to activate my social safety system; see handout 3.1 (Changing Social Interactions by Changing Physiology).
- ☐ Practiced noticing what I have in common with other human beings. Repeated silently: *Just like me, others are seeking happiness and have known suffering. Just like me, others have harmed others and have been harmed by others. Just like me, others are trying to cope with their life as best they can and yet can still learn from what life has to offer.*
- ☐ Celebrated diversity by nonjudgmentally interacting with people who dress, think, or act differently than I do.

- ☐ Practiced fully listening without judgment to the opinions expressed by people who I believe to hold different values or morals than I do.
- ☐ Turned my mind from unhelpful thoughts, such as *If I join with others, then it means my entire life has been a total sham.*
- ☐ Highlighted positive events or experiences in my life and attributed them to my learning new ways of behaving rather than to coincidence or happenstance.
- ☐ Remembered times when I experienced warmth or closeness from or toward others (even my therapist).

Describe other skills you practiced or what else you learned.

H *Help others and allow others to* **Help** *me.*

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Engaged in anonymous random acts of kindness.
- ☐ Practiced letting go of fears that if I am kind toward others, they will hurt me or see me as weak.
- ☐ Allowed others to help me (for example, open a door) or asked for help when I needed it.
- ☐ Offered help to others, without expecting that they return the favor.
- ☐ Practiced being frank with others, and encouraged them to return the favor.
- ☐ Practiced letting go of expectations that my self-sacrifices or hard work should be appreciated or noticed by others.
- ☐ Practiced giving and receiving compliments or praise.
- ☐ Increased my prosocial behavior—for example, practiced chitchat with someone, sang with others in church, enthusiastically joined in with others applauding an entertainer, said yes to an offer of tea or coffee or to an invitation to join colleagues after work for a beer.
- ☐ Increased my proactive prosocial behavior—for example, asked others to join me rather than waiting for them to ask me first (for example, to go to a movie, take a walk, visit a museum).
- ☐ Practiced resting and rewarding myself after completing a difficult task rather than telling myself I should get back to work and work harder.

Describe other skills you practiced or what else you learned.

T Practice **Thankfulness** toward self and others.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the skills you practiced.

- ☐ Greeted each day with thankfulness; for example, repeated to myself: *Today I am fortunate to have woken up, I am alive, I have a precious human life, and I am not going to waste it. I am going to use all my energies to develop myself and be more radically open to what the world has to offer. I will actively seek ways to join with others and accept problems as opportunities rather than obstacles. I am going to have kind thoughts toward others and not think badly about others. I am going to benefit others as much as I can.*
- ☐ Practiced closed-mouth smiling and eyebrow wags when around others.
- ☐ Approached situations that generated positive emotions.
- ☐ Whistled, hummed, or sang while doing chores, and looked for other opportunities to practice expressing cheerfulness in my life.
- ☐ Practiced humility by not insisting that the world conform to my way of thinking.
- ☐ Acknowledged that I am one of many while celebrating my uniqueness.
- ☐ Gave people the benefit of the doubt by assuming good intentions on their part if I had no direct evidence to the contrary.
- ☐ Practiced forgiveness and letting go of grudges (used Flexible Mind Has HEART skills).
- ☐ Was grateful for what I have.

Other skills and observations.

Radical Openness Handout 29.1

What Forgiveness Is and Is Not

Forgiveness is Not...

- Approval or denying the past
- Holding on to prior grievances, grudges, or desires for revenge
- Opening yourself to being hurt again

Practice Self-Enquiry

- *What will move me closer to how I would like to live, or what is more in line with my personal values?*
- *Which path leads to more suffering?*
- *What do I fear I might lose if I were to practice forgiveness? Is this fear justified?*
- *Would my life be more fulfilling if I were able to relax vigilance about the past hurt or grievance?*
- *Am I holding on to my fear or anger for other reasons (for example, secret desire for revenge)?*

Forgiveness is...

- Taking care of ourselves
- A way to help us save face because it signals we are taking responsibility for our emotional reactions
- Living in line with our values
- Staying focused on the present
- A voluntary choice
- Dependent on an ongoing commitment (we must decide to forgive, and we must redecide repeatedly)
- Remembering that as humans we have all harmed, and we have all been harmed
- Letting go of the past in order to not be controlled by it
- Gaining freedom from the burden of the past
- A process that takes time

Radical Openness Handout 29.2

Forgiveness Self-Enquiry Questions

Practice self-enquiry to deepen awareness of your edge, using the following questions.

Finding Your Forgiveness Edge

- *How does your body feel when thinking about the past injury? Do you find your muscles tightening, teeth clamping together, mouth tightening, face flushing, or do you feel rigid or numb?*
- *Do you find yourself ruminating about the event or not sleeping because you can't stop thinking about the event?*
- *How willing are you to look at the past injury? Do you find yourself avoiding things in order to not think about the past grievance? Do you ever try not to think about the past injury or hope it will go away by itself? Is there any information, memory, or emotion about the past injury that you secretly don't want to remember? What might this tell you about the event or experience?*
- *What is it that you are afraid would happen if you were to forgive? To what extent are you telling yourself that it is unfair, wrong, or damaging to recall a past injury or to even be asked to consider recalling it?*
- *Do you believe it would be inappropriate or wrong to let go of this past grievance? What is it you fear might happen if you let go?*
- *Who are you hurting or helping by holding on to this grievance?*
- *What do you think keeps you from letting go of this grievance?*
- *What was your perspective when the injury occurred in the past? Has it changed over time? What might this tell you about your willingness to forgive?*
- *What was the perspective of other people involved at the time of the injury? What might their reactions tell you about your pain and desires to hold on to the memory of the injury?*
- *Is forgiveness, gratitude, or compassion toward others a behavior that you admire? What might this tell you about yourself or your personal values?*

If you find yourself resisting self-enquiry to find your edge, use self-enquiry to explore your resistance.

- *What might my resistance be trying to tell me? What is it I need to learn?*
- *What does my resistance tell me about myself or my willingness to engage in learning this new skill?*
- *What am I resisting? Is there something important for me to acknowledge or recognize about myself or the current moment? What is it I need to learn?*

Self-Enquiry About Punishment

- *Is this really worth my time? Who am I really hurting when I think like this?*
- *Who's really winning in the long run when I spend my life thinking about my enemy or the person that hurt me? What is it that I need to learn?*
- *What am I afraid might happen if the individual went unpunished? What is it I need to learn?*
- *Is it possible that my insistence on not forgetting the past injury, or my desire to find a way to punish the transgressor, means that I am giving them the power to control my life, even if they don't know it?*
- *Is it possible that by letting go of my desires for revenge I will be the one winning because I will no longer be holding on to the past? What do I need to learn from this?*

Self-Enquiry About Your “Probation Officer”

- *Am I refusing to consider alternative explanations for the other person's behavior? Is it possible I am neglecting potential factors or causes outside of the other person's control that may have led to the painful event?*
- *Is it possible that I am misreading a flat face or blank expression as hostile or disapproving when it may stem from factors unrelated to me, intense concentration on their part, or a habit of not showing emotions? If so or possibly, then what is it I need to learn?*
- *Am I assuming that the other person's reaction or behavior is solely a reflection of his or her personality or moral failure?*
- *Have I given the other person the same consideration or benefit of the doubt that I might extend myself when I am in similar circumstances, or if I had a history similar to the wrongdoer's? If not, what might this mean?*

Self-Enquiry About Pride

- *What might my pride tell me about my practice of forgiveness? Is it possible that I am wearing my forgiveness as a badge of honor? What might this mean?*
- *Is it possible that I secretly believe that my forgiveness practice is better, more genuine, more real, or more difficult than that of others? Do I secretly look down on others who I imagine are less able to forgive? What might this mean?*
- *Do I secretly desire my forgiveness to be acknowledged or appreciated by the person I am extending it toward? When I practice forgiveness, do I feel that the other person owes me? Do I only practice forgiveness when I believe I will get something in return? What might this mean? What do I need to learn?*
- *What am I afraid would happen if I allowed myself to experience pride about my forgiveness work? Is it possible that I am being too hard on myself? What do I need to learn?*
- *Am I using self-enquiry practice to punish myself or to prove that I am always working hard? If yes or maybe, what is it I need to learn? For what do I deserve punishment? For whom am I working hard? What is preventing me from feeling good about my forgiveness practice? What is it I need to learn?*

Radical Openness Handout 29.3

Strengthening Forgiveness Through Grief Work: Examples of Common Beliefs or Expectations

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the expectations or beliefs you may need to grieve for a past injury.

- ☐ An expectation for a parent to be loving and caring
- ☐ A belief that a spouse or partner should be faithful
- ☐ A belief that others will work as hard as yourself
- ☐ A belief that people should be straightforward or honest
- ☐ A belief that you will always do the right thing
- ☐ A belief that you are always kind or considerate
- ☐ A belief that others will be kind and considerate
- ☐ A belief that others will play fair
- ☐ A belief that others will value or appreciate your hard work or efforts to help
- ☐ A belief that others will be kind
- ☐ A belief that other people will treat you with respect
- ☐ A belief that the world should be stable or orderly
- ☐ A conviction that you are able to accurately predict what will happen in the future
- ☐ A conviction that you can know the intentions of others
- ☐ A belief that others will be polite
- ☐ A belief that a parent, spouse, or family member will not purposefully attempt to harm you
- ☐ A belief in your ability to overcome any obstacle or solve any problem no matter where or how it may appear

Forgiveness Script

To start, sit in a comfortable yet alert position, and take a breath, with awareness, in order to center yourself into this moment. Bring into your awareness the memory of the past grievance or injury you have chosen and the loss you need to grieve.

Read the following script aloud three times in a row.

I recognize that to forgive and reclaim my life, I must first grieve my loss of my expectations or beliefs about the world, myself, or other people. For today's practice, I need to grieve the loss of my expectations that... [Name the expectation requiring grief work.] By grieving this loss, I am learning to recognize that I cannot avoid the pain of this past injury—it is not something that I can ignore, deny, or pretend never happened—as this only creates more suffering. My sadness helps me recognize that the world is not always as I expect it to be. By allowing myself to experience the sadness of my loss—without getting down on myself, falling apart, or blaming others—I take the first step toward forgiveness and genuine healing. I recognize that forgiveness is freely chosen. And so, with full awareness, I freely choose to forgive. [Turn your mind to the area in your life needing forgiveness. Take a slow deep breath, raise your eyebrows, closed-mouth smile.] I forgive you. [Deep breath.] I forgive you. [Deep breath.] I forgive you. [Deep breath.] I recognize that this brief practice of forgiveness means taking care of myself, and that by repeating this practice frequently, I am freeing myself from useless anger, resentment, or rumination and reclaiming my life by taking a step toward living more fully in the present.

Radical Openness Handout 29.4

Main Points for Lesson 29: Learning to Forgive

1. Forgiveness is not approval or denying the past.
2. Forgiveness does not mean reconciliation.
3. Forgiveness does not mean opening yourself up to being hurt again.
4. Forgiveness means taking care of ourselves and learning to let go of useless anger, resentment, or self-blame.
5. To let go of a past injury or grievance, you must first find your edge that keeps you holding on to the past injury.
6. Forgiveness must be freely chosen. A person cannot be forced to forgive, nor can someone be forced to accept forgiveness when it is offered.
7. Forgiveness requires an ongoing commitment to let go of past hurts in order to grow.
8. We must decide to forgive, and we must decide again repeatedly.
9. To reclaim our life and learn how to forgive, we must grieve the loss of expectations.
10. Practice being thankful for what you have. Remind yourself of all the times in your life when you have needed forgiveness from others.

Radical Openness Worksheet 29.A

Flexible Mind Has HEART

Flexible Mind Has HEART

- H Identify the past **Hurt**
- E Locate your **Edge** that's keeping you stuck in the past
- A **Acknowledge** that forgiveness is a choice
- R **Reclaim** your life by grieving your loss and practicing forgiveness
- T Practice **Thankfulness** and then pass it on

Instructions: Pick the past hurt or injury you want to practice forgiveness with, using the following skills. Remember, it doesn't have to be something big. Each letter of the word HEART is a step toward healthy forgiveness.

H *Identify the past **Hurt**, grievance, or injury you are holding on to.*

Place a checkmark in the box next to each statement that helps you locate a past hurt, grievance, or injury.

- ☐ An event or interaction occurred, either recently or in the distant past, that I find myself repeatedly thinking about.
- ☐ Thoughts, images, or feelings about the event keep popping up in my mind, despite my attempts to prevent this from happening.
- ☐ I often wish that the event had never happened, or that things had gone differently.
- ☐ I have tried to hide what happened from others by changing the topic or attempting to avoid discussing it.
- ☐ I have lied to others about the event or pretended it never happened.
- ☐ The event pertains to a time when I was harmed or betrayed by someone.
- ☐ The event pertains to a time when I harmed or betrayed another person.
- ☐ I believe that a particular person or group of people should be punished for what happened and cannot stop thinking about it.
- ☐ I blame myself for what happened and/or believe I should be punished because of what happened.
- ☐ I believe I should be punished for what happened.
- ☐ When I think about the event, I sometimes want to give up.
- ☐ I believe that the event is further proof that I am a failure or flawed.

Other hurts, grievances, or injuries.

Describe the event you want to practice forgiveness with in the space provided. *If you have more than one event, rank-order them from most avoided/disliked (1) to least avoided/disliked, and place a checkmark next to the event you want to work on this week.*

E *Locate your **Edge** that's keeping you stuck in the past.*

To let go of a past injury or grievance, you must first find your edge that keeps you holding on to the past injury. Our edge is where self-growth occurs. It is most often described as a feeling of tension or resistance, embarrassment, a desire to avoid, or a sense of numbness. It usually involves things in our life that we don't want to think about or admit to.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the statements that best describes the skills you used.

- ☐ Observed urges to explain, justify, or defend...
- ☐ What happened in the first place
- ☐ How I responded during or after the event
- ☐ How others responded during or after the event

Record in the space provided what you actually did.

- ☐ Observed urges to blame myself, blame others, or blame the world...
 - ☐ For the event itself
 - ☐ For making it happen or not preventing it
 - ☐ For not doing the right thing
 - ☐ Used handout 29.2 (Forgiveness Self-Enquiry Questions) to help locate my edge.
- Record in the space provided what you discovered about your edge.

- ☐ Practiced self-enquiry about my edge. *Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the statements that best describes the skills you used.*
 - ☐ Remembered that self-enquiry means finding a good question that may lead to new learning, rather than an explanation or way to feel better.
 - ☐ Practiced daily or over several days and remembered to keep practices brief (five minutes) in order to block automatic tendencies to fix or find solutions.
 - ☐ Practiced being suspicious of quick answers to self-enquiry questions.
 - ☐ Recorded the thoughts, emotions, memories, and sensations that arose following or during each self-enquiry practice in my self-enquiry journal.
 - ☐ Following multiple practices over multiple days, used my self-enquiry journal to help “make meaning,” find a solution, or gain new insight about my edge.

Record in the space provided what you learned.

A Acknowledge that forgiveness is a choice.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the statements that best describes the skills you used.

- ☐ Acknowledged that forgiveness is a choice that only I can make—it is ultimately my decision. No one can be forced to forgive, nor can someone be forced to accept forgiveness when it is offered. *Not* deciding is still making a choice.

- ☐ Reminded myself that holding on to a past grievance or grudge against someone is like drinking poison every day with hopes of punishing my enemy. It creates more suffering for myself.
- ☐ Practiced letting go of imagining that somehow the transgressor will get away with what they did wrong if I stop feeling anger toward them.
- ☐ Remembered that punishing a transgressor punishes myself in the long term because it keeps me stuck in the past, and it wastes precious time dwelling on a past event that cannot be redone or remade.
- ☐ Practiced self-enquiry whenever I noticed desires to punish the other person (or myself); for example, I used the “Self-Enquiry About Punishment” questions in handout 29.2.
- ☐ Practiced surrendering arrogance by acknowledging the fallibility inherent in all humans, including myself.
- ☐ Practiced letting go of insisting that all past injuries must be vindicated by acknowledging the impossibility of this task.
- ☐ Celebrated diversity rather than assuming everyone should behave or think like I do.
- ☐ Practiced seeing the world from the perspective of the person who hurt me, and used self-enquiry to facilitate this by asking...
 - *Is it possible that when the transgression occurred, those involved never intended harm and/or that they regret their behavior now?*
 - *Even if the other person appears to not regret their behavior, is it possible that they were not fully aware or capable of understanding how harmful their behavior was?*
 - *Is it possible that major problems or past traumas in their life may have made them (or myself) more vulnerable to the painful event?*
- ☐ Practiced accepting that something hurtful happened that was outside of my control while remembering that acceptance does not mean approval or resignation.

R Reclaim your life by grieving your loss and practicing forgiveness.

To reclaim our life, we must first grieve the loss of our expectations and beliefs about the world, ourselves, or other people.

- Grieving means allowing oneself to feel the sadness or disappointment associated with a loss for a brief time, and then letting the sadness go. Grieving does not mean wallowing in sadness or ruminating about the past event.
- Sadness helps us recognize that we cannot control the world. It helps us stop expecting life to be the same by blocking useless denial. It helps us grow because it updates our “computer,” or brain, by allowing the loss to be fully acknowledged.
- Grief work clears out old ways of thinking and allows us to be more open to what’s happening now.
 - ✓ *Ask: What part of myself or belief about the world did this past injury damage?*

✓ **Ask:** *What is it that I need to grieve?*

Use handout 29.3 (Strengthening Forgiveness Through Grief Work: Examples of Common Beliefs or Expectations) and note in the space provided what you need to grieve.

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the statements that best describes the skills you used.

- ☐ Reminded myself what forgiveness is and is not (see handout 29.1).
- ☐ Checked my resolve to forgive, and recommitted, if needed. *Describe how you noticed that your resolve had wavered.*

- ☐ Practiced forgiveness by grieving my loss, using the script provided in handout 29.3.
- ☐ Activated my social safety system while allowing the past memory to emerge into my awareness.
- ☐ Held the image of the past grievance in my mind and repeated silently “I forgive you” three times while mindfully breathing.
- ☐ Remembered that forgiveness requires a conscious decision to forgive again each time we encounter a reminder of the past injury.
- ☐ Repeated my grief statement each time I found myself thinking about the past injury.
- ☐ Forgave myself for struggling with forgiveness.

T *Practice Thankfulness and then pass it on.*

Place a checkmark in the boxes next to the statements that best describes the skills you used.

- ☐ Practiced radical forgiveness by remembering that humans share a common bond of suffering (*we have all harmed, and we have all been harmed*), and therefore we all deserve forgiveness.

- ☐ Practiced loosening hypervigilant scanning for wrongdoing, using the questions from handout 29.2 under the subheading “Self-Enquiry About Your ‘Probation Officer.’”
- ☐ Practiced being thankful when an opportunity for forgiveness arose.
- ☐ Practiced being thankful for what I have now.
- ☐ Passed on the gift of forgiveness by looking for small opportunities to practice forgiveness, without expecting acknowledgment or anything in return.
- ☐ Practiced kindness first and foremost, using worksheet 17.B.
- ☐ Acknowledged that forgiveness is hard work.
- ☐ Observed how practicing forgiveness influenced my relationships. *Record any observations in the space provided.*

Handout 30.1

The Asch Experiment

