OVERCOMING FRUSTRATION

Throughout life we are often irritated by people, annoyed by delays, and frustrated when things do not go our way. We too often display our irritation and live our lives almost constantly upset. Being frustrated from time to time is a common fact of life. We all experience frustration when we face seemingly unnecessary complications or a complete roadblock on the path to our goal. Everyone gets frustrated. Low frustration tolerance is having oversized or extreme reactions to normal stressors and inconveniences of everyday life. You might feel bothered by inconsequential annoyances and become angry, irritated, and upset. Learn to challenge your thoughts to reduce frustration and allow yourself to overlook offenses.

WRITING YOUR STORY

Name several, specific areas of life that commonly annoy you. Think about pet peeves, injustices, discriminations, inconveniences, disrespect, and other various maltreatments you have experienced. Reflect on how you felt, thought, and acted in response to these difficulties. How did you justify poor choices and careless decisions? List various ways frustration and irritability have complicated your substance use and mental health disorders.

COMMON BELIEFS THAT DRIVE FRUSTRATION

Check the beliefs below that describe your frustration:

☐ My time is important     ☐ I should never be inconvenienced
☐ I shouldn’t be frustrated ☐ People should always be courteous to me
☐ This thing ought to work  ☐ I can’t stand wasting time like this
☐ I should get my way       ☐ I deserve everyone’s respect
DEVELOPING FRUSTRATION TOLERANCE - WORKSHEET 1

☐ Don’t ever treat me like that again
☐ This only happens to me
☐ Yes, this is terrible!
☐ I should get what I want
☐ They got better treatment than I did
☐ You didn’t listen to me
☐ I should never be deprived
☐ This situation is intolerable
☐ You offended me
☐ It’s not my fault, it’s the equipment
☐ This is so unfair
☐ I’m not responsible, it’s their fault
☐ I was singled out and treated differently
☐ This is boring and stupid
☐ The world owes me happiness and contentment
☐ There should be a separate traffic lane for idiots
☐ I can’t stand this
☐ You would be upset too, if you had to go through this

☐ This is too much to take
☐ I didn’t get what I deserved
☐ I was slighted, overlooked, and disrespected
☐ I was made to feel uncomfortable unnecessarily
☐ I was right, they were wrong
☐ I’m entitled to be upset because of the way I was treated
☐ I’m entitled to use alcohol and drugs because of how I was treated
☐ Nobody deserves this kind of treatment
☐ I can’t believe people are so slow
☐ This terrible treatment was intentional
☐ Other people shouldn’t do things that frustrate me
☐ They wasted my time
☐ I can’t stand slow service, stupidity, or rude treatment
☐ I can’t stand being treated this way

INCREASING YOUR FRUSTRATION TOLERANCE

Frustration tolerance can be developed through changing the way you think. You are learning to work through or work down difficulties and problems, rather than letting them get you worked up. Offenses can be pardoned, inconsistencies tolerated, oversights forgiven, and faults and mistakes overlooked. You have the ability to change your beliefs and reduce your level of frustration. Not only do you accept responsibility for your attitudes and actions, but you are able to change the thoughts and beliefs that often result in frustration and disappointment. The thoughts and beliefs that set self-centered, self-serving, and reactive attitudes into motion can be changed.
DEVELOPING FRUSTRATION TOLERANCE - WORKSHEET 1

CHALLENGE THOUGHTS

Read through the list below and choose three to five statements that would help you in recovery.

☐ I can tolerate frustration
☐ I don’t like it, but I can handle it
☐ I’m getting stronger
☐ I can overlook an offense
☐ This isn’t my preference, but it’s not dangerous
☐ People make mistakes and I can overlook them
☐ Things don’t always go my way
☐ I’m learning how to handle difficulties
☐ I can stand it
☐ This is frustrating, but not impossible
☐ I’m up for a challenge
☐ I’ll get through this
☐ This is a triviality of everyday life
☐ This problem may be real, but frustration is a choice
☐ Practice makes progress
☐ Every choice to manage my distress is a choice to get stronger
☐ Distress can be tolerated and tolerating stress makes me stronger
☐ Frustration is managed by changes in my thinking
☐ Tolerating current frustrations increases my future success
☐ I’m letting my character, not my frustration, determine my actions
☐ I’m increasing my ability to manage stress through practice
☐ When I tolerate, overcome, and endure, I get stronger
☐ I may have the same problem, but now I have a new perspective

Write down the three to five coping thoughts you selected. Review them regularly.

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