

The Dip-Shift Process: **D.I.P.**



Don't let a dip in mood turn into a dive! Dip-Shifting is a mindfulness practice that develops your ability to recognize, interrupt, and disengage from disabling thoughts so you can redirect your attention when you choose.

"Engaging with disabling thoughts is like scratching mosquito bites to make them stop itching."

Betsy Sansby

The 3 Steps— **D.I.P.**

1) **D. Notice a DIP in mood**

- **What feelings am I having?** Sad, mad, fearful, hurt, lonely, guilty, worthless.
- **What thoughts am I having?** "My life sucks." "I'm such a loser." "My chest hurts." "Am I having a heart attack?"

2) **I. Investigate**

- **Where in my body am I having symptoms?** (Tightness in chest? Nausea? Hives?)
- **What impulses are coming up?** (Go back to bed. Spend money. Stalk ex-partner on Facebook. Hyper-focus on my symptoms. Drink. Get a quart of **Ben & Jerry's**.)
- **How did I get here?** What factors triggered this dip in mood? (Poor sleep, time of day, fighting, illness, loss, a disturbing dream?)
- **Am I doing anything right now that's making it worse?** (Consulting too many doctors, obsessing on symptoms, fueling disabling thoughts, researching my condition online and **looping** on Worst Case Scenarios?)



3) **P. Pivot!**

- **Shift your position.** Stand up. Change direction. Get out of bed. Assume a fighting stance. (While you're at it, say the word: "Nope!") Anxiety is a 14-year old bully. Don't let him immobilize you.
- **Shift your focus.** Focus outward on someone or something else.
- **Shift your thinking.** Acknowledge pain with compassion. Say: "Yes, I know. This is hard.. Time to be gentle with myself."
- **Don't argue with negative thoughts.** Greet them politely, but don't give them your lunch money.
- **Burn off adrenaline by doing vigorous exercise.** Anxiety symptoms scare you into thinking there's something terribly wrong. How can you be tired and wired at the same time? Here's how. Your body is dysregulated. It's sounding a false alarm. Run if you can. Or walk briskly. Choose aerobic activity, not weight-lifting. Weight-lifting makes people snarly.
- **If you can't exercise, read something engaging or write in a journal.** These activities access a different part of your brain from the fear response. They are both soothing to the central nervous system.

