

Emotion Regulation Skills: Opposite Action

Emotions are complicated, and can get in the way of your overall wellbeing. Sometimes we experience emotions that are so strong that they deeply affect our relationships, goals, self-image, spirituality, work performance, and overall mental health. With the DBT technique, Opposite Action, we learn to flip our overwhelming emotion into something that brings about our most favorable and desirable outcome. The process is as follows:

Step	Example	Your Turn
Identify the feeling.	<i>Anxiety- about leaving home for vacation.</i>	
Identify the resulting action.	<i>Actively avoiding booking a vacation by burying yourself in work and convincing yourself you do not have time to go on vacation.</i>	
Apply the opposite action.	<i>Push yourself to plan, book and follow through with going on your long-awaited vacation.</i>	
Feel the opposite feeling.	<i>Excitement – about being able to take your dream vacation.</i> <i>Relief – because there is no longer an internal push-and-pull about whether or not it would work out for you to go on vacation.</i>	