

Chapter 10 Resources: Emotional Intelligence and Regulation in the Digital Interactions

Exercise: Managing Intense Emotions with TIPP

This exercise complements the emotional intelligence section in Chapter 9 by introducing a physical regulation strategy that supports emotional awareness and stability during moments of heightened emotions and stress.

When emotions escalate quickly, the body enters a heightened state of stress, making it difficult to think clearly, communicate effectively, or respond in ways that align with long-term goals.

TIPP (**t**emperature, **i**ntense exercise, **p**aced breathing, **p**rogressive muscle relaxation) is a skill-based intervention from Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) that provides a fast, physiological reset to help manage intense emotions.

Unlike reflective strategies that require cognitive processing, TIPP works by calming the nervous system directly, shifting the body out of fight-or-flight mode into a more regulated state where deeper emotional work can begin. After using one or more of these skills, ask yourself: *Do I feel different? What changed? Is my urge to react still as strong?*

The TIPP skills in practice:

- **T (temperature):** Lower your body temperature by splashing cold water on your face, holding a cold pack, or (if possible) stepping briefly outside into cooler air. This activates the body's *dive reflex*, which slows the heart rate and reduces physiological arousal.
 - **Note:** *What if it's hot outside?* Use a cold compress on your neck, or frozen vegetables in a towel. The goal is to rapidly change your physical state.
- **I (intense exercise):** Do 10–20 minutes of vigorous movement (e.g., jumping jacks, running in place, push-ups) to burn off stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline, helping the body return to baseline. This is helpful for agitation, frustration, or panic.
- **P (paced breathing):** Try the 4-4-4 method. Inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 4, exhale for 4. Repeat several times. This helps activate the parasympathetic nervous system, promoting calm and regulation..
- **P (progressive muscle relaxation):** Tense and then release different muscle groups one at a time (e.g., hands, shoulders, jaw). This helps reduce internal tension and increases awareness of the mind–body connection.

These strategies are not avoidance, they are short-term tools to bring you into a state where reflection, problem-solving, or partner engagement is possible.