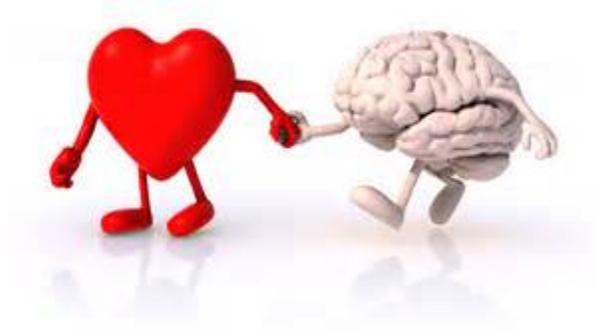


## Week Three

### - Emotions and the Wise Mind -



“The mind is like a parachute. It doesn’t work unless it’s open.”

- Anonymous

#### **Topic(s):**

- Emotions: What are they and how do they work?
- What Emotions Do for You
- The Wise Mind

#### **Homework:**

- Emotional Responses Worksheet
- Wise Mind Worksheet

Materials adapted, and parts taken from:

*The Dialectical Behavior Skills Workbook*. Matthew McKay, PhD. (2007). Oakland:New Harbinger Publications, Inc.  
*Skills Training Manual for Treating Borderline Personality Disorder*, Marsha Linehan. (1993). New York:The Guilford Press.

*Mind and Emotions*, Matthew McKay, PhD. (2011). Oakland:New Harbinger Publications, Inc.



## EMOTION REGULATION HANDOUT 3

([Emotion Regulation Worksheets 2–2c](#))

### What Emotions Do for You

#### EMOTIONS MOTIVATE (AND ORGANIZE) US FOR ACTION

- Emotions motivate our behavior. Emotions prepare us for action. The action urge of specific emotions is often “hard-wired” in biology.
- Emotions save time in getting us to act in important situations. Emotions can be especially important when we don’t have time to think things through.
- Strong emotions help us overcome obstacles—in our minds and in the environment.

#### EMOTIONS COMMUNICATE TO (AND INFLUENCE) OTHERS

- Facial expressions are hard-wired aspects of emotions. Facial expressions communicate faster than words.
- Our body language and voice tone can also be hard-wired. Like it or not, they also communicate our emotions to others.
- When it is important to communicate to others, or send them a message, it can be very hard to change our emotions.
- Whether we intend it or not, our communication of emotions influences others.

#### EMOTIONS COMMUNICATE TO OURSELVES

- Emotional reactions can give us important information about a situation. Emotions can be signals or alarms that something is happening.
- Gut feelings can be like intuition—a response to something important about the situation. This can be helpful if our emotions get us to check out the facts.
- **Caution:** Sometimes we treat emotions as if they are facts about the world: The stronger the emotion, the stronger our belief that the emotion is based on fact. (Examples: “If I feel unsure, I am incompetent,” “If I get lonely when left alone, I shouldn’t be left alone,” “If I feel confident about something, it is right,” “If I’m afraid, there must be danger,” “I love him, so he must be OK.”)
- If we assume that our emotions represent facts about the world, we may use them to justify our thoughts or our actions. This can be trouble if our emotions get us to ignore the facts.

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## EMOTION REGULATION HANDOUT 4



(Emotion Regulation Worksheets 3, 16)

### What Makes It Hard to Regulate Your Emotions

#### BIOLOGY

- Biological factors can make emotion regulation harder.

#### LACK OF SKILL

- You don't know what to do to regulate your emotions.

#### REINFORCEMENT OF EMOTIONAL BEHAVIOR

- Your environment reinforces you when you are highly emotional.

#### MOODINESS

- Your current mood controls what you do instead of your Wise Mind.
- You don't really want to put in time and effort to regulate your emotions.

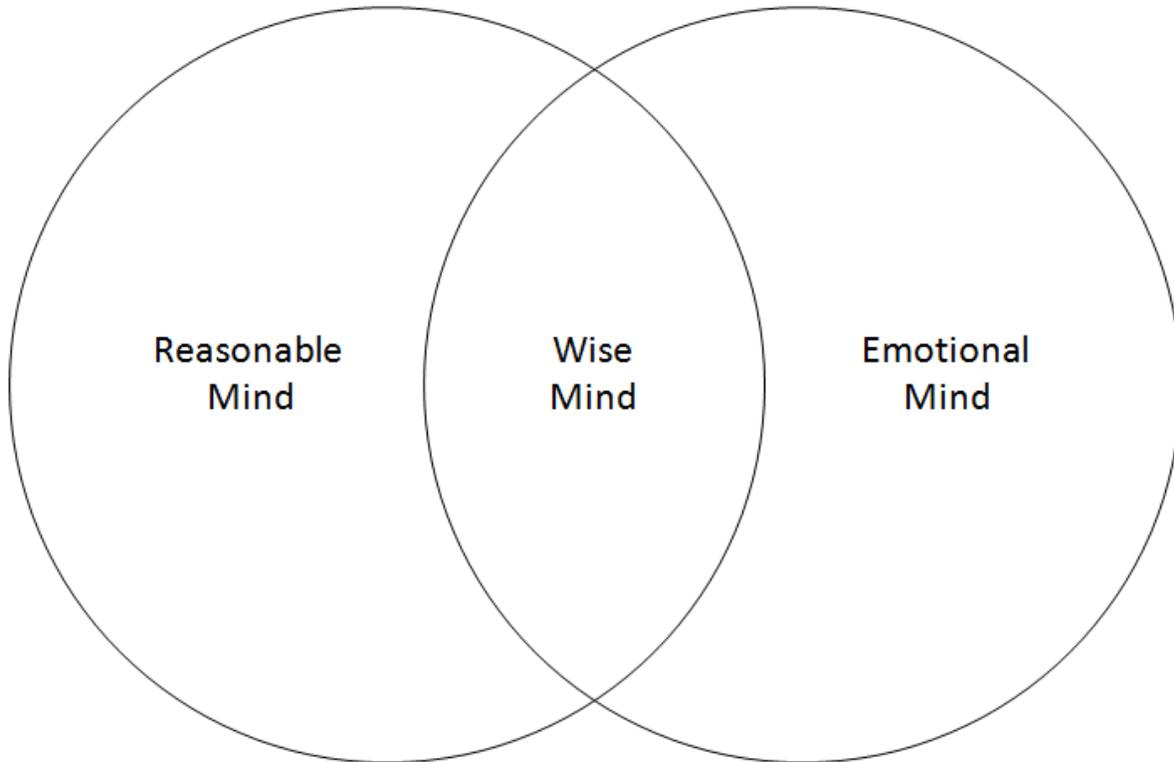
#### EMOTIONAL OVERLOAD

- High emotional arousal causes you to reach a skills breakdown point. You can't follow skills instructions or figure out what to do.

#### EMOTION MYTHS

- Myths (e.g., mistaken beliefs) about emotions get in the way of your ability to regulate emotions.
  - Myths that emotions are bad or weak lead to avoiding emotions.
  - Myths that extreme emotions are necessary or are part of who you are keep you from trying to regulate your emotions.

## States of Mind



**We are going to be talking about three states of mind:**

Reasonable Mind

**Emotional mind**

**WISE MIND**

## Reasonable Mind

**This is your rational, thinking, logical mind.**  
**It is the part of you that plans and evaluates things logically –**  
**it is your “cool” part.**

Reasonable Mind can be very beneficial. This part is engaged when your logical self is in control. It tends to be cool, detached, and analytical. No emotion, *just the facts* sort of approach.

There are many times when it is useful to have your Reasonable Mind in control. For instance, when you need to balance a checkbook, or read a map, you need your Reasonable Mind to be running the show. Without it, people could not build homes, roads, or cities; they could not follow instructions; they could not solve logical problems, do science, or run meetings.

However, there are also times when it would *not* be so useful to be in Reasonable Mind – such as at a wedding, or a celebration. You wouldn't want to spend your entire time at your child's wedding adding up how much it all cost. So, there are times when Reasonable Mind can be useful and really helpful, and other times when it might get in the way.

### Things evaluated by your Reasonable Mind:

- Dates
- Numbers
- Facts
- Participants involved
- Logic
- Past experiences
- Statistics
- Research
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## **Emotional Mind**

**You are in Emotion Mind when your emotions are in control –  
when they influence and control your thinking and your behavior.**

**It is the “hot” part.**

Emotion Mind can be very beneficial. Intense love fills history books as motivation for relationships. Intense devotion or desire motivates staying with very hard tasks, sacrificing oneself for others.

Emotion Mind is when you are having an emotion and feel like you are *in* the emotion and being swept away by it – completely identified with it. When we act from Emotion Mind, things tend to be reactive, fast, and usually not too well thought out. The emotion has got you, driving you, sweeping you along. When you are in Emotion Mind, you feel like you *are* the emotion. There is little separation from it because that is what emotions want to do; they want us to believe in them totally.

Emotion Mind isn't good or bad in itself. There are plenty of times when we might like or even prefer to be in Emotion Mind. But there are also times when being in Emotion Mind isn't such a good thing. For example, Emotion Mind at work doesn't tend to be very useful or appreciated by most of our bosses. Or how about in an argument with your spouse? Or when disciplining your kids?

Emotion Mind can be exacerbated by illness, sleep deprivation, tiredness, drugs, alcohol, hunger, poor nutrition, environmental stressors, and threats.

The take-home message is not that emotions are good or bad, but whether being caught up in them is working for you at the time.

### **Things evaluated by your Emotion Mind:**

- **Emotions**
  - **Feelings**
  - **Stress**
  - \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_

## WISE MIND

**Wise Mind is the integration of emotion mind and reasonable mind.**

**You cannot overcome emotion mind with reasonable mind.**

**Nor can you create emotions with reasonableness.**

**You must go within and integrate the two.**

Wise Mind contains a bit of both the emotion mind and the reasonable mind. For most people it involves a stepping back, slowing down and stopping for a second. For some people it tends to resonate in their stomachs, where one makes a “gut decision.” For others, it is more centered in their heart area, and for some it is in the head.

Wherever it resides, if you are going to make a decision from Wise Mind, you need to check two things: 1) is what you are going to do something that is in your long-term best interest and, 2) is it something that you can emotionally buy into? If there is no emotional buy-in, you probably have reasonable mind, but not Wise Mind.

You can use your Wise Mind for all kinds of things, large and small.

Buying a car?                      Second piece of cake?                      Wake up or snooze x3?

It is *your* Wise Mind, nobody else’s. It is the part of each person that can know and experience truth – it is grasping the whole picture when before only parts were understood. It is almost always quiet; it has a certain peace. It is where you know something in a centered way. Everyone has Wise Mind, some just might not have experienced it much.

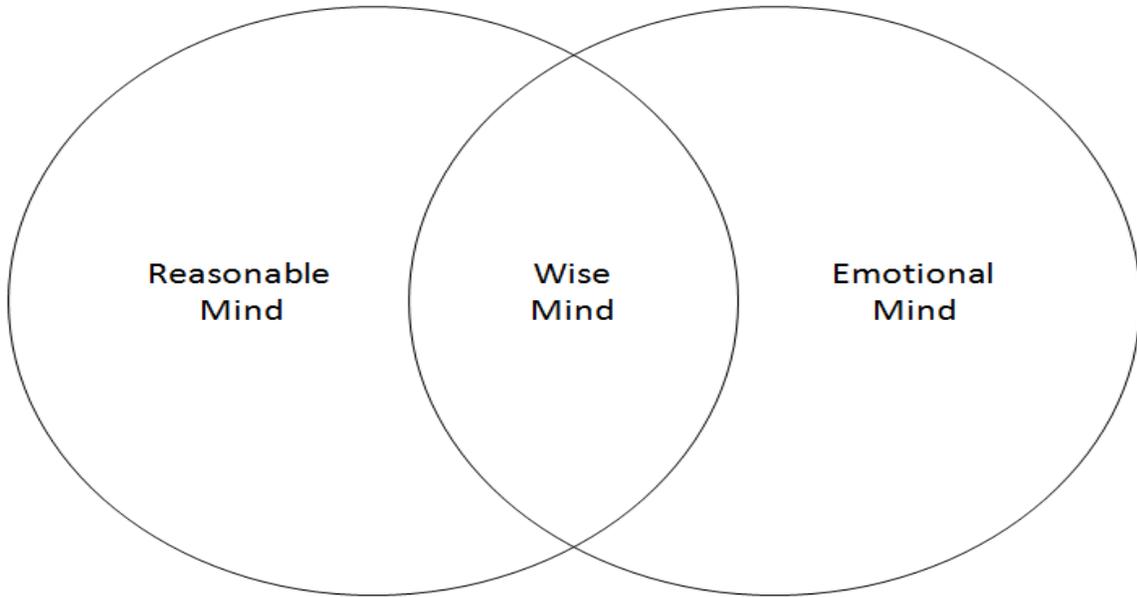
### Qualities of your Wise Mind:

- **Adds a larger perspective**
- **Stopping, slowing down**
- **Long-term best interest**
- **Emotional buy-in**
- **Integrates reason/past experience**
- **Moving inward**
- **It is your own**

### Wise Mind Worksheet

Briefly describe the incident/situation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



What are the facts, in Reasonable Mind terms: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What emotions were you feeling?      What were the thoughts about the emotion?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What does your Emotion Mind want you to do? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What did your Wise Mind tell you to do? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What did you actually do? \_\_\_\_\_