

Fourth installment of Radical Acceptance
March 26, 2021

What Is Radical Acceptance? (And What It Is Not)

“Radical Acceptance rests on letting go of the illusion of control and a willingness to notice and accept things as they are right now, without judging” – *Marsha M. Linehan*

What is one way that we can reduce our suffering while also increasing our sense of personal freedom? One method, developed by Marsha M. Linehan, is through Radical Acceptance. The basic idea behind Radical Acceptance is to view the tough situations that we are currently experiencing, acknowledge the emotions these situations bring up for us in the present moment, and to accept (not deny) those emotions. This can help us make the changes we need to make in our lives.

What it is and what it isn't

Radical Acceptance is a skill taught in Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT). It is a tool that can help you in facing painful emotions and experiences by accepting them fully without judgement. Radical Acceptance is a skill used to reduce unnecessary suffering and increase our ability to navigate through difficult situations. The “radical” part of Radical Acceptance is the full acceptance of reality with your mind, body, and spirit. It is accepting completely and totally that reality is unfolding the way it is.

It is also important to recognize what Radical Acceptance is not. Radical Acceptance is not putting your “stamp of approval” on injustice or a painful event, passively laying down, or throwing your hands up and “giving in.” It is not waving a white flag and surrendering. Instead, Radical Acceptance acknowledges that injustice or a painful situation cannot be changed without full acceptance that the event happened in the first place.

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