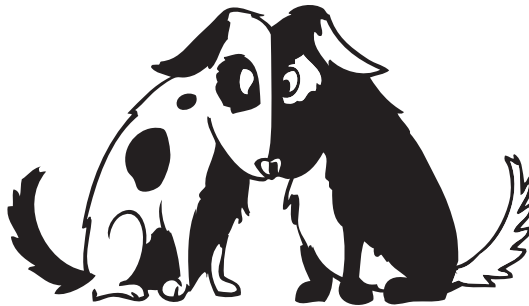


What Is Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)?

- DBT is an effective treatment for people who have difficulty controlling their emotions and behaviors.
- DBT aims to replace problem behaviors with skillful behaviors.
- DBT skills help people experience a range of emotions without necessarily acting on those emotions.
- DBT skills help teens navigate relationships in their environment (family/school/peers).
- DBT helps people create a life worth living.

What Does “Dialectical” Mean?

Dialectical = two opposite ideas can be true at the same time, and when considered together, can create a new truth and a new way of viewing the situation. There is always more than one way to think about a situation.

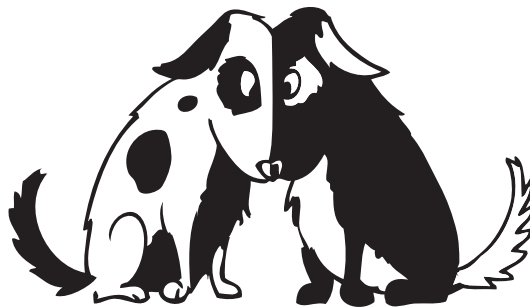


Guidelines for the Adolescent Skills Training Group

1. Information obtained during sessions (including the names of other group members) must remain confidential.
2. People are not to come to sessions under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
3. People are not to discuss any risk behaviors with other group members outside of sessions. Participants do not tempt others to engage in problem behaviors.
4. Group members may not contact one another when in crisis and instead should contact their skills coach or therapist.
5. People may not form private (cliques, dating) relationships with one another while they are in skills training together.
6. People may not act in a mean or disrespectful manner toward other group members or leaders.

DBT Assumptions

1. People are doing the best they can.
2. People want to improve.
3. People need to do better, try harder, and be more motivated to change.
4. People may not have caused all of their own problems and they have to solve them anyway.
5. The lives of emotionally distressed teenagers and their families are painful as they are currently being lived.
6. Teens and families must learn and practice new behaviors in all the different situations in their lives (e.g., home, school, work, neighborhood).
7. There is no absolute truth.
8. Teens and their families cannot fail in DBT.



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DBT Contract

I am familiar with the theory, assumptions and format of DBT Skills Training.

I agree to participate in DBT Skills Training and complete all of the modules.

I will come to group on time with my materials and practice exercises. If I don't do the practice, I agree to do a behavioral analysis (so we understand what got in the way and can problem-solve for next time).

I am fully aware of the attendance policy, and if I exceed the allotted amount of absences, I understand that I will have dropped out of DBT Skills Training. (As a care giver, I am aware that the attendance policy applies to me as well.)

Client Signature _____ Date _____

Skills Trainer Signature _____ Date _____

Goals of Skills Training

Problems to Decrease

1. REDUCED AWARENESS AND FOCUS; CONFUSION ABOUT SELF

(Not always aware of what you are feeling, why you get upset, or what your goals are, and/or have trouble staying focused)

2. EMOTIONAL DYSREGULATION

(Fast, intense mood changes with little control and/or steady negative emotional state; mood-dependent behaviors)

3. IMPULSIVITY

(Acting without thinking it all through; escaping or avoiding emotional experiences)

4. INTERPERSONAL PROBLEMS

(Pattern of difficulty keeping relationships steady, getting what you want, keeping self-respect; loneliness)

5. TEENAGER AND FAMILY CHALLENGES

(Extreme thinking, feeling, and acting; absence of flexibility; difficulty navigating family conflict or effectively influencing others' behaviors)

Behaviors to Increase

1. CORE MINDFULNESS SKILLS

2. EMOTION REGULATION SKILLS

3. DISTRESS TOLERANCE SKILLS

4. INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

5. WALKING THE MIDDLE PATH SKILLS

PERSONAL GOALS:

Behaviors to Decrease

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Behaviors to Increase

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

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Mindfulness: Why Bother?

Being mindful can . . .

1. Give you more choices and more control over your behavior. It helps you slow down and notice emotions, thoughts, and urges (i.e., increases self-awareness), and helps you choose a behavior more thoughtfully, rather than act impulsively and make situations worse.
2. Reduce your emotional suffering and increase your pleasure and sense of well-being.
3. Help you make important decisions (and balance overly emotional or overly logical decisions).
4. Help focus your attention (i.e., be in control of your mind rather than letting your mind be in control of you) and therefore make you more effective and productive.
5. Increase compassion for self and others.
6. Lessen your pain, tension, and stress, and in turn can even improve your health.

Practice, practice, practice

Mindfulness Cheat Sheet

1. Identify what you will focus on:

Examples: Your breath

An object (a picture, burning candle)

An activity (brushing your hair, cleaning your room, reading)

2. Bring your attention to the object of focus.

3. When your attention wanders away from the object of focus (and sometimes it will, so don't judge yourself for it!) . . .

- Notice that this has happened.
- Gently bring your attention back to the object of focus.



To Get Started

Begin practicing mindfulness by noticing your attention and how it wanders. Gradually work on doing this practice for 30 seconds, 1 minute and 2 minutes at a time. Practice *a lot*. No one will know you are doing it!

Your attention may wander to noises around you, worry thoughts, judgmental thoughts such as "this is stupid," body sensations, urges to talk, and so on). Notice them, let them go, and return your attention to the object of focus.