



Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) Group



Northwest Passage is dedicated to restoring hope through innovative mental health services for children and families.



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Change Ahead!



Almost none of the knowledge in this book is original to Northwest Passage. We take this time to recognize and appreciate the very important work of the people who created the base of knowledge to inform the treatment interventions borrowed for this manual. The information shared about Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Dialectical Behavioral Therapy principles are credited to Dr. Aaron Beck and Dr. Marsha Linehan, respectively. The information shared about therapeutic lifestyle choices found in the PassageWay was informed by the work of Dr. Roger Walsh. Finally, some of the teaching tools and worksheets found here have been adapted to the specific work of Northwest Passage by a host of clinicians including: Angela Fredrickson LCSW, Kira Yanko LPC, Lacey Fisk LCSW, Erica Lumley LMFT, Meghan Fischer LPC ATR, Gina Lundervold-Foley LPC, Lisa Courchaine LCSW, Carly Tebo LCSW, and Ethan Halanien LPC-IT.



The PassageWay is an approach to wellness that borrows from the wisdom of the past and combines it with current research about the importance of living a full and mindful lifestyle. Over 40 years of experience has taught us that real, sustainable change occurs when you connect with your community, explore your identity, develop your passions, appreciate time in nature, attend to your relationships, discover effective recreation opportunities, learn healthy nutritional habits, and move your body. While one young person may find solace in fishing, another might yearn for the order therapeutic skills group brings to their life. One individual might grow through service to their elders, while another throws themselves into building strength and stamina through physical activity.

The PassageWay proposes that the journey to building a healthy lifestyle includes the consistent awareness of the use of eight therapeutic lifestyle choices, detailed below:

 NATURE Nature heals. Spending time in nature allows us to re-center and unplug. Sunshine and fresh air can change a mindset.	 RECREATION Action with enjoyment. Finding something to do that we love is important to growth, healing and building a life worth living.	 RELAXATION Relaxation for mindfulness. Practicing relaxation techniques helps us manage distress and promotes healthy habits.
 EXERCISE Healthy bodies and minds. Movement is critical to sustaining positive mental health, as well as physical strength and stamina.	 RELATIONSHIPS Relationships create hope. Relationships with our family, peers, communities and selves are the core of our human experience.	 NUTRITION Nutrition feeds the soul. The fuel we choose for our bodies has a direct effect on our health and emotional well-being.
 SERVICE Help others. Lend a helping hand or spend time with those in need. It feels good to give back to our communities.	 SPIRIT An opportunity to reflect. Contemplating our core beliefs allows us to discover the passion that lights our flame.	

The PassageWay and DBT

DBT skills work well with the PassageWay in that many of the DBT skills incorporate the use of the therapeutic lifestyle choices found in the PassageWay. If you look closely, you will see parts and pieces of Emotion Regulation and Distress Tolerance in the PassageWay learning and activities. Also, using your DBT skills can enhance and expand the benefit you get from living the PassageWay. Using Interpersonal Effectiveness skills and Mindfulness skills can help you gain even more benefits from many of the PassageWay elements.

DBT Group Schedule

One week of Mindfulness

Four weeks of Distress Tolerance

One week of Mindfulness

Four weeks of Interpersonal Effectiveness

One week of Mindfulness

Three weeks of Emotional Regulation

Depending upon your length of stay at Northwest Passage, you may not learn the skills in this order, or cover all skill sets. For continuing education on DBT skills, your clinician or case manager can assist you in finding community based DBT resources upon discharge.



DBT Group Rules

1. Come to group prepared with your binder.
2. Be nice to each other – we want to create a safe environment, no passive aggressive comments about peers.
3. Be truthful.
4. Stay on topic.
5. DBT is an important part of your time in treatment. Participating shows your team you are engaged in treatment.
6. You are expected to share at least one homework assignment each week so when you are writing them, make sure at least one is something you are comfortable sharing! This also means that you must keep at least one homework each week. We recommend keeping it IN your DBT binder.
7. You may have free speech, but you may not be verbally aggressive, swear at a person or use derogatory language that puts another person down.
8. Take care of yourself – take a self time-out if you need one and try to return to group.
9. Verbal or physical abuse steals the peace and safety of the group. It is not accepted in this group.
10. Practice your skills each week by doing your homework sheet. We recommend keeping it in your DBT binder.
11. If you miss group for ANY reason (doctor, visit, anything) it is your responsibility to make up the lesson and still complete your homework sheets. You can ask staff or peers for help learning the skill you missed. You may also write your therapist a note or address the skill in individual therapy.
12. You may engage in a mindless activity, but still show you are actively participating. If it becomes distracting to yourself or the group, you will be asked to stop.
13. DBT is a skills-based group. The priority is to learn and practice skills.

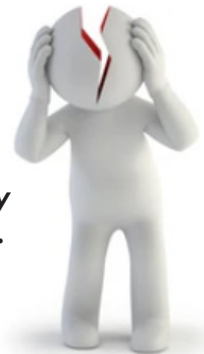


Our DBT Group Rules

In DBT We Acknowledge the Following:



Life is full of unexpected twists and turns.



Your life is painful the way you are currently living it.



Stinky things happen in all of our lives and sometimes we can feel stuck in the stink.



You are out of control when you allow your intense emotions to control your life.



Without effective coping skills, you may puke your emotions out on yourself or others.



You may not have caused all your problems, though you do have to solve them.



All of our relationships and interactions with others can be effective.



You are capable of change and you need to make some changes.



Making changes can be challenging and learning new skills takes a lot of practice.

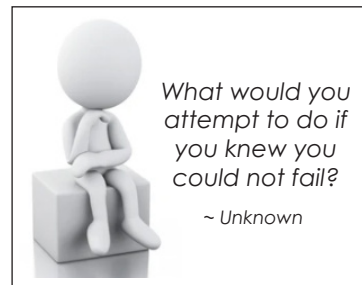


We all make mistakes, you are doing the best you can and you are capable of doing better.



DBT skills are like muscles; the more you use them the stronger they become.

You CANNOT fail in DBT!



Stages and Targets of Treatment in DBT

The most important of the overall goals in DBT is helping the person create a “life worth living”. What makes a life worth living varies from person to person. All people have in common the task of bringing problem behaviors, especially behaviors that could result in death, under control. For this reason, DBT organizes treatment into four stages with targets.



The 4 Stages of DBT:

- Moving from being out of control of one's behavior to being in control.
- Moving from being emotionally shut down to experiencing emotions fully.
- Building an ordinary life, solving ordinary life problems.
- Moving from incompleteness to completeness/connection.

The 4 Targets* of DBT: **Targets refer to the problems being addressed at any given time in therapy.*

Target 1: Reduce and then eliminate life-threatening behaviors (e.g., suicide attempts, suicidal thinking, intentional self-harm).

Target 2: Reduce and then eliminate behaviors that interfere with treatment (e.g., behavior that “burns out” people who try to help, sporadic completion of homework assignments, non-attendance of sessions, non-collaboration with therapists, etc.). This target includes reducing and then eliminating the use of hospitalization as a way to handle crises.

Target 3: Decreasing behaviors that destroy the quality of life (e.g., depression, phobias, eating disorders, non-attendance at work or school, neglect of medical problems, lack of money, substandard housing, lack of friends, etc.) and increasing behaviors that make a life worth living (e.g., going to school or having a satisfying job, having friends, having enough money to live on, living in a decent apartment, not feeling depressed and anxious all the time, etc.).

Target 4:

Learn skills that help people do the following:

- Control their attention, so they stop worrying about the future or obsessing about the past. Also, increase awareness of the “present moment” so they learn more and more about what makes them feel good or feel bad.
- Start new relationships, improve current relationships, or end bad relationships.
- Understand what emotions are, how they function, and how to experience them in a healthy way.
- Tolerate emotional pain without resorting to self-harm or self-destructive behaviors.

The DBT treatment approach strives to validate a person's emotional and behavioral response as understandable and, at the same time, show them as dysfunctional, ineffective, and in need of change.



An Introduction to Dialectics and DBT

“Dialectical” means that *two ideas can be true at the same time*:

- There is more than one true way to see any situation.
- There is more than one true opinion or idea.
- Things that appear to be alike or opposites can *both* be true.
- All people have something unique, different, and worthy to teach us.

A life worth living has both comfortable and uncomfortable aspects:

Happiness *AND* Sadness

Anger *AND* Peace

Hopefulness *AND* Discouragement

All points of view have both *TRUE* and *FALSE* within them:

You are right *AND* the other person is right

You are doing the best you can *AND* you need to make changes

You can take care of yourself *AND* you need help and support from others



Being dialectical means...

- Letting go of anger that people don't think like you.
- Letting go of “black and white” and “all or nothing” thinking.
- Looking for what is “left out” of your understanding of a situation.
- Expanding your way of seeing things.
- Finding a way to validate the other person's point of view or experience.
- Getting “unstuck” from standoffs and conflicts.
- Being more flexible and approachable.
- Avoiding assumptions and blaming.

DBT is a type of therapy that helps us learn how to:

- Regulate our emotions so it no longer feels as if our emotions run our lives.
- Stop hurting ourselves and our relationships.
- Stop avoiding uncomfortable emotions or situations.
- Get through tough situations without doing something that is going to make it worse.
- Develop healthier relationships and repair damaged relationships.
- Assert ourselves while maintaining and/or increasing our self-respect.
- Lead a more balanced and self-regulated life.

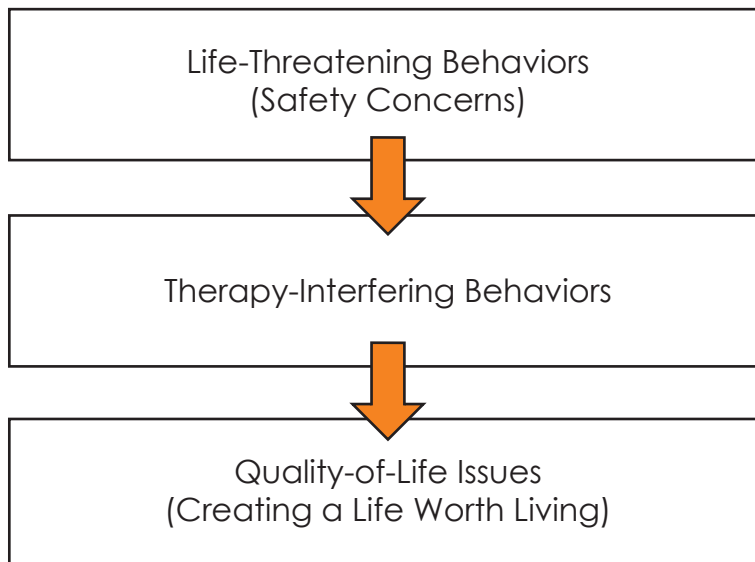
In DBT group, we believe that:

- There is no absolute truth.
- We are all doing the best that we can and we want to do better.
- We *ALL* experience pain, though remaining *STUCK* or *SUFFERING* are choices.
- We are capable of learning new behaviors and we must learn them.
- We can choose to take things in a well meaning way rather than assuming the worst.
- DBT can help us **Do Better Today** as long as we are *WILLING* to try!

To avoid chasing COWs (*Crisis of the Week*), DBT has been designed to:

- Enhance and maintain the person's motivation to change.
- Enhance the person's capabilities.
- Ensure the person's new capabilities are generalized to all relevant environments.

DBT adheres to the following hierarchy of interventions:



Guidelines for Dialectical Thinking

Move away from “Either – Or” thinking and move towards “Both – And” thinking.

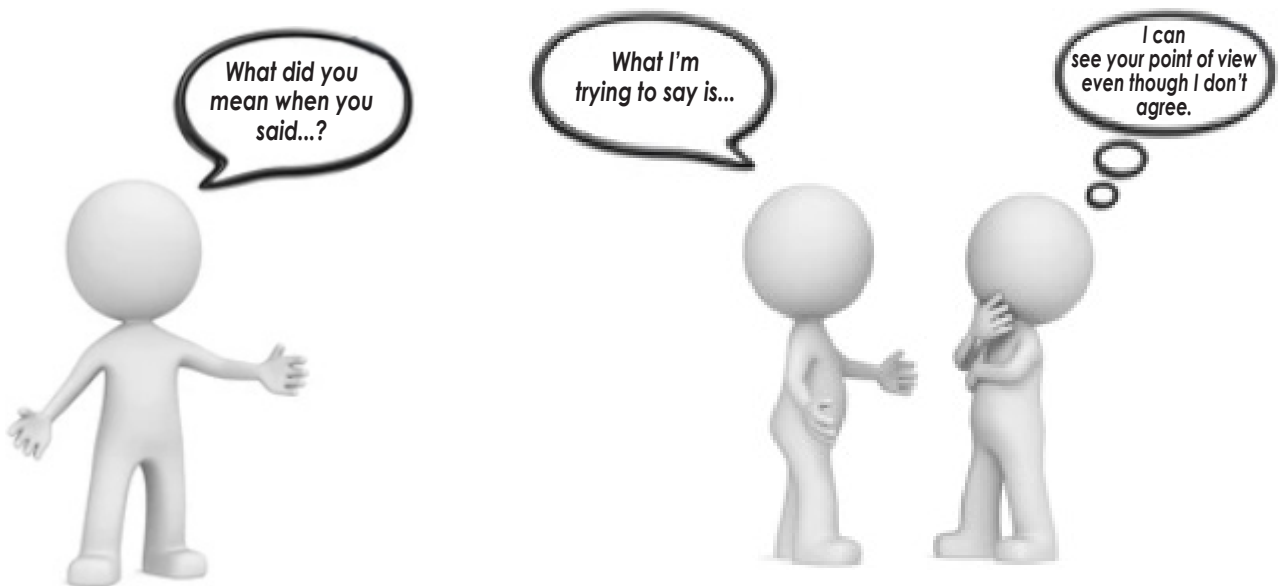
Avoid extreme and judgmental words or phrases such as: *Always, Never, Every Time.*

Instead of saying “Everyone always treats me unfairly”; say “Sometimes I feel that I am treated unfairly AND at other times I feel that I am treated fairly.”

Use “I feel...” statements instead of “You are...” statements.

Practice looking at ALL sides of a given situation/points of view by actively seeking out the “kernel of truth” in every side.

Accept that different options can be legitimate, even if you do not agree with them.



DON'T assume that you know what others are thinking OR expect others to know what you are thinking.



DO seek clarity and ask questions if needed.

An Introduction to Validation

Validation – Acknowledging how someone else feels, thinks, believes, and experiences their reality is
REAL, IMPORTANT, and UNDERSTANDABLE.

Telling someone that you “GET” what they feel or think under the current conditions.

Self-Validation – Acknowledging to yourself that what you feel is
REAL, IMPORTANT, and UNDERSTANDABLE.

Letting yourself know that what you feel is real, even when others don’t understand.

Validation can be confusing and tricky so here is an explanation of what it is and what it is not:

- ✓ It is acknowledging and understanding the other person's situation and emotions.
- ✓ It is keeping the focus on the other person; don't start telling your own story.
- ✓ Encouragement can be balanced with validation.
- ! Encouragement can feel condescending if the person's emotions and perspective are not validated.
- ! Remember, even if you think their situation is not a big deal, it may feel like a big deal to them.
- ! You can validate someone and still disagree with them or want something to change.
- ✗ It is not problem-solving, fixing, offering solutions, or giving advice.
- ✗ It is not taking on another's distress or personalizing the situation.
- ✗ It is not just cheer-leading or encouragement.
- ✗ It is not “looking on the bright side”, comparing, or putting the situation into perspective.
- ✗ It is not agreeing, giving in, and letting someone do whatever they want or treat you poorly.

VALIDATION 





Understanding How the Skill Sets Fit Together

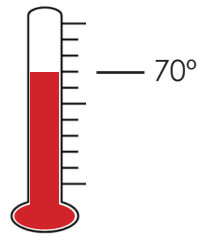
There are four skills modules all together – two emphasize change and two emphasize acceptance. For example, it is extremely important that people who self-harm learn to accept the experience of pain instead of turning to self-destructive behavior to solve their problems. Likewise, people who cut themselves, binge and purge, abuse alcohol and drugs, dissociate, etc., must learn to simply “be with” reality, as painful as it may be at any given moment, in order to learn that they “can stand it.” DBT teaches a host of skills so that people can learn to stand still instead of running away. DBT also teaches people how to work to understand why their lives are so hard.



The Key to Learning and Using DBT Skills

The method to gaining competence with the DBT skills is relatively simple: you need to practice them. The more you practice the skills, the closer you come to effectively managing your emotions, behaviors, and relationships. DBT skills will not solve your problems or make your circumstances change. They will help you tolerate your pain and learn to cope with it more effectively. Through the process of practice, reinforcement, and coaching by a skilled therapist, the DBT skills can lead to a life worth living. They can also lead to a more fulfilled life; that takes a bit more time.

DBT Key



Emotional
Thermometer

EMOTIONAL REGULATION

PLEASE Master
Increasing Pleasurable Activities
Opposite Action

MINDFULNESS

Wise Mind
Reality Acceptance
One-Mindfully

CHANGE

ACCEPTANCE

ICE

MAD

SELF-REGULATION

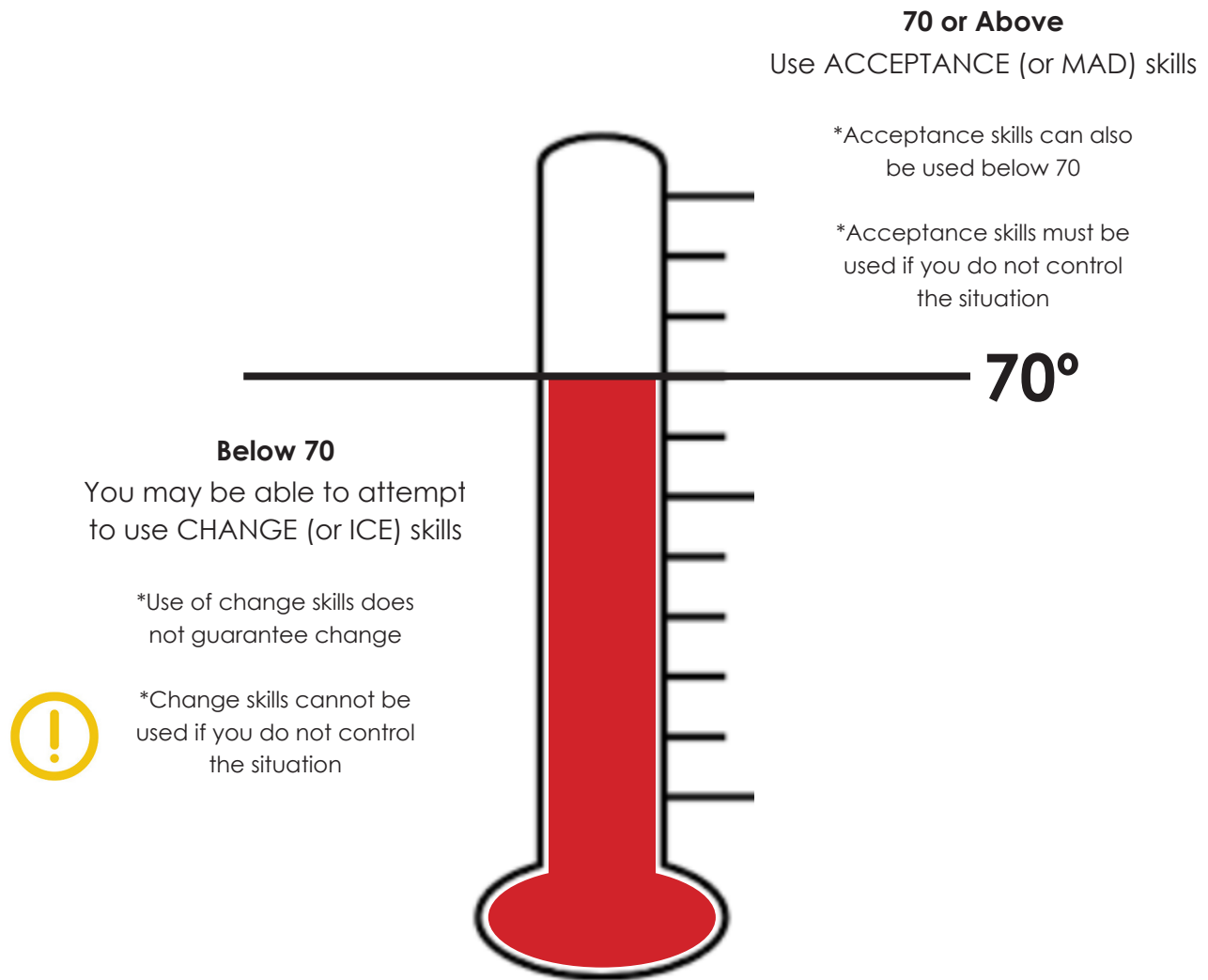
INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

DEAR MAN
GIVE
FAST

DISTRESS TOLERANCE

ACCEPTS
IMPROVE
5 Senses

Emotional Thermometer

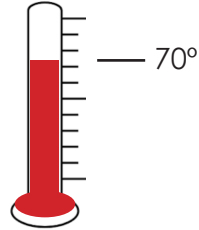


It is important to be aware of your own emotions and where you are on your emotional thermometer. It is also important to be aware of where other(s) might be on their emotional thermometer.

If your emotions are running high, it is likely that you may be ineffective in the situation and/or you may damage relationships and ACCEPTANCE skills should be used. If you are calm enough, however, then you can use CHANGE skills!

ALL emotions, not only negative, distressing, or uncomfortable emotions, can be experienced above 70 and make us more likely to be ineffective.

Emotional Thermometer



Identify an emotion:

What level was the emotion on the thermometer?

Describe the behavior evidence and/or signs of the emotional intensity:

How did you manage the emotion?

Core Mindfulness Skills



This skill set is termed “Core” Mindfulness because they form the basis from which all the other skills are possible. The goal of mindfulness is to become present and fully experience the moment you are in. It is about letting go of worry about the future and regrets about the past and living in the present moment completely. We can learn from the past and plan for the future, but the only time we can do anything is right now.

What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is about keeping your awareness in the current moment – most of the time, it is about being present and aware in your life today. Mindfulness would say that the past is the past and the future isn't here yet.



What has happened in the past has already happened. It can't be changed. It is possible to learn from the past, reflect on the past, and remember the past.

Since the future hasn't happened yet, worrying about what is to come is ineffective. Yet, it can be effective to plan and prepare for the future.

Being in the past or future either mindfully or intentionally is optimal. If you live your life mindlessly in the past or the future, you can miss out on really important things happening right now. You may end up regretting it later.

Mindfulness would say: If you are going to spend time and energy focusing on the past or future – do it intentionally and with full awareness. However, spend most of your time in the present moment, in the here and now, in today. This allows you to fully experience your life as it is happening, rather than what it was or what it might be.



*Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery.
Today is a gift, that is why we call it the present.*

~ Unknown

Mindfulness – WHAT

“What” do we do to practice and “How” do we do it? Here are the “What” skills that will tap into your wise mind. Sometimes the trip is short and easy, and other times it takes a while.

The “What” Skills

Observe – Just notice. Use your senses to notice things around you. Do not put labels on things. Do not judge things, simply notice. Take in your surroundings through your five senses. See the sights, smell the smells, notice the emotions and thoughts, hear sounds, taste what is there, get in touch with your body. Watch your thoughts coming and going, notice each feeling, see each thing you are doing.

- Simply notice the experience – Do not react to it
- Let experiences, feelings, and thoughts come to your mind and slip right out
- Be like a guard at a palace gate – ALERT to every thought, feeling, and action



Describe – Begin to put words on things. Use words to describe your environment, your thoughts, and your feelings. Simply describe in observational terms how things look, how your body feels, what thoughts you are having. Put words on the experience – when a feeling or thought arises, acknowledge it.

In your mind you might say to yourself:

- “I’m having the thought that I’m overwhelmed”
- “I can feel my stomach muscles tightening”
- “The thought ‘I can’t do this’ has come into my mind”

Participate – Enter your own experiences. Become “one” with what you are doing. Do what is needed, nothing more, nothing less. Become part of the dance, not fighting reality, but rather participating in it. Allow yourself to be fully aware and engaged in the moment and let go of your worrying.

- Actively practice your skills as you learn them until they become natural, when you use them without thinking about it.
- Practice changing harmful situations, changing your harmful reactions to situations, accepting yourself and the situations as they are.

Use these skills intentionally when doing daily activities. Brush your teeth this way, exercise this way. Then, use these skills with something new. Change your routine subtly. Do a different form of exercise. Observe the difference. Describe the differences.

Mindfulness – HOW

“What” do we do to practice and “How” do we do it? Here are the “How” skills that will tap into your wise mind. Sometimes the trip is short and easy, and other times it takes a while.

The “How” Skills

Non-judgmentally – Do not judge. Look at things just as they are. Accept the moment as it is. Accept the helpful and the unhelpful. Acknowledge what is without judging “bad” or “good” or any interpretation. When you judge, just notice it. This takes practice, practice, and more practice.

- See but DON'T EVALUATE – just the facts, focus on the “what”
- Let go of “good, bad, terrible, wonderful, should, or should not”
- Accept each moment – be like a blanket spread out on the lawn accepting both rain and sun, leaves and bugs
- When you find yourself judging, DON'T JUDGE YOUR JUDGMENT

One-Mindfully – Do only one thing in the moment. Do something completely. When your mind drifts, because it will, gently return your mind to the one thing you are doing.

- Do one thing at a time – when you are eating, eat and when you are walking, walk
- Focus your attention on the very moment you are in
- When other actions, thoughts or feelings distract you – let go of the distraction and go back to what you were doing – again, and again, and again

Effectively – Focus on what works. Is it more important to be right or effective? Keep an eye glancing at your objectives, and do things effectively in reaching those goals. Let go of useless anger that keeps you stuck and uses up your energy. Focus on what works – do what needs to be done in each situation and stay away from “fair, unfair, right, wrong, should, and should not.” Focus on the situation that you are in; not the one you wish you were in, or the one that may be more comfortable for you.

- Play by the rules
- Act as skillfully as you can, meeting the needs of the situation
- Let go of vengeance, anger, and righteousness that hurts you and may be ineffective

There is no failure in using these skills. There is simply practice. When we practice, we are not expected to be perfect. When we use skills, we are practicing them.

Mindfulness – How & What



Check off one mindfulness skill that you practiced today (try to use a different one each day):



- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Observing | ☐ Non-judgmentally |
| ☐ Describing | ☐ One-mindfully |
| ☐ Participating | ☐ Effectively |

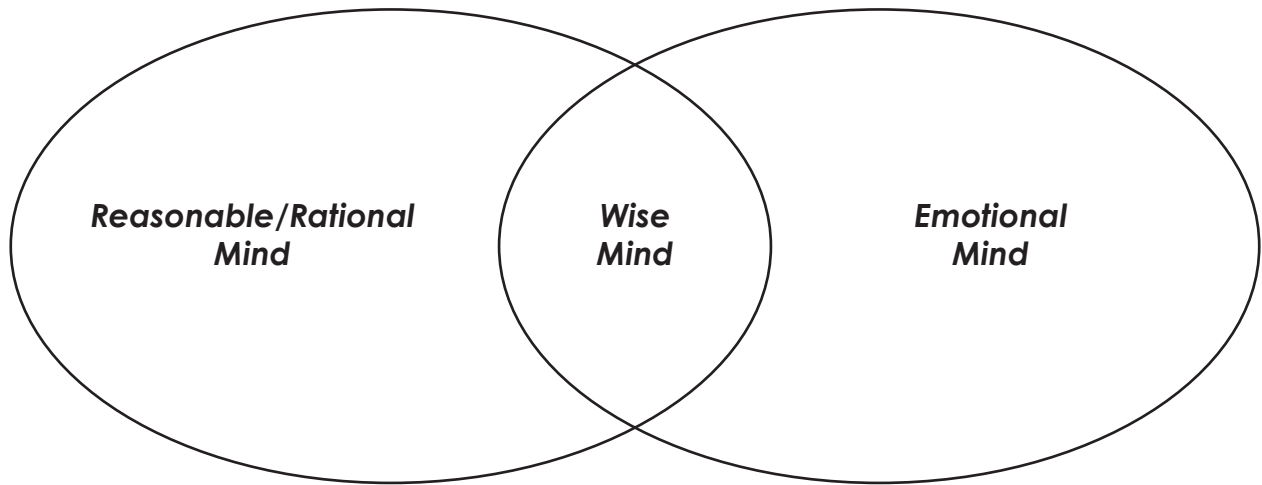
Describe that situation and how you specifically practiced the skill:

How did practicing this one piece of mindfulness help you become more aware of the present moment?

What was it like for you to practice this skill? What was your experience?



Mindfulness – Wise Mind



This skill is about balancing thinking and feeling. DBT recognizes that we are more effective in our lives when we experience both thinking and feeling in our lives.

An example of this is from Harry Potter. Hermione is very thoughtful (*Reasonable Mind*) and Ron is emotional (*Emotional Mind*). Harry uses his best friends to make sense of what is happening and decide how he should respond (*Wise Mind*).

Sometimes it is okay to be entirely in emotional mind or rational mind, although when we are in wise mind, we are more likely to be balanced. When we are balanced, we are more likely to make our healthiest decisions. Ideally, we vacation in emotional or rational mind and live in wise mind.



Mindfulness – Wise Mind

Rational Mind + Emotional Mind = Wise Mind

Reasonable/Rational Mind

Is all about facts, rules, logic, and plans

*Cool & Calm
Task-Driven*

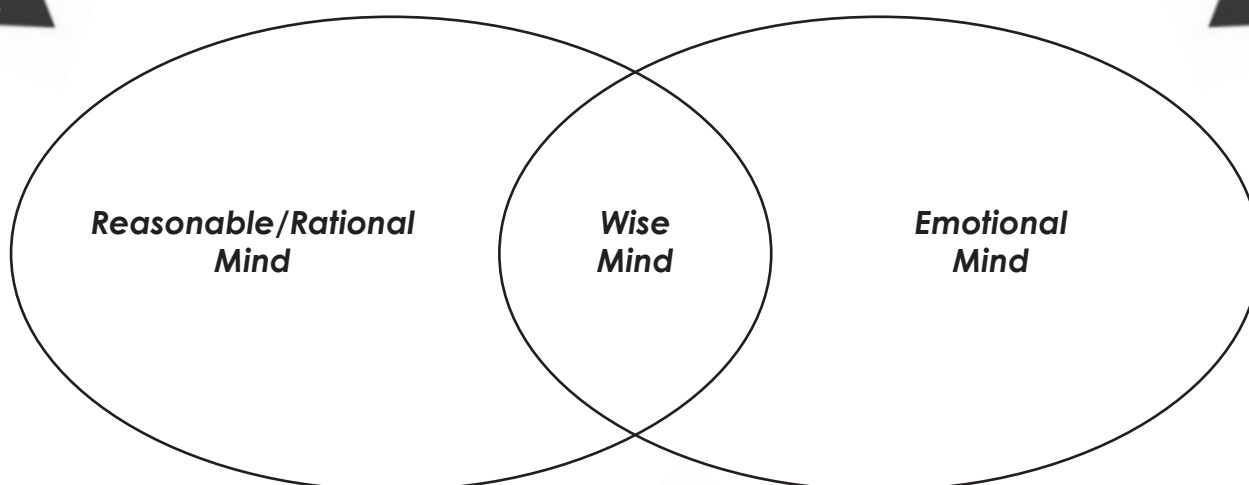
*It may be easier to think clearly and to
solve problems*

Emotional Mind

Is all about the current emotional state, urges, and impulses

*Hot & Passionate
Emotion-Driven*

It can feel out-of-control

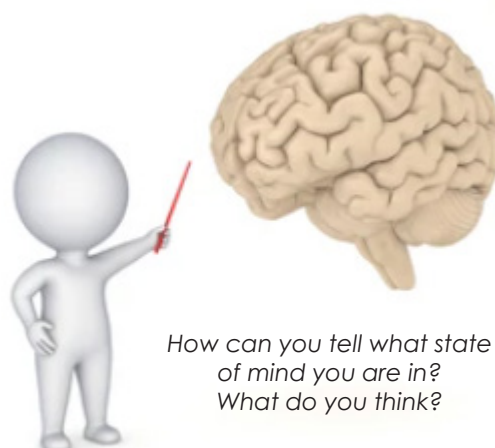


Wise Mind

Combines both the emotional mind and reasonable mind

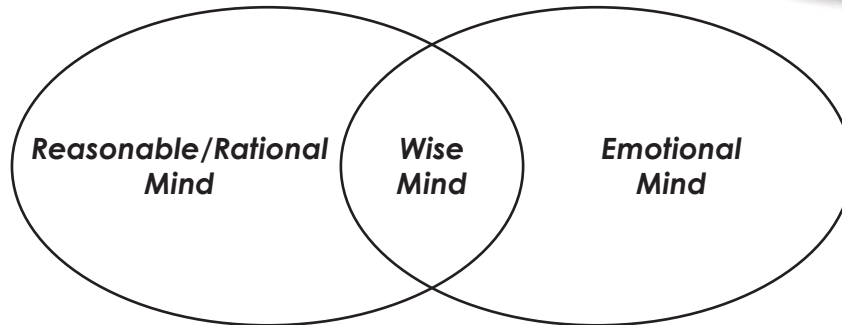
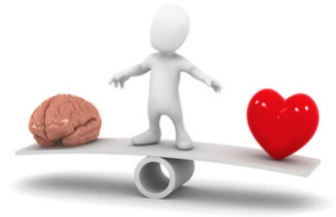
Balanced & Healthy

*When we are in wise mind, we are most
likely to make the most effective choices*



*How can you tell what state
of mind you are in?
What do you think?*

Mindfulness – Wise Mind



Example: *I want to go to the movies with friends, but I have a test tomorrow.*
Emotional Mind says, "Screw the test; hang out with friends, YOLO!"
Reasonable Mind says, "Study for the test, you need good grades for a good future."
Wise Mind says, "Study for the test now, go to the movies this weekend with friends."

Describe a situation that happened today in which you had the opportunity to practice Wise Mind:

What did your Emotional Mind say?

What did your Rational Mind say?

What did your Wise Mind say?

What did you follow?

What was the outcome?

Mindfulness – Reality Acceptance

Pain is a Part of Life; Suffering is a Choice

Radical Acceptance – Identifying what you have control over and what you don't have control over. There are many things in life that are out of your control, including people and the environment. What you do have control over is yourself. You can control your thinking, feelings, impulses, and behaviors.

Radical Acceptance is about being skillful in letting go of things you can't control in order to focus your energy on what you can control: YOURSELF!

It is empowering and life enhancing. It is not approval or giving up. It doesn't mean that you have to like what is happening. It is accepting reality as it is. Then you can focus on being who you need to be and acting how you need to act to be as effective as possible.

Turning the Mind – Choosing to accept. Acceptance requires a choice – you have to turn your mind in the direction of acceptance. Acceptance sometimes only lasts a moment so you have to keep turning your mind to the choice over and over and over. The choice has to be made daily and, sometimes, many times a day.

Willingness – Is accepting what is and responding to what is in an effective manner. It means doing what works. It is doing just what is needed in the current situation or moment.

Willfulness – Is imposing your will on reality – trying to fix everything or refusing to do what is needed. It is the opposite of doing what works.

The Difference Between WILLINGNESS and WILLFULNESS:

Life is like hitting baseballs from a pitching machine. A person's job is just to do their best to hit each ball as it comes. Refusing to accept that a ball is coming does not make it stop coming. Willpower, defiance, crying, or whimpering does not make the machine stop pitching the balls; they keep coming over and over and over. A person can be WILLFUL and just stand in the way of a ball and get hit, be WILLFULL and stand there and do nothing and let the ball go by as a strike, or be WILLING and swing at the ball – doing what needs to be done.



Mindfulness – Reality Acceptance



Radical Acceptance

Describe a situation that you were working to Radically Accept:

Describe specifically how you were WILLINGLY accepting. (How did you act?):

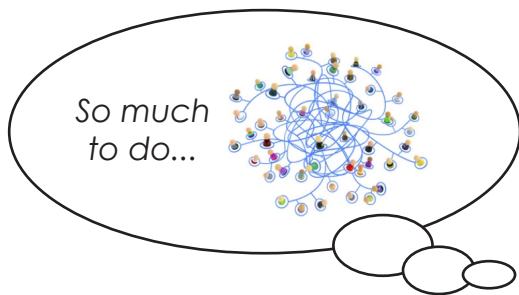
Describe specifically how you were being WILLFULL. (How did you act?):

How did (or could) being WILLING help you be more effective?

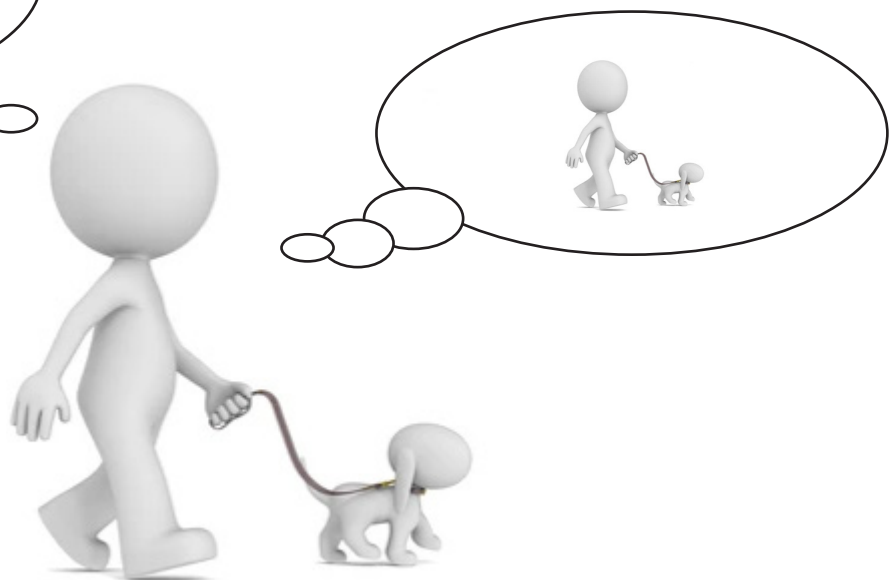
*Only you can
turn your mind*



One-Mindfully



Mind Full vs. Mindful



Mindfulness is paying attention in a particular way; on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally.
~ Jon Kabat-Zinn

*BRINGING MINDFULNESS INTO MY
DAY IS EASY. ALL I HAVE TO DO IS WATCH
MYSELF BREATHE IN & BREATHE OUT.
TO BE PRESENT IN WHAT I
DO-TO TASTE & SAVOR WHEN I EAT,
TO SEE WHAT I LOOK AT & TO HEAR
THE NOISES* THAT SURROUND ME. ALL
I NEED TO DO IS LET GO. I AM WHAT I AM AND IT
IS WHAT IT IS. TO RELEASE
EVERYTHING THAT IS NOT ME SO I
AM AT ONE WITH THE *MOMENT... ONE
MOMENT* AT A *TIME, ONE
DAY AT A TIME... EACH DAY... EVERY DAY...*

Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills



We must interact with others in order to survive. Relationships can provide fulfillment and pain. Thus, we need to have skills that help us navigate our relationships more effectively. All of us must be taught how to interact with others in order to do it well. Many people are not taught these things growing up and have to stumble through relationships on a trial-and-error basis to figure out what works and what doesn't. If you cannot figure it out on your own, then you are left wondering what other people have and how you can get it. Here are some concrete skills that can help you achieve your relational goals, start and maintain relationships, and create or maintain self-respect. As with all the skills, the steps sometimes appear simple, but they can be challenging to put into practice.

Interpersonal Effectiveness



Goals of Interpersonal Effectiveness

Objective Effectiveness: Getting your objective or GOALS met in any given situation

Getting your needs met

Getting someone to do or change something

Refusing an unwanted or unreasonable request

Resolving an interpersonal conflict

Getting your opinion or point of view taken seriously

Relationship Effectiveness: Getting or keeping a good relationship

Acting in a way that the other person keeps liking or respecting you

Balancing immediate goals with the good of the long-term relationship

Self-Respect Effectiveness: Keeping or improving self-respect and liking yourself

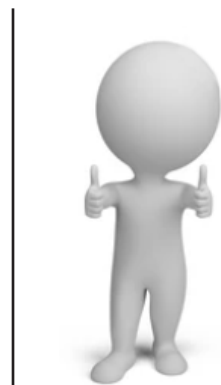
Respecting your own values and beliefs; acting in a way that makes you feel moral

Acting in a way that makes you feel capable and effective

Self-Respect Effectiveness

For me to have positive thoughts and feelings about myself and my message.

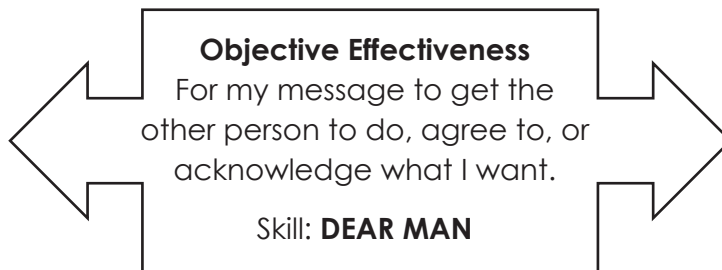
Skill: **FAST**



Objective Effectiveness

For my message to get the other person to do, agree to, or acknowledge what I want.

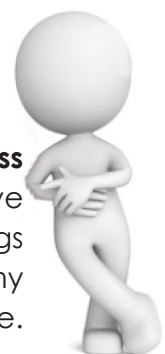
Skill: **DEAR MAN**



Relationship Effectiveness

For the other person to have positive thoughts and feelings about our relationship, my message, and me.

Skill: **GIVE**



Interpersonal Effectiveness

Things That Make Us Less Effective Interpersonally

Lack of Skill – You actually just don't know what to say or how to act or what will work.

Worry Thoughts – These get in the way of your ability to act effectively. You have the ability, but your worry thoughts interfere with doing or saying what you want.

*Worry about bad
consequences*

*Worry about whether
you deserve to get
what you want*

*Worry about not being
effective and calling
yourself names*



Emotions – Your emotions get in the way of your ability to act effectively. You have the ability, but your emotions make you unable to do or say what you want. Emotions, instead of skill, control what you say or do.

Indecision – You can't decide what to do or what you really want. You have the ability, but your indecision gets in the way of doing or saying what you want. You can't figure out how to balance asking for too much versus not asking for anything, or saying no to everything versus giving in to everything.

Environment – Characteristics of the environment make it impossible for even a very skilled person to be effective. Other people may seem too powerful. Other people may be threatened and have some reason to not like you if you get what you want. Other people may not give you what you need or let you say no without punishing you unless you sacrifice your self-respect.

Interpersonal Effectiveness - DEAR MAN

Increasing the Likelihood of Getting What You Want

Describe
Express
Assert
Reinforce
(Stay) Mindful
Appear Confident
Negotiate



DANGER! Proceed with caution:

Though this skill promotes effective communication, a DEAR MAN does NOT guarantee that you will get what you want. Also, if done improperly or aggressively, it can damage the relationship or your self-respect.

- Describe** Describe the current situation
Tell the person exactly what you are reacting to
Stick to the facts – no opinions
- Express** Tell them your feelings and opinions about the situation
Don't assume they can read your mind
- Assert** Ask for what you want or say no clearly
Assume that others will not figure out what you want unless you ask
- Reinforce** Explain the consequences (both positive and negative)
Tell the person the good things that will happen if they comply with your request
Tell the person the negative effects of not complying
- Mindful** Keep your focus ON YOUR OBJECTIVES
Broken record: Keep asking, saying no, or expressing your opinion over and over
Ignore: If the other person attacks or tries to change the subject, ignore it and keep making your point
- Appear Confident** Use a confident and respectful tone of voice and physical manner
Good eye contact
- Negotiate** Be willing to give to get
Offer and ask for alternative solutions to the problem
Focus on what will work
Turn the tables: Turn the problem over to the other person
Ask, "What do you think we should do?" or "How can we solve this problem?"



Check yourself before you wreck yourself!

Be aware of each person's emotional thermometer (yours and theirs). If anyone is above 70, change skills cannot be used.

Your DEAR MAN Bill of Rights

Core concept – We all have DEAR MAN rights that we work to exercise with responsibility.

Review the bill of rights below. Refer to it to encourage yourself to use DEAR MAN. Also, remember that rights require responsibility, so use DEAR MAN mindfully and effectively.
Choose your “DEAR MAN” moments wisely.

- I have the right to be treated with respect.
- I have the right to my own opinions.
- I have the right to express my feelings.
- I have the right to stand up for my values.
- I have the right to disagree with others.
- I have the right to understand a request before agreeing to it.
- I have the right to ask for information.
- I have the right to take time to think about a request.
- I have the right to say no without guilt.
- I have the right to ask for my wants and needs.
- I have the right to set healthy boundaries with others.
- I have the right to be in *Wise Mind* before I get into a discussion.
- I have the right to disengage from a conflict.
- I have other rights related to my needs and wants.



AND these rights apply to the other people as well...

Interpersonal Effectiveness - DEAR MAN

How to Tell if it's Right to Do a DEAR MAN?

Just because you want to do a DEAR MAN and confront someone, doesn't mean that it is the best thing to do! But how do you tell when it is the best time and how strongly to confront the other person??? Follow these questions as a guide:

- 1. Priorities** – What are my priorities in this situation?
 - Are my objectives very important? (increase intensity)
 - Is my relationship weak? (reduce intensity)
 - Is my self-respect on the line? (increase intensity)
- 2. Capability** – Is the person capable of giving me what I want? If yes, ask more strongly.
- 3. Timeliness** – Is this a good time to ask?
- 4. Homework** – Have I done my homework? Do I know all the facts to support my request?
- 5. Authority** – Am I responsible for this situation? Does the person have authority over me?
- 6. Rights** – Is the person required by law or morality to give me what I want? Am I required to give them what they want?
- 7. Relationship** – Is the request appropriate to our relationship?
- 8. Reciprocity** – What have you done for me lately? What have I done for you?
- 9. Long versus short-term** – Will being assertive or acquiescing to the request help or hurt my long term goals? What about my short-term ones?
- 10. Respect** – Do I usually do things for myself? Am I careful to avoid asking for help or seeming helpless when I can?



- 6 yeses** – Ask firmly, insist
- 5 yeses** – Ask firmly, resist No
- 4 yeses** – Ask firmly, accept No
- 3 yeses** – Ask gently, accept No
- 2 yeses** – Hint openly, take No
- 1 yeses** – Hint indirectly, take No
- 0 yeses** – Don't ask, don't hint

Interpersonal Effectiveness - DEAR MAN

How to Tell If It's Right to Do a DEAR MAN



1. Is the person capable of giving me what I want? How?
2. Is this a good time to ask? Why or why not?
3. Have I done my homework? Do the facts support a DEAR MAN?
4. Am I responsible for the situation? Do I have authority over the person?
Why or why not?
5. Is the person required by law or morals to give me what I want? How so?
6. Is the request appropriate for the relationship?
7. Am I giving at least as much as I am asking for?
8. If I stop asking now, will it just cause more problems later? OR will asking now cause more problems?
9. Is it necessary for this person to do this for me because I can't do it for myself?



Interpersonal Effectiveness - DEAR MAN



Increasing the Likelihood of Getting What You Want

Describe the situation – tell the other person what you are reacting to:

Express your feelings:

Assert your needs – What do you want them to do, or what do you want to be different?

Reinforce what will happen if they do or do not give you what you are asking:

Stay **Mindful** – Be a broken record, keep asking; If they attack or threaten, ignore it and keep being a broken record. How were you mindful?

Appear Confident – How did you do this? Remember your tone of voice and body language:

Negotiate – Be willing to GIVE to GET – offer other solutions to get what you want. How did you negotiate?



Though this skill promotes effective communication, a DEAR MAN does NOT guarantee that you will get what you want. Also, if done improperly or aggressively, it can damage the relationship or your self-respect.

Interpersonal Effectiveness - DEAR MAN



Increasing the Likelihood of Getting What You Want

Describe the situation

Express emotions

Ask for what you want

Reward what will happen if they do what you ask

(Stay) Mindful

Appear Confident

Negotiate

Think about something you asked for today.

Describe why you wanted it:

What were your **emotions**?

What did you say to **ask** for what you wanted:

What did you say to **reward** the person you asked?

Interpersonal Effectiveness - DEAR MAN



Increasing the Likelihood of Getting What You Want

Describe the situation

Express emotions

Ask for what you want

Reward what will happen if they do what you ask

(Stay) Mindful

Appear Confident

Negotiate

Think about something you asked for today.

What did you want?

Who did you ask?

Could that person give you what you wanted? Yes No

When did you ask?

Was it the right time to ask? Yes No

Did you get what you asked for? Yes No

Interpersonal Effectiveness - GIVE

Save the Relationship



(be) Gentle

(act) Interested

Validate

(use an) Easy manner

(be) Gentle

Be courteous and kind.
No attacks verbally or physically, no clinching your fists or jaw.
No threats or manipulative statements like "I'll kill myself if you..."
Stay in the conversation, even if it's painful.
No judging – don't say "if you were a good person you would..."
Avoid should – don't say "you should or shouldn't."

(act) Interested

Listen and be interested in the other person and their point of view.
Don't interrupt or talk over them.
Be respectful of the other person's desire to have the conversation at a later time.

Validate

Validate or acknowledge the other person's feelings.
Use nonjudgmental statements, like "I can understand how you feel, and..."

(use an) Easy manner

Use a little humor, smile and be light-hearted.



Interpersonal Effectiveness - GIVE

What Is Validation and How Do I Use It?

Validation is acknowledging that how someone else feels, thinks, believes, and experiences their reality is

REAL, IMPORTANT, and UNDERSTANDABLE

Self-Validation is acknowledging to yourself that what you feel is real, important, and understandable.

VALIDATION  **AGREEMENT**

VALIDATION 



Validation does not necessarily mean that you like or agree with what the other person is doing, saying, or feeling. It just means that you understand where the other person is coming from.



Why Validate? It improves relationships!

It can demonstrate that:

We are listening

We understand

We are being nonjudgmental

We care about the relationship

Conflict is possible with less intensity

Validation Practice

A peer has been struggling to follow the rules lately and is frustrated with the consequences. He asks you to lie for him so that he can stay out of trouble.

- a) You immediately go to staff and tell on them.
- b) You try to avoid them. When they approach you, you make an excuse not to talk to them.
- c) You say, "You're really worried about being in trouble, I understand that, but I can't lie and get into trouble too."
- d) You say, "You want me to tell staff that you didn't do it?"

Using Validation

Validation is a complicated skill.

Use the acronym **VALIDATE** to remember the building blocks:

Value Others: Seeking the inherent value in others is essential to validation. Adopt an attitude of acceptance toward others. Demonstrate your caring and concern, and let others know they are important to you.

Ask Questions: We ask questions to help clarify others' experience. Ask specific questions about what others are feeling. Ask about thoughts and beliefs. Be genuinely curious about what is behind behaviors. Use questions to draw out others' experience.

Listen and Reflect: Listen to others' answers to your questions and reflect back the major themes. Invite others to confirm your understanding (or lack of understanding). Continue to question, listen, and reflect for clarity.

Identify with Others: Work to see the world through the eyes of others. How do relationships and the world make sense to them? Seek to understand others, identifying when you can and accepting differences when you cannot.

Discuss Emotions: Talk about others' feelings and how they affect them from *their* perspective (not how it affects you). Acknowledging the impact of others' experience on them demonstrates understanding.

Attend to Non-Verbal Behavior: Notice others' non-verbal communication to give you information about their experience. Do they look open or closed? Are they making eye contact? Read facial expressions and body language to identify feelings, and then check out your observations with others for accuracy.

Turn the Mind: Validation does not mean that we agree with others. Validation means that we non-judgmentally accept what they feel, think, and experience and how behaviors make sense given their context. Turn the mind toward validation, especially when it is difficult to relate. Turning the mind is especially important in conflicts.

Encourage Participation: Validation can be a difficult process at times, so we need to encourage ourselves and others to be engaged with each other. Do not give up, even when understanding is hard, when you feel disconnected, or when you are in conflict with others.



Interpersonal Effectiveness - GIVE



Save the Relationship

1. Give an example of a situation and how you did or could have VALIDATED yourself:
2. Give an example of a situation and how you did or could have VALIDATED someone else:
3. Give an example of a situation and how you INVALIDATED yourself:
4. Give one example of a situation and how you INVALIDATED someone else:



Interpersonal Effectiveness - GIVE



GIVE helps us build and keep relationships

(be) Gentle

(act) Interested

Validate

(use an) Easy manner

Think of a conversation you had today. Who were you talking to? What were you talking about?

What parts of **GIVE** did you use?

What did you do to use them?

Interpersonal Effectiveness



Save the Relationship in Order to More Often Get What You Want

Fill in the missing words. You can use your DBT Manual if you need help remembering. Then, circle one of the four skills that you tried to practice today or could have practiced today.

Be G _____

Act I _____

V _____

Use An E _____

Which skill did you pick?

Draw a picture or describe with a short paragraph how you practiced the skill or how you could have used the skill:

Interpersonal Effectiveness - FAST

Save Your Self-Respect



- (be) Fair
- (no) Apologies
- Stick to Values
- (be) Truthful

(be) Fair

Be fair to yourself and to the other person.
Don't use words like "always", "never", or "everyone".

(no) Apologies

No overly apologetic behavior.
Don't apologize for being alive, for making a request at all, or for having a difficult opinion.

Stick to values

Stick to your own values and beliefs. Don't sell yourself out.

(be) Truthful

Don't lie, act helpless when you are not, or exaggerate. Don't make up excuses.



Interpersonal Effectiveness - FAST



Save Your Self-Respect



Describe the Situation:

What did I want?

What did I do?

How did I want to feel about myself?

What did I want the other person to feel about me?

What was the most important to you in this situation?

Rank the following in order with 1 being the most important and 3 being the least important:

___ Getting what I want

___ Saving the relationship

___ Saving self-respect

What parts of DEAR MAN did you use and *how*?

What parts of GIVE did you use and *how*?

What parts of FAST did you use and *how*?

Interpersonal Effectiveness - FAST



FAST helps us build and keep relationships
while also having self-respect when we talk to other people

(be) Fair

(no) Apologies

Stick to Values

(be) Truthful

Think of a conversation you had today. Who were you talking to? What were you talking about?

What parts of **FAST** did you use?

What did you do to use them?

Emotional Regulation Skills



Emotional regulation skills are about learning to manage our emotions so they don't control our lives. Emotions are a part of life and must be experienced if we are to have a life worth living. Emotions communicate to us, and we must learn to listen and respond effectively to what they are communicating. These skills will help you prepare for, notice, and experience your emotions in order to relieve your suffering and to live a fuller life.

How Emotional Regulation Skills Can Help

Emotions are temporary and there are ways to change your emotions. You don't have to let negative emotions take over your life. You have the power to improve how you're feeling, whether or not you have good reason to feel bad. Emotional Regulation skills help us manage our emotions in an effective and healthy manner.



When emotions are in control, it can feel as if we are on an emotional roller coaster.

If you have never developed skills to help you manage your emotions effectively, then you may be looking to make life tolerable as a first step. If you have some skills with your emotions, these skills will help you experience things more fully. You can use these skills to reduce your vulnerability to emotional crises and experience positive emotions in your life. Mindfulness skills and exercises can be utilized to help you experience your emotions to their fullest.

Some people experience a narrow range of emotions. Certain situations arise, and they may feel irritation or amusement. Others may find themselves careening from one extreme emotion to another. These are the people that might respond to events with more intense feelings like vengefulness or jubilation. Although we all enjoy a little jubilation, the reality is that the roller coaster from one extreme to the next can leave you exhausted and feeling out of control. To make matters worse, people who experience intense emotions often find themselves stuck in negative feelings and unable to get rid of them for long periods of time.

Emotion Regulation Skills in Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) were designed to help people who experience intense and painful emotions that often lead them to feel suicidal. In DBT, problem behaviors like substance abuse and self-injury are seen as attempts by the individual to escape these painful emotions. Whether you experience intense emotions or just want to improve your understanding of how your emotions function, DBT Emotion Regulation Skills can enhance your ability to regulate how you feel.

When we are on an emotional roller coaster and don't know how to handle our emotions effectively, we sometimes puke them out on ourselves and others. Emotional puking is likely to damage our self-respect as well as our relationships.



A Healthier Perspective on Emotions



"You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf." ~ John Kabat-Zinn

Life seems to have the element of rising and falling like waves in the ocean. It can be helpful to think of emotions as waves. Waves come and waves go. Emotions come and emotions go. Like waves, our emotions reach a maximum intensity and then the intensity dissipates. Emotions rise and fall every day, every hour, and sometimes, every minute. We can learn to surf the waves of our emotions so we can stay afloat and enjoy life. If we manage our thoughts and feel our feelings, we are able to ride the waves with ease.

When we choose to feel and describe our feelings rather than numb them, we create an opportunity for personal awareness. Awareness of our emotions requires us to be attentive to where our thoughts are taking us. Negative events happen to us all, but if you're someone who spends time ruminating on the negative, you may need to make a conscious effort to focus on appreciating the moment. When you worry, you take away the pleasure of the moment. If you notice yourself worried about problems in your life, what is expected of you, or all you need to do, tell yourself to let it go. Refocus back onto the positive aspects of your life and the goals you have set for yourself. You don't have to let negative emotions take over your life.



You can run, but you cannot hide from the waves of emotions. Numbing yourself to your emotions or pretending they don't exist does not make them go away. You cannot get rid of emotions because they serve important survival functions. Be willing to radically accept your emotions as they arise. Grab a board and hang 10 dude!

A few helpful facts about emotions:

- Emotions are neither good or bad, right or wrong. Emotions just ARE. They exist.
- Judging your emotions is not helpful.
- There is a difference between having an emotion and doing something or acting on the emotion.
- Emotions don't last forever. No matter what you are feeling, eventually, it will fade away and another emotion will take its place.
- Emotions are not facts. When emotions are intense they can feel like "the truth", but they aren't.

Emotional Regulation

Wave Model for Describing Emotions

3. Emotional Experiencing:

Brain changes
Face & Body Changes
Sensing of Emotions
Action Urge

What did I feel in my body?

What did I feel like saying or doing?

2. Interpretation: How you understand or make sense of what happened.

What did I tell myself?

1. Prompting Event: Something happens (inside or outside of yourself) that triggers an emotion.

What triggered my emotion?
(who, what, when, or where)

4. Emotional Expressions:

Body Language
Facial Expressions
Words
Actions/Behaviors

What did I do or say?

5. Aftereffects:

Memory
Thoughts
Physical Functioning
Actions/Behaviors
Secondary Emotions

How did this emotion impact me?

Adapted from: Skills Training Manual for Borderline Personality Disorder by Marsha Linehan (1993)

Emotional Regulation

Emotional Regulation Skills Help Us:

- Identify emotions and their intensity
- Understand emotions you experience
- Understand what emotions do for you
- Reduce emotional vulnerability
- Decrease vulnerability to emotional mind
- Increase positive emotions
- Decrease emotional suffering
- Let go of painful emotions through mindfulness
- Change painful emotions through opposite action



What good are emotions?

- They communicate to others.
- They organize our actions.
- They can be self-validating.

There is a difference between having an emotion and doing something or acting on the emotion (engaging in emotion driven behavior). When an intense emotion is experienced, you do not have to act on it. All you need to do is recognize the emotion and feel it.

Mindfulness of the Current Emotion

Observe your emotion: Note its presence and step back
Allow yourself to become unstuck from the emotion

Experience your emotion fully: Notice it as a wave coming and going
Try not to block the emotion
Try not to push the emotion away
Don't try and keep the emotion around
Don't try and increase or intensify the emotion
Simply witness the emotion

Remember you are not your emotion: Do not act on the sensation of urgency
Describe your emotion as "I have the feeling of ____"
Do not describe yourself as the emotion

Practice accepting your emotion: Don't judge your emotion
Practice *WILLINGNESS* with your emotion



Why learn these skills?

- To quiet the body – High emotion leads to high stress
- To quiet behaviors – Intense emotions lead to intense choices
- So Wise Mind is easier to find

Emotional Regulation - PLEASE MASTER

Reduce Vulnerability to Emotional Mind

Treat PhysicalL illness

Balance Eating

Avoid mood- Altering drugs

Balance Sleep

Get Exercise

Build MASTERY

1. Treat PhysicalL illness:



Take care of your body. See a doctor when needed.
Take prescribed medication only as directed.

2. Balance Eating:



Don't eat too much or too little. Eat healthy foods.

3. Avoid mood Altering drugs:



Stay off alcohol and non-prescribed medications.

4. Balance Sleep:



Try to get the amount of sleep that helps you feel good.
Avoid too much or too little sleep.

5. Get Exercise:



Do some sort of exercise every day, at least 20 minutes.

6. Build MASTERY:



Try to do one thing each day to make yourself feel in control and competent. (Something you are good at.)

Emotional Regulation - PLEASE MASTER



Examples of what these can mean:

Treat **Physical** illness:

Balance **Eating**:

Avoid mood-altering drugs:

Balance **Sleep**:

Get **Exercise**:

MASTERy:

Interpersonal Effectiveness - PLEASE MASTER



Reduce Vulnerability to Emotional Mind

Describe what you did for each emotional regulation skill:

Treat Physical Illness?

Balanced Eating?

Avoid mood Altering drugs?

Balanced Sleep?

Exercise?

MASTERy?



PLEASE MASTER



Write down a goal you have for yourself:

What did you do (or what could have you done) to work on that goal today?

-
-
-

Who is someone you have a relationship with?

What did you do (or what could have you done) to take care of that relationship today?

Be Mindful of Positive Experiences

What are you grateful for today?

-
-
-

Emotional Regulation - Increasing Positive Emotions

Building Positive Experiences & Reducing Painful Emotions



Short Term – Do pleasant things that are possible now
Increase fun activities
Do one thing each day you are good at

Long Term – Make changes in your life so that positive events will occur more often
Build a “life worth living”



Work toward Goals

Make a list of long-term goals
Do one thing each day towards it

Attend to Relationships

Repair old relationships
Reach out for new relationships
Work on current relationships

Avoid Avoiding

Avoid giving up
When there are things you don't want to do, do them anyway

Be Mindful of Positive Experiences

Focus attention on positive events that happen
Refocus when your mind wanders to the negative

Be Unmindful of Worries

Distract yourself from...
Thinking about when the positive event will end
Thinking about whether you deserve the positive experience
Thinking about how much more might be expected of you now



Interpersonal Effectiveness - Increasing Positive Emotions



Building Positive Experiences & Reducing Painful Emotions

Increased Positive Events

What did you do to increase daily pleasant activities?

How did you work on Long Term Goals today?

How did you attend to relationships?

How did you avoid avoiding?

Mindfulness of Positive Experiences

How did you practice being mindful of positive and unmindful of negative experiences?

Emotional Regulation - Increasing Positive Emotions



This skill is about building positive experiences in order to increase positive emotions in our lives.

What pleasant activities did you do today?

What was a step you took toward a long-term goal?

How did you take care of a relationship?

How did you avoid avoiding something?

What did you do to focus on the positives instead of the negatives?

Emotional Regulation - Letting Go of Emotional Suffering

Changing Emotion by Acting Opposite to the Current Emotion

How to Act Opposite to...

Fear: Do what you are afraid of over and over and over again



Guilt or Shame: Repair the incident, say sorry, make it better
Commit to avoiding the mistake in the future
Accept natural consequences
Let it go

Sadness or Depression: Get active, approach don't avoid
Do things to feel competent and self-confident

Anger: Gently avoid the person you're angry with rather than attacking
Do something nice rather than mean



For opposite action, you need to act as a detective and examine your (and others') emotions, thoughts, and behaviors very carefully!

Emotional Regulation - Letting Go of Emotional Suffering

Changing Emotion by Acting Opposite to the Current Emotion

Event: What happened?



Emotion: How were you feeling?

*Your emotion is always valid, though it may provoke unhealthy or ineffective behaviors.



Thoughts: What thoughts are you having?

*Are you experiencing a thinking error/thought distortion?

*Are you making assumptions about the other person/people involved?



Urge: What did you feel like doing in response to what happened?

What is my emotion driven behavior?

How have you handled similar situations in the past?



Evidence: Look for evidence and check your facts.

Use your Wise Mind to examine the situation.

*Check your source of information and avoid relying on assumptions or stereotypes.



Is the emotion

Justified OR Unjustified?

YES – Justified



NO – Unjustified



Check Emotional Thermometers:

Check both yours and the other person's emotional thermometer to determine if change or acceptance skills can be used.

*If anyone's emotional thermometer is above 70, only acceptance skills can be used.

Feel the emotion and be mindful of the strength of the emotion.

Don't do anything to keep it around longer.



Opposite Action:

Ask yourself if you were experiencing the opposite emotions how would you respond?

What would those behaviors look like?

*Acting in an opposite manner does not mean being fake or ignoring problems.

Emotional Regulation - Opposite Action



Changing Emotion by Acting Opposite to the Current Emotion

Briefly describe the situation:

What emotion(s) did you feel?

What thought(s) did you have?

Was there evidence for your thought(s)? If so, what was the evidence?

Was the thought justified (there was evidence in the moment) or unjustified (there was no evidence in the moment)?

JUSTIFIED



UNJUSTIFIED

If the thought was unjustified, how did you use opposite action?

If the thought was justified, where was your emotional thermometer (0 to 100 degrees)?

What Acceptance Skills (Mindfulness/Distress Tolerance) did you use to take care of yourself?

Emotional Regulation - Opposite Action



What happened? What was the situation?

What did you think/believe about what happened?

What emotion(s) did you have about what you thought/believed?

What did you want to do about it, based on what you thought/believed?

Was there evidence in the moment for what you thought/believed?

YES NO

If there was evidence, then your emotion was JUSTIFIED! How did you use your skills in the moment?

If there was no evidence, then your emotion was valid, but UNJUSTIFIED! How did you act opposite to your urges?

Distress Tolerance Skills



These skills are very much what they sound like. Everyone has distress in life.

These skills help to deal with the distress effectively. The natural tendency when one experiences pain of any kind is to try to end it or escape it. When we experience intense physical pain, we may try anything possible to make it stop. In DBT we believe that when we try this tactic in the face of emotional pain, it only makes things worse.

Distress Tolerance



We are not alone in experiencing pain. We *ALL* experience pain. Sometimes how we handle our pain is not as healthy or effective as it could be. Using distress tolerance skills in order to make it through times of emotional pain can help us along without making the situation or the pain worse.

Life is not always a sunny day at the beach. These skills can be used as “crisis survival skills” to weather the biggest waves of emotion and the storms of life.

When we are experiencing distressing emotions we need to ask ourselves a couple questions:

- Can I solve the problem or change the situation?
- If yes, do I know what is needed?
- If no, how can I make it through the situation without making it worse?

Coping with pain is important for three reasons:

- Pain is part of life and can't always be avoided. (Suffering is a choice!)
- If you can't deal with your pain, you may act impulsively.
- When you act impulsively, you may end up hurting yourself or not getting what you want!



Distress Tolerance Skills help us to distract from the distressing emotion temporarily until we are in control of our emotion and can act effectively

Four things that contribute to emotional suffering:

- Being told “No” or not getting what you want.
- Getting what you want and not being satisfied with it.
- Having to endure the absence of those or that which you love.
- Having to endure the presence of those or that which you do not love.



It may also be helpful to examine or watch out for the things you already do that actually make a situation worse.

- Self-injurious behaviors
- Relationship damaging behaviors
- Self-medicating with substances
- Reckless or risk-taking behaviors
- Physical aggression towards self or others



Distress Tolerance - ACCEPTS

Activities

Contribute

Compare

Opposite Emotions

Push away

Thoughts

Sensations

Activities: Do ANYTHING that keeps you busy!



Contribute: Do something nice for someone else.



Compare: Ask yourself how could it be worse?



Opposite Emotions: Do something that makes you feel the opposite of your distressing emotion.



Push away: Put the situation in a mental box and push it away. Each time it pops back into your mind, push away again until you have time and control to deal with it.



Thoughts: Distract with thought (like count to 10 or list colors).



Sensations: Strong physical sensations (like hold ice or take a hot shower).



Distress Tolerance - ACCEPTS



Please check off two ACCEPTS skills to practice today when you are feeling negative emotions:



- ☐ Activities
- ☐ Contribute
- ☐ Compare
- ☐ Emotions (Opposite)
- ☐ Push away
- ☐ Thoughts
- ☐ Sensations

Describe the stressful situation you were in when you practiced the skill:

What was your emotion intensity level BEFORE (0-100)? What were the signs?

How did you use the skill? Be specific.

What was your emotion intensity level AFTER (0-100) and what were the signs?

Distress Tolerance - ACCEPTS



Activities: What are activities you enjoy? Give an example of something that could keep you busy:

Contribute: What is something nice that you could do for someone else?

Comparison: What would be worse than your current situation?

Opposite Emotion:

What emotion are you feeling right now?

List a song that makes you feel the opposite of what you are feeling right now.

Push Away:

Can you solve your concern right now?

When might you be able to solve the problem?

Thoughts: Write out the alphabet backwards.

Sensations: List three activities that would cause a strong physical sensation.

Distress Tolerance – Self-Soothe / 5 Senses

Crisis Survival Skills

Sight: Watch a sunset, look at a picture or photo you like, etc.
What else can you think of?



Sound: Listen to music, sing your favorite song, etc.
What else can you think of?



Smell: Put on your favorite lotion, light a candle, bake cupcakes, etc.
What else can you think of?



Touch: Pet the dog, have a massage, take a bath, etc.
What else can you think of?



Taste: Have a good meal, favorite flavor ice cream, eat one mindfully, etc.
What else can you think of?



Distress Tolerance – Self-Soothe / 5 Senses



Crisis Survival Skills

Please check off TWO senses to practice self-soothing during the day when you feel a negative emotion:_____



- ☐ Sight
- ☐ Sound
- ☐ Smell
- ☐ Touch
- ☐ Taste

Describe the stressful situation you were in when you practiced the skill:

What was your emotion intensity level BEFORE (0-100)? What were the signs?

How did you use the skill? Be specific.

What was your emotion intensity level AFTER (0-100) and what were the signs?

Distress Tolerance – IMPROVE

Imagery

Meaning

Prayer

Relaxation

One thing in the moment

Vacation

Encouragement

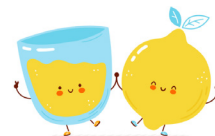
Imagery

Imagine relaxing scenes. Imagine a secret room within yourself where you are safe. If feeling threatened, close that door so nothing can hurt you. Imagine everything going well and you coping with the situation. Imagine hurtful emotions draining out of you like water from a pipe.



Meaning

Find or create some purpose, meaning, or value in the pain. Make lemonade out of lemons.



Prayer



Open your heart to a supreme being. Ask for strength to bear the pain in the moment, turn things over.

Relaxation

Progressive muscle relaxation, take a hot bath, soak your feet, or breathe deeply.



One thing in the moment

Focus your entire attention on just what you are doing right in the moment – walking, cleaning, combing your hair, etc.



Vacation



Give yourself a brief vacation in your room for ten minutes to just not think about anything stressful.

Encouragement

Be your own cheerleader. Repeat, "I can do this, it won't last forever, and I'm doing my best."



Distress Tolerance – IMPROVE



Please check off two IMPROVE skills to practice today when you feel negative emotions:



- ☐ Imagery (imagine yourself safe or relaxed)
- ☐ Meaning (make lemonade out of lemons)
- ☐ Prayer (for strength to get through)
- ☐ Relaxation (progressive muscle relaxation)
- ☐ One thing at a time (present thinking)
- ☐ Vacation (self-time out)
- ☐ Encouragement (be your own cheerleader)

Describe the stressful situation you were in when you practiced the skill:

What was your emotion intensity level BEFORE (0-100)? What were the signs?

How did you use the skill? Be specific.

What was your emotion intensity level AFTER (0-100) and what were the signs?

Frequently Asked Questions & Answers About DBT



Additional CBT & DBT Tools





The Three Fundamentals of DBT: CBT, Acceptance, and Dialectics

1. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

CBT and DBT therapists do not think that people can be helped through insightful discussions, although insight can be helpful at times. *Learning new behaviors* is critical in DBT and is a focus in every individual session and skills group. "Behavior" refers to anything a person thinks, feels, or does. Cognitive behavioral therapy uses a wide variety of techniques to help people change behaviors that inhibit a "life worth living". In DBT, as in CBT, people are asked to change. People track and record their problem behaviors with a weekly diary card. They also attend skills groups, complete homework assignments, and role-play new ways of interacting with people when in session with their therapist. In addition, people work with their therapists to identify how they are rewarded for maladaptive behavior or punished for adaptive behavior. They expose themselves to feelings, thoughts, or situations that they feared and avoided, and they change self-destructive ways of thinking. What we have just described in layman's terms are the four main change strategies: Skills Training, Exposure Therapy, Cognitive Therapy, and Contingency Management.

Contrary to popular belief, behavior therapy is not cold and technical. Rather, at its best, it is about learning to change while treating ourselves and each other with respect and kindness.

2. Validation (Acceptance)

As we noted in the above paragraphs, cognitive behavioral therapy techniques were not enough to help people who were suicidal and chronically self-harming. It's not that the techniques were ineffective; it's just that as stand-alone interventions, they caused people a great deal of distress. People found the pushing for change *invalidating*. In a simple example, it's as if therapists were saying to someone with severe burns on the soles of their feet, "just keep walking and your feet will get stronger...try not to think about the pain," though each step was excruciatingly painful, and the patient was depressed and had no experience with keeping their mind off severe pain. Linehan and her research team discovered that when the therapist weaved an emphasis on validation with an equal emphasis on change, people were more likely to be collaborative and less likely to become agitated and withdrawn.

So what is validation? It means a number of things. One of the things it does not mean, necessarily, is agreement. For instance, a therapist could understand that a person abuses alcohol to overcome intensive social anxiety, and yet realize that when the person is drunk, she makes impulsive decisions that may lead to self-harm. The therapist could validate that: a) her behavior makes sense as the only way she's ever gotten her anxiety to go down; b) her parents always got drunk at parties; and c) sometimes when she's drunk and does something impulsive, the impulsive behavior can be "fun." In this case, the therapist can validate that the substance abuse makes sense, given the person's history and point of view. But the therapist does not have to agree that abusing alcohol is the best approach to solving the person's anxiety.

In DBT, there are several levels and types of validation. The most basic level is staying alert to the other person. This means being respectful to what she is saying, feeling, and doing. Other levels of validation involve helping the person regain confidence both by assuming that her behavior makes perfect sense (e.g. of course you're angry at the store manager because he tried to overcharge you and then lied about it) and by treating the other person as an equal (i.e., as opposed to treating her like a fragile mental patient).

In DBT, just as people are taught to use cognitive behavioral strategies, they are also taught and encouraged to use validation. In treatment and in life, it is important to know what about ourselves we can change and what about ourselves we must accept (whether short term or long term). For that reason, acceptance and validation skills are taught in the skills modules as well.

3. Dialectics

“Dialectics” involves several assumptions about the nature of reality:

- Everything is connected to everything else;
- Change is constant and inevitable; and
- Opposites can be integrated to form a closer approximation to the truth (always evolving).

DBT also involves specific dialectical strategies to help people get “unstuck” from rigid ways of thinking or viewing the world. For instance, a person may complain that she absolutely hates her group therapist and wants to switch skills groups. The therapist might respond with an opposing suggestion: This can be seen as a learning opportunity in handling intense negative emotions towards authority. The therapist could then show the similarity between the person's group therapist and other people of authority (teachers, bosses, supervisors), and demonstrate this as a chance to tolerate a person one can't stand but has to work with. As these examples illustrate, the point of all dialectical strategies is to provide movement, speed, and flow so that therapist and person do not become stuck in “I will not do that” vs. “Oh, yes you will!”



Why Do People Engage in Self-Destructive Behavior?



A key assumption in DBT is that self-destructive behaviors are learned coping techniques for unbearably intense and negative emotions. Negative emotions like shame, guilt, sadness, fear, and anger are a normal part of life. However, it seems that some people are particularly inclined to have very intense and frequent negative emotions. Sometimes, the human brain is simply “hard-wired” to experience stronger emotions, just like an expensive stereo is “hard-wired” to produce very complex sounds. Or, it could be that severe emotional or physical trauma causes changes in the brain to make it more vulnerable to intense feeling states. Additionally, sometimes people have mood disorders – Major Depression or Generalized Anxiety – that are not controlled by standard medications and thus lead to emotional suffering. Any one of these factors, or any combination of them, can lead to a problem called **emotional vulnerability**. A person who is emotionally vulnerable tends to have quick, intense, and difficult-to-control emotional reactions that make his or her life seem like a roller coaster.

Extreme emotional vulnerability is rarely the sole cause of psychological problems. An **invalidating environment** is also a major contributing factor. What is an invalidating environment? The “environment” in this case is usually other people. “Invalidating” refers to a failure to treat a person in a manner that conveys attention, respect, and understanding. Examples of an invalidating environment can range from mismatched personalities of children and parents (e.g., a shy child growing up in a family of extroverts who tease her about her shyness) to extremes of physical or emotional abuse.

If a shy child is teased by his siblings or forced to go into social situations he wants to avoid, he may learn to have tantrums to let others realize that he's scared. If his shyness is only taken seriously when he has an outburst, he learns (without being conscious of it) that tantrums work. He has not been “validated.” In this case, forms of validation could have included telling the person that being shy is normal for some people, teaching him that shy people have to work harder to overcome social anxiety, or helping him learn skills for managing shyness so it does not interfere with his life.

This is a relatively benign example. Some individuals, however, grow up in situations where they are abused or neglected. They may learn more extreme ways of getting other people to take them seriously. Further, because they are in painful circumstances, they may learn to cope with emotional pain by thinking about suicide, cutting themselves, restricting their food intake, or using drugs and alcohol. A vicious cycle can get started: The person is really sad and scared, she has no one who listens to her, she is afraid to ask for help or knows no help is available, and so she tries to kill herself. Then, when her pain is treated seriously at the hospital, she learns (without being conscious of it) that when she's suicidal, other people understand how badly she feels. Repeated self-injury can result if it is seen as the only means for getting better or achieving understanding from other people.

Emotion Faces

Are you aware of how you are feeling?



Primary and Secondary Emotions

There are eight primary emotions that we are born with wired into our brains. This wiring causes your body to react in certain ways and for you to have certain urges when particular emotions arise. All other emotions are made up by combining these basic eight emotions.

Primary Emotions – Are *in-the-moment* emotional responses to a pleasant or unpleasant stimulus. They happen as a *direct* result of an external cue that affects us emotionally. If we do not express or respond to the primary emotion in a healthy way, it can provoke secondary emotions.

Secondary Emotions – Occur in response to our primary emotions. Secondary emotions are not wired into our bodies and brains, but are learned from our families, cultures, and others around us in a variety of settings or experiences.



8 Primary Emotions

Joy
Sadness/Sorrow
Trust
Disgust
Fear
Anger
Surprise
Anticipation/Interest

Research shows us that the eight primary emotions cause a common reaction in all human beings (and monkeys too). In some ways, all human beings and primates are the same in the way we feel and show these basic emotions. *See handout on how emotions impact the body.

However, every person is also unique. When you feel an emotion such as anger, you may have tension in part of your body. Have you ever noticed that? Where you are feeling the most tension and express that tension is unique to you. Some people feel anger in their chest, others in their stomachs.

Urges to DO SOMETHING (Emotion-Driven Behaviors) are a natural response to having any type of emotion. For instance, if you are bored, you may restlessly seek out something to interest you. Your urges when you experience a particular emotion may or may not be the same as someone else's urges.

Typically, we don't have a problem recognizing, accepting, and expressing the pleasant emotions. However, it is most often the case that the uncomfortable emotions cause problems for us and our relationships. Why is this? Why do we have a problem giving validity to something uncomfortable or distressing?

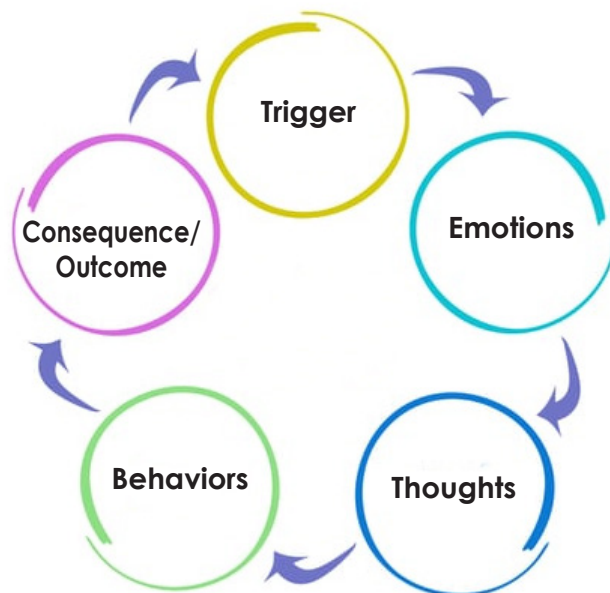
Understanding the Relationship Between Emotions, Thoughts, Behaviors, and Our Bodies

Our bodies, emotions, thoughts, and behaviors are interconnected

Physical, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral symptoms are all causally related so that changes in one contribute to changes in the other three. How we feel and what we think impacts our behaviors. Understanding the behavioral cycle can help us identify how DBT skills can be applied and improve the outcome of a given situation.

Example: Sarah receives poor scores on a quiz in math class. Sarah thinks to herself "I'm so stupid. Everyone is smarter than me." Sarah feels frustrated and hopeless. Sarah tells her mom that her math teacher hates her and there is no point asking for extra help. Sarah gets stomach aches and doesn't feel good when thinking about math class and quizzes. Sarah wants to avoid the stress of math class. Sarah skips class and gives up on completing her homework. Sarah does not complete or turn in her homework and fails her math class.

The Behavioral Cycle



Repeated triggers can result in similar emotional and cognitive responses. The behavioral cycle repeats itself and becomes a pattern. These patterns can contribute to feeling like we are out of control and our emotions are running our lives. Such patterns can be difficult to change.

DBT skills can help! At each stage of the behavioral cycle we have an opportunity to use skills.



Understanding the Behavioral Cycle



Trigger: Any situation or event that brings on an emotion and/or a thought.

Example: Sarah received poor scores on her quiz.

Emotion: Any feeling. **Sometimes we feel more than one emotion at a time or mixed emotions.*

Example: Sarah feels frustrated and hopeless.

Thought: Something we tell ourselves in our heads or others out loud. **It may be a thinking error.*

Example: Sarah thinks she is stupid and everyone else is smarter. Sarah tells her mom that her math teacher hates her.

Thinking Errors: Tricks our mind plays on us that are unhelpful or distort the reality of a situation.

Thinking errors can seem helpful or seem to make what we did or want to do seem logical.

Sometimes these are also called cognitive distortions.

Example: Sarah thinks her math teacher hates her, so she does not ask for extra help.

Urge: An impulse that prompts an action or a response.

Example: Sarah wants to avoid the stress of math class.

Behavior: Any action. **Behaviors may be ineffective or damage our self-respect and/or relationships.*

Example: Sarah skips math class and does not turn in her homework.

Consequence/Outcome: A result of an action. **Consequences can be positive or negative.*

Example: Sarah fails her math class.

Physical Symptoms: Our thoughts and emotions can cause physical responses in our bodies.

Example: Sarah gets stomach aches when thinking about math class and the quizzes.

The Behavioral Cycle



TRIGGER/EVENT

What happened?

EMOTION(S)

How did what happened make you feel?

THOUGHT(S)

What thoughts were you having?

Was your thought a *thinking error*? If so, what kind of error was it?

Was your thought an *urge*? If so what was it and did you act on it?

BEHAVIOR(S)

What did you do?

CONSEQUENCE(S)/OUTCOME(S)

What was the outcome?

Was the consequence/outcome what you thought it would be? YES or NO

Would you do anything different next time? If so, what would you do differently?

Do you think doing things differently would change the consequence/outcome? YES or NO

If yes, how might the consequence/outcome have changed?

Events, Emotions, Thoughts & Behaviors

Homework



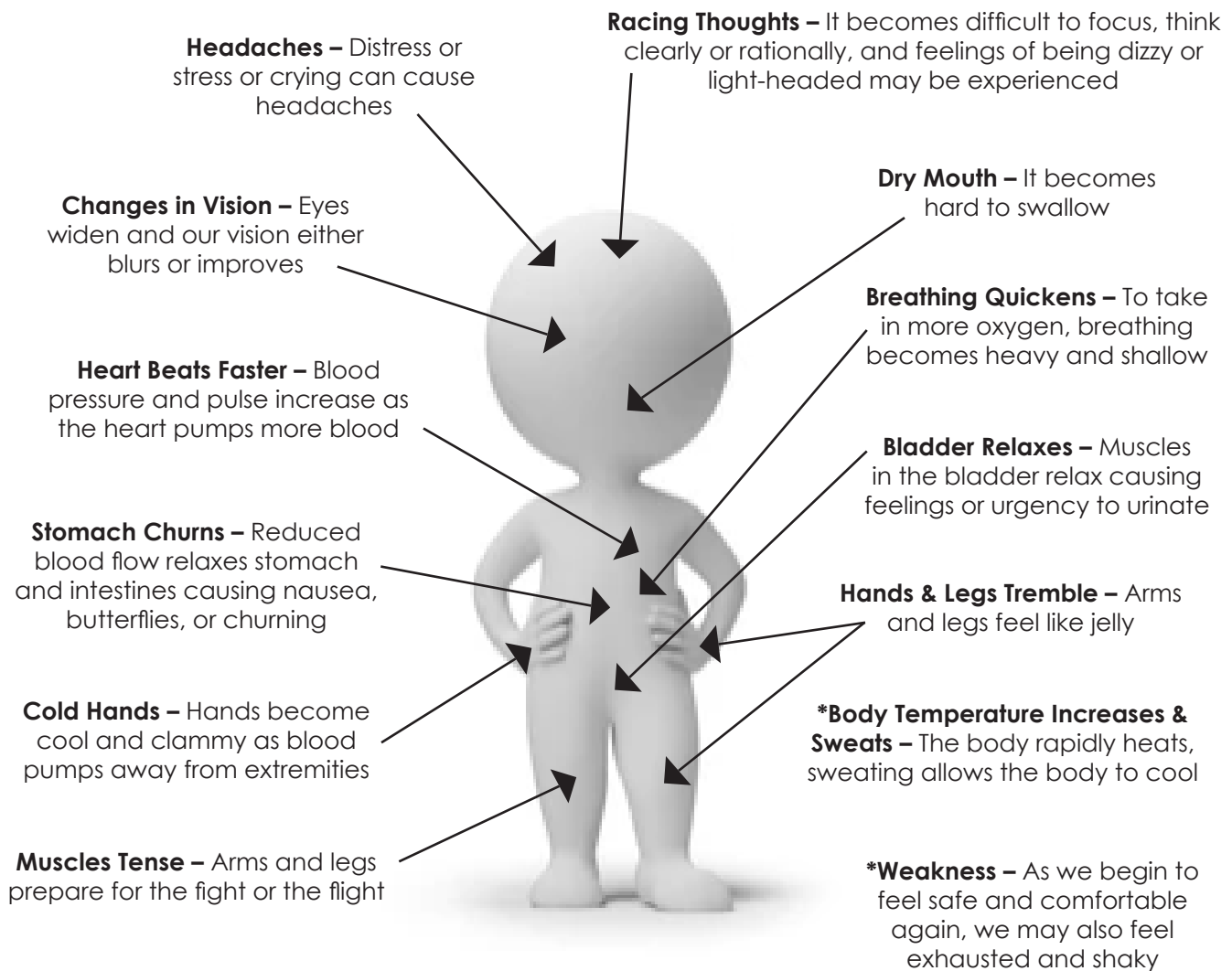
Physical, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral symptoms are all causally related so that changes in one contribute to changes in the other three. How we feel and what we think impacts our behaviors. Understanding the behavioral cycle can help us identify how DBT skills can be applied and improve the outcome of a given situation.

Read the items to the left. For each item, circle the correct category:

1.	"We're going to be late!"	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
2.	"This group is a drag."	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
3.	"I'm afraid of a snake."	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
4.	Throwing a ball.	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
5.	Wanting to punch someone.	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
6.	Someone calls you a name.	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
7.	Contraband is found in your room.	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
8.	You get to go on a home visit.	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
9.	Staff puts you on focus.	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
10.	Someone eats your snack.	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
11.	You cry.	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
12.	Your aunt dies.	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
13.	A peer is sad.	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
14.	A peer is annoying.	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
15.	Your favorite DBT group is canceled.	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
16.	Worrying about money.	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
17.	"I hate this food!"	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
18.	You yell at a peer.	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
19.	You punch a window.	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
20.	You want to curse.	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
21.	Slamming the door.	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
22.	Your cousin gets married.	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
23.	It's time for school.	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
24.	You refuse your medication.	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event
25.	You lie to your therapist.	Thought	Emotion	Behavior	Event

How Stress/Distressing Emotions Impact the Body

When our emotions are running high (above 70 on our emotional thermometers), we experience increased stress/distress. When the brain perceives a threat, it activates the body's alarm system. When you feel threatened, adrenaline is released, and a chemical reaction occurs in your body that allows you to act in a way to protect yourself. This reaction is known as "fight or flight," or the stress response.



Experiencing stress/distress can affect all aspects of your life, including your emotions, behaviors, thinking ability, and physical health. No part of the body is immune. A little stress every now and then is not something to be concerned about. Our bodies are designed to handle small doses of stress. We are not equipped to handle ongoing, chronic stress without consequences. Ongoing, chronic stress can cause or exacerbate many physical health problems.

How Do Emotions Impact Your Body?



Just as people experience and cope with emotions differently, physical symptoms of emotions can vary from person to person. Emotions have physical aspects as well as psychological aspects. Emotions bridge thoughts and behaviors – they operate in every part of a person. Beyond the “fight or flight” response, emotions can be our most reliable indicators of how things are going in our lives. One way to assess our emotions is to tune into our body’s response to them. Use the figure below to diagram how various emotions impact your body.



Myths We Live By

Interpretations

"Myths" are stories that we come to believe, simply because they have been a part of our lives or our thinking for so long. We don't often question them. We simply assume that they are real. Our thoughts can be like myths - "stories" that are so deep a part of how we live, that we no longer notice them. Myth thoughts may not be something we would admit to believing if someone asked about them, but we believe them in our emotional mind.

These myths of thinking may come from our families, friends, or culture. We have myths about almost everything in our lives. Most people have myths about emotions that cause them to react in ways that are not helpful sometimes. The key is to know what your own myths are, what usually triggers them in your mind, and how you can keep them from controlling your behavior when that behavior could make you less effective and damage your self-respect or relationships.

Each person's myths are unique; however, there are some fairly common myths. Here are a few myths about emotion (check them if you find that you believe them in reasonable mind, emotional mind, or if they feel like wise mind).



- _____ 1. There is a right way to feel in every situation.
- _____ 2. Letting others know that I am feeling bad is a weakness.
- _____ 3. Uncomfortable feelings are bad and destructive.
- _____ 4. Being emotional means being out of control.
- _____ 5. All painful emotions are a result of bad attitude.
- _____ 6. If others don't approve of how I am feeling, I shouldn't feel this way.
- _____ 7. Other people are the best judge of how I am feeling.
- _____ 8. Painful emotions are not really important and should be ignored.

Cognitive Distortions/Thinking Errors

As the name suggests, cognitive distortions are ways of thinking that negatively skew the way in which we see the world, ourselves, and others. Cognitive errors are all habits of thinking that are deeply ingrained. The good news is, like any habit, these patterns of thinking can be broken and discarded through awareness and practice.

Type 1: Unwilling to Accept Responsibility

Denial – The individual pretends it didn't happen, and might even try to fool himself/herself into thinking it didn't happen. If he or she denies it ever happened, maybe it will go away.

Shifting the Focus – The individual tries to turn people's minds and attention onto something else, and distract from the real issue.

Blaming Others – The individual blames the problem and his/her own behavior on someone or something else.

Blaming the Victim - The individual blames the victim, as though he/she wasn't at fault, and somehow the victim brought it on himself/herself.

Intellectualization – The individual tries to use ideas and intellect to sidetrack issues and out-think the opposition, finding excuses and explanations.

Innocence/Playing Dumb – The individual acts as though he/she didn't know it was wrong or against the rules, or pretends he/she didn't know better.

Rationalization – The individual finds reasons, explanations, and excuses from what he/she did.

Justification – The individual finds reasons to explain the “correctness” of what he/she did, as though it was okay.

Minimization – The individual downplays the importance of what happened, or its meaning.

Dismissal – The individual disregards, ignores, or brushes aside what happened or other people's feelings as though they don't matter.

Angelic Thinking – This is a victim stance, in which the individual portrays himself/herself as a wonderful person, incapable of breaking the rules or harming someone.

Type 2: Self-Defeating

Catastrophic Thinking – The individual magnifies the impact of negative experiences to extreme proportions.

Hopelessness – The individual assumes that nothing will ever work out, and that things will always go wrong.

Over-Generalization – Something goes wrong in one situation, and the individual applies it to all situations.

Black and White Thinking – The individual sees things as “all-or-nothing;” things are either one way or the other.

Oughts, Shoulds, and Musts – The individual feels life ought to be a certain way, or he/she should do something, or things must go the way he/she wants them to.

Negative Predictions/Fortune Telling – The individual predicts failure in situations yet to happen because things have gone wrong before.

Projection – The individual makes negative assumptions about the thoughts, intentions, or motives of another person, which are often “projections” of his/her own thoughts and feelings about the situation.

Mind Reading – The individual feels that others should know how he/she feels or what he/she wants even though he/she doesn't tell the other person.

Labeling – The individual labels himself/herself or someone else negatively, which shapes the way he/she sees himself or that other person, often for simplistic reasons.

Personalization – The individual treats a negative event as a personal reflection or confirmation of his own worthlessness.

Negative Focus – The individual focuses mainly on negative events, memories, or implications while ignoring more neutral or positive information about himself/herself or a situation.

Avoidance – The individual avoids thinking about emotionally difficult subjects because they feel overwhelming or insurmountable.

Emotional Mis-reasoning – The individual draws an irrational and incorrect conclusion based on the way he/she feels in the moment.

Type 3: Narcissistic

Life is Too Hard – The individual feels that life is just too unfair, and somehow owes him/her more.

Entitled – The individual feels as though he/she deserves good things even if he/she doesn't have to work for them.

Victim Stance – The individual feels as though he/she is the victim of the whole world, and that he/she is the one who's been harmed.

Grandiose – The individual feels as though he/she is better or more important than other people, or others should and do look up to him/her.

Revenge – The individual feels as though he/she is been wronged and is allowed (or entitled) to get his/her revenge.

Personalization – The individual feels as though the rules are applied only to him/her, instead of everyone, and that people and things are against him/her personally.

Oneupmanship – The individual feels he/she has to do better than everyone else and show everyone that he/she is the best.



Guidelines for Sharing and Listening

Skills for Sharing Emotions:

1. State your views as your own feelings and thoughts, not as absolute truths.
2. When expressing negative emotions or concerns, also include any positive feelings you have about the person or situation.
3. Make your statement as specific as possible, both in terms of specific emotions and thoughts.
4. Speak in “paragraphs.” That is, express one main idea with some elaboration and then allow the other person to respond. Speaking for a long time without a break makes it hard for someone to listen.
5. Express your feelings and thoughts with tact and timing so that the person can listen to what you are saying without becoming defensive.

Skills for Listening – Ways to respond while the other person is speaking:

1. Show that you understand the person's statements and accept his or her right to have those thoughts and feelings. Demonstrate this acceptance through your tone of voice, facial expressions, and posture.
2. Try to put yourself in the other person's place and look at the situation from his or her perspective, in order to determine how the other person feels and thinks about the issue.

Skills for Responding – Ways to respond after the other person finishes speaking:

1. After the person finishes speaking, summarize and restate their most important feelings, desires, conflicts, and thoughts.
2. While in the listener role, do not:
 - Ask questions, except for clarification.
 - Express your own viewpoint or opinion.
 - Interpret or change the meaning of the person's statement.
 - Offer solutions or attempt to solve a problem if one exists.
 - Make judgments or evaluate what the person has said.

Instructions for Chain Analysis Worksheet

1. Describe the specific **PROBLEM BEHAVIOR** – Throwing a chair, cutting, hearing voices, dissociating, not coming to a therapy appointment, etc. (Behaviors that are targeted in the treatment plan or dairy card).
 - a. Be very specific and detailed. No vague terms.
 - b. Identify exactly what you did, said, thought, or felt (if feelings are the targeted problem behavior).
 - c. Describe the intensity of the behavior and other characteristics of the behavior that are important.
 - d. Describe problem behavior in enough detail that an actor in a play or movie could recreate the behavior exactly.
2. Describe the specific **PROMPTING EVENT** that started the whole chain of behavior. Start with the environmental event that started the chain. A prompting event is an event outside the person that triggers the chain of events leading to the problem behavior. Always start with some event/trigger in your environment, even if it doesn't seem to you that the environmental event “caused” the problem behavior.

Possible questions to get at this are:

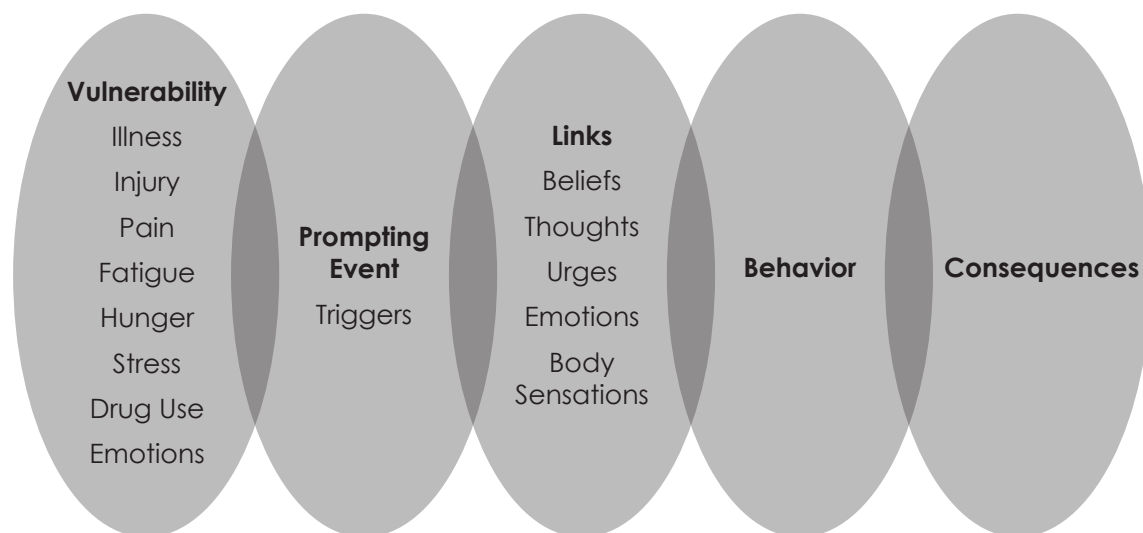
- a. What exact event precipitated the start of the chain reaction?
 - b. When did the sequence of events that led to the problem behavior begin? When did the problem start?
 - c. What was going on the moment the problem started?
 - d. What were you doing, thinking, feeling, or imagining at the time?
 - e. Why did the problem behavior happen on that day instead of the day before?
3. Describe in general what things (both in yourself and in the environment) made you **VULNERABLE** to the prompting event. What factors or events made you more vulnerable to a problematic chain? What gave the prompting event such power?

Areas to examine are:

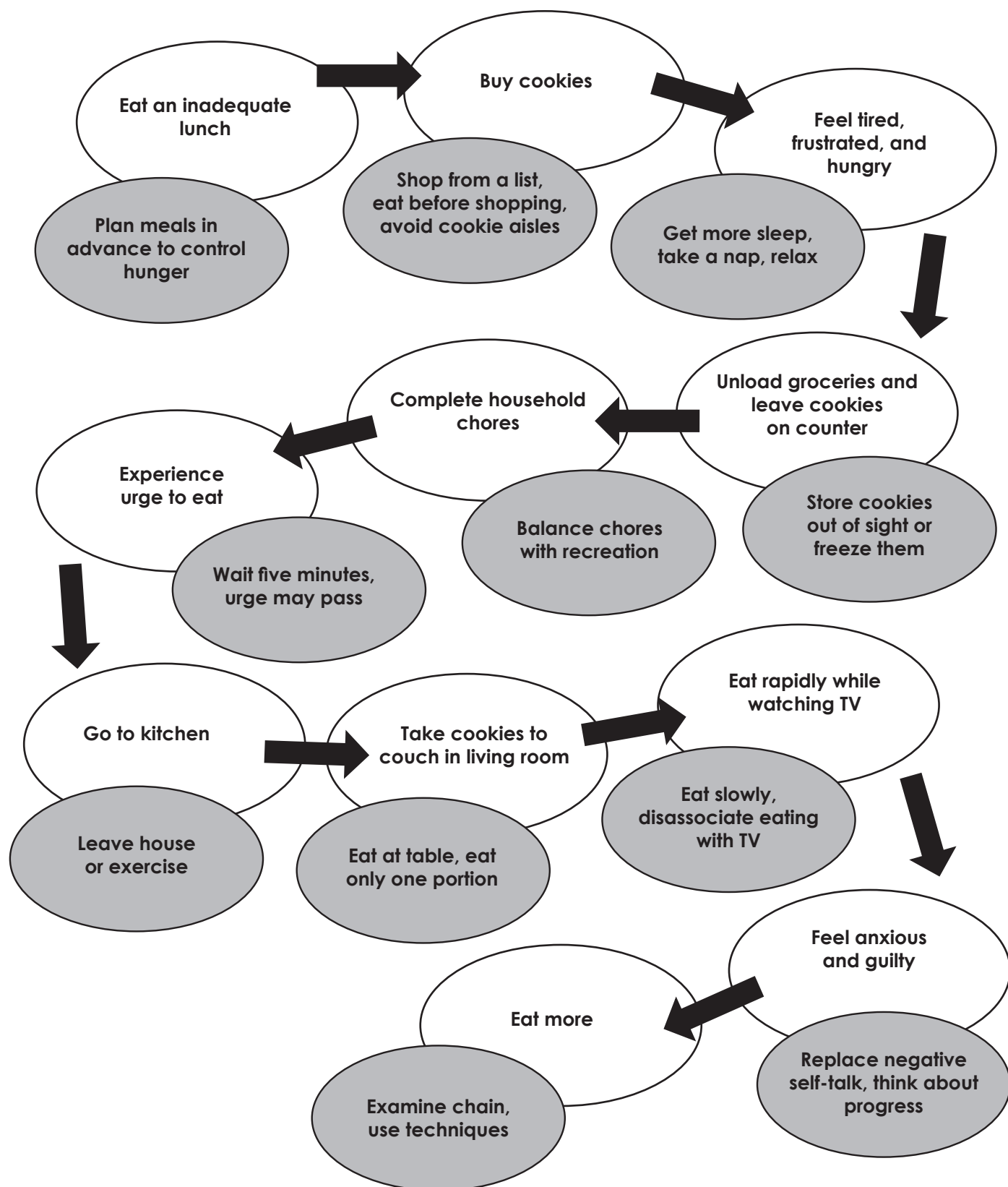
- a. Physical illness; unbalanced eating or sleeping; injury
- b. Use of drugs or alcohol; misuse of prescription drugs
- c. Stressful events in the environment (either positive or negative)
- d. Intense emotions, such as sadness, anger, fear, loneliness
- e. Previous behaviors of your own that you found stressful

4. Describe in detail **THE LINKS IN THE CHAIN OF EVENTS** that hooked the prompting event to the problem behavior.
- a. Links in the chain can be:
- Actions or things you do;
 - Body sensations or feelings;
 - Cognitions, e.g., beliefs, expectations, or thoughts;
 - Events in the environment or things others do;
 - Feelings and emotions that you experience.
- b. Imagine that your problem behavior is chained to the prompting event in the environment. How long is the chain? Where does it go? What are the links? Write out all links in the chain of events, no matter how small. Be very specific, as if you are writing a script for a play.
1. What exact thought (or belief), feeling, or action followed the precipitating event? What thought, feeling, or action followed that? What next? What next?
 2. Look at each link in the chain after you write it. Was there another thought, feeling, or action that could have occurred? Could someone else have thought, felt, or acted differently at that point? If so, explain how that specific thought, feeling, or action came to be.
 3. For each link in the chain, ask yourself if there is a smaller link you could describe.
5. What are the **CONSEQUENCES** of this behavior? Be specific. Examine both the immediate (in just seconds) effects and the delayed or longer-term effects. Figure out the reinforcers for the behavior.
- a. How did other people react immediately and later?
 - b. How did you feel immediately following the behavior? Later?
 - c. What effect did the behavior have on you and your environment immediately and later?
6. Describe in detail different more skillful **SOLUTIONS** to the problem.
- a. Go back to the chain of your behaviors following the prompting event. Circle each point or link (or fill in a link with your pencil) where, if you had done something different, you would have avoided the problem behavior.
 - b. What could you have done differently at each link in the chain of events to avoid the problem behavior? What coping behaviors or skillful behaviors could you have used?

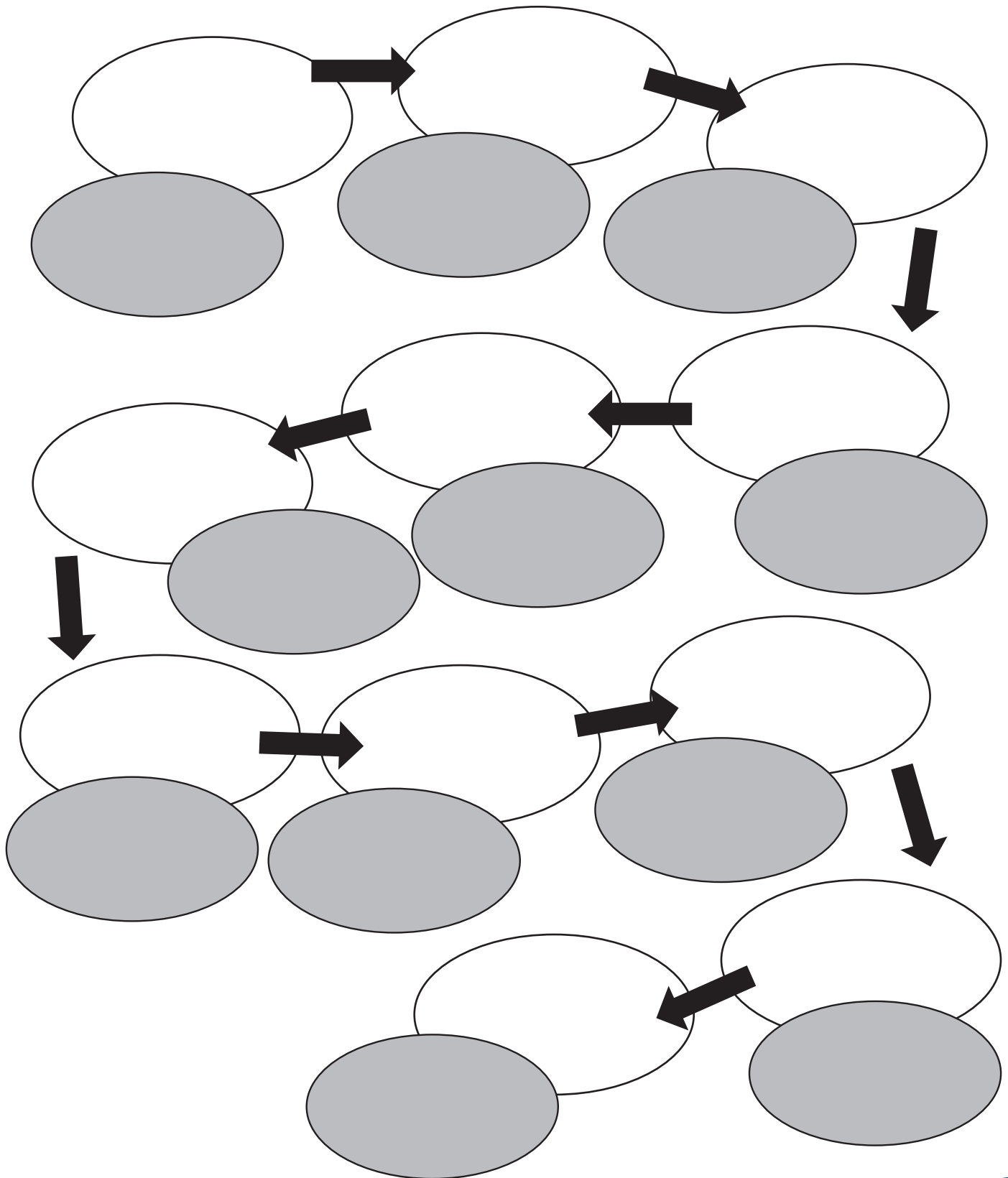
7. Describe in detail **PREVENTION STRATEGY** for how you could have kept the chain from starting by reducing your vulnerability to the chain.
8. Describe a plan for **SOLVING** the prompting event or keeping it from happening again.
9. Think through the **HARMFUL** consequences of your behavior. Figure out what is harmed so you can figure out what you need to repair or correct. Look at yourself, at your environment, and at people in your environment to see if there are any harmful consequences.
10. Describe what you are going to do to **REPAIR** important or significant consequences of the problem behavior. Describe what you will do to **CORRECT** the harm that resulted from your problem behavior. Describe how you will make things just a little bit better than they were before, that is, how you will **OVER-CORRECT** the harm.
11. Finally, in this space, you can write whatever reflects your **DEEPEST THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS** about this episode. Just start writing and continue for five minutes or so without stopping. If the topic gets upsetting to you, shift topics and keep writing. Or, you can write out any comments that you have about the analysis.



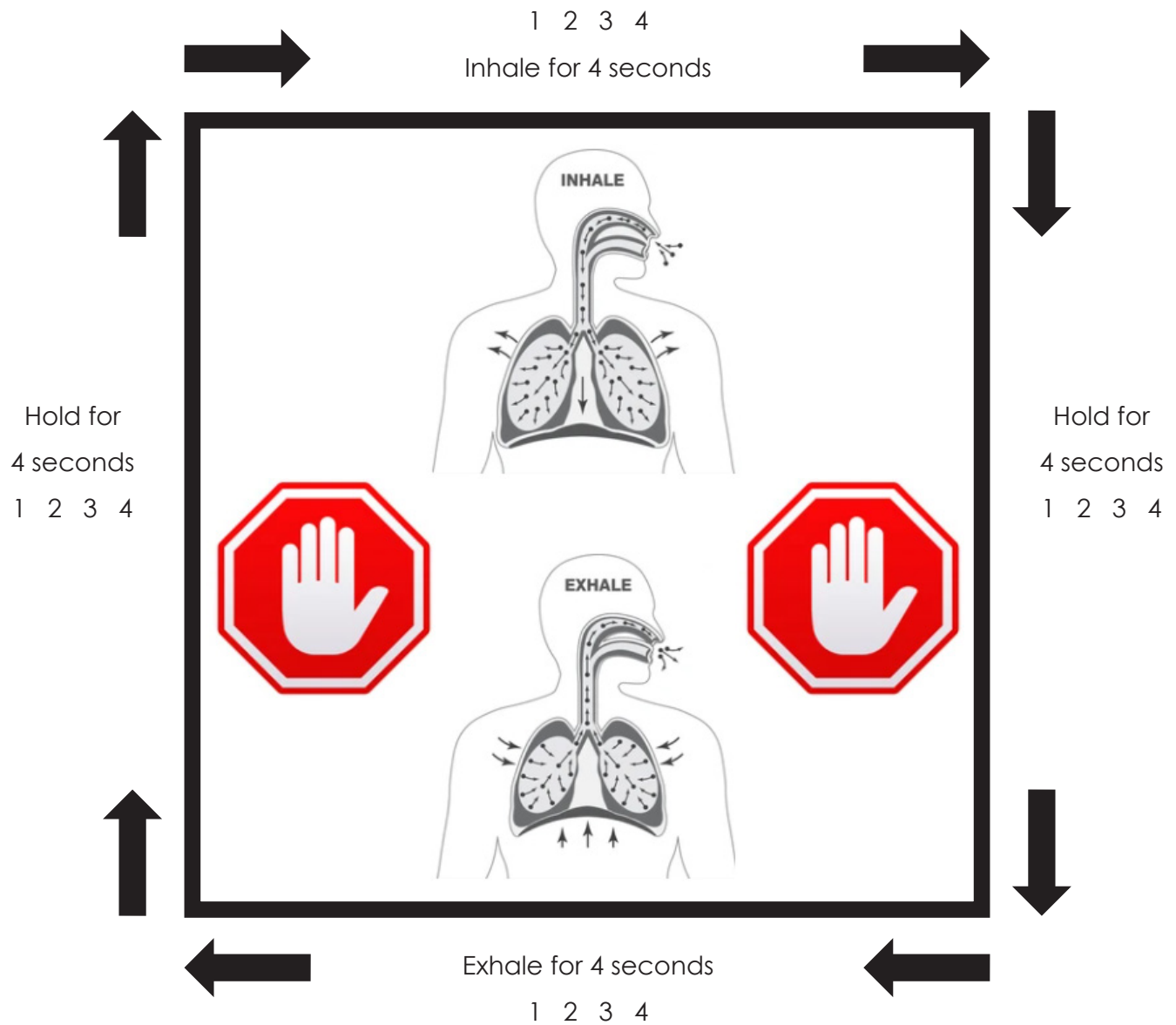
DBT Behavioral Chain Analysis: Example



DBT Behavioral Chain Analysis:



Square Breathing

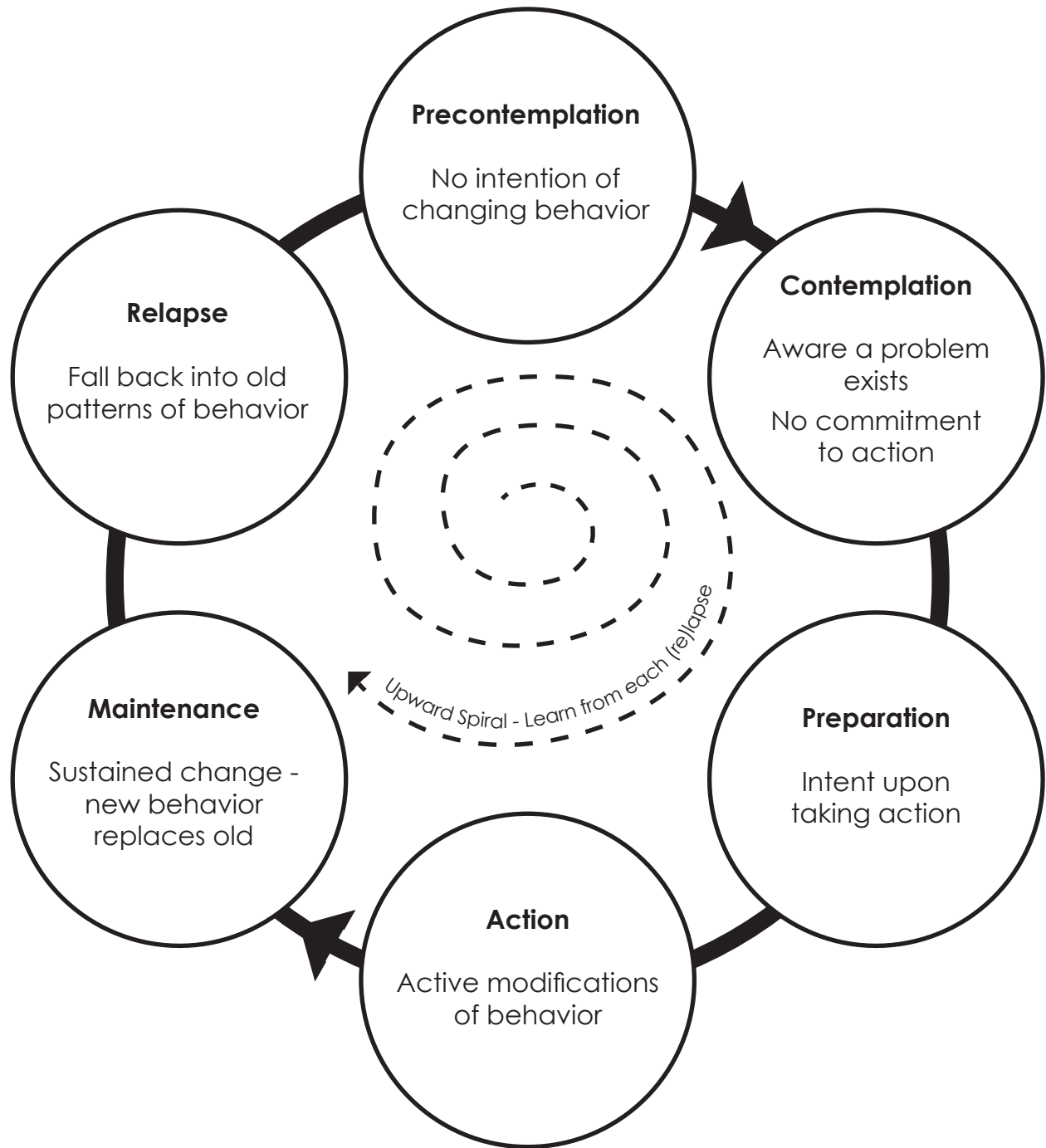


Personal Locus of Control

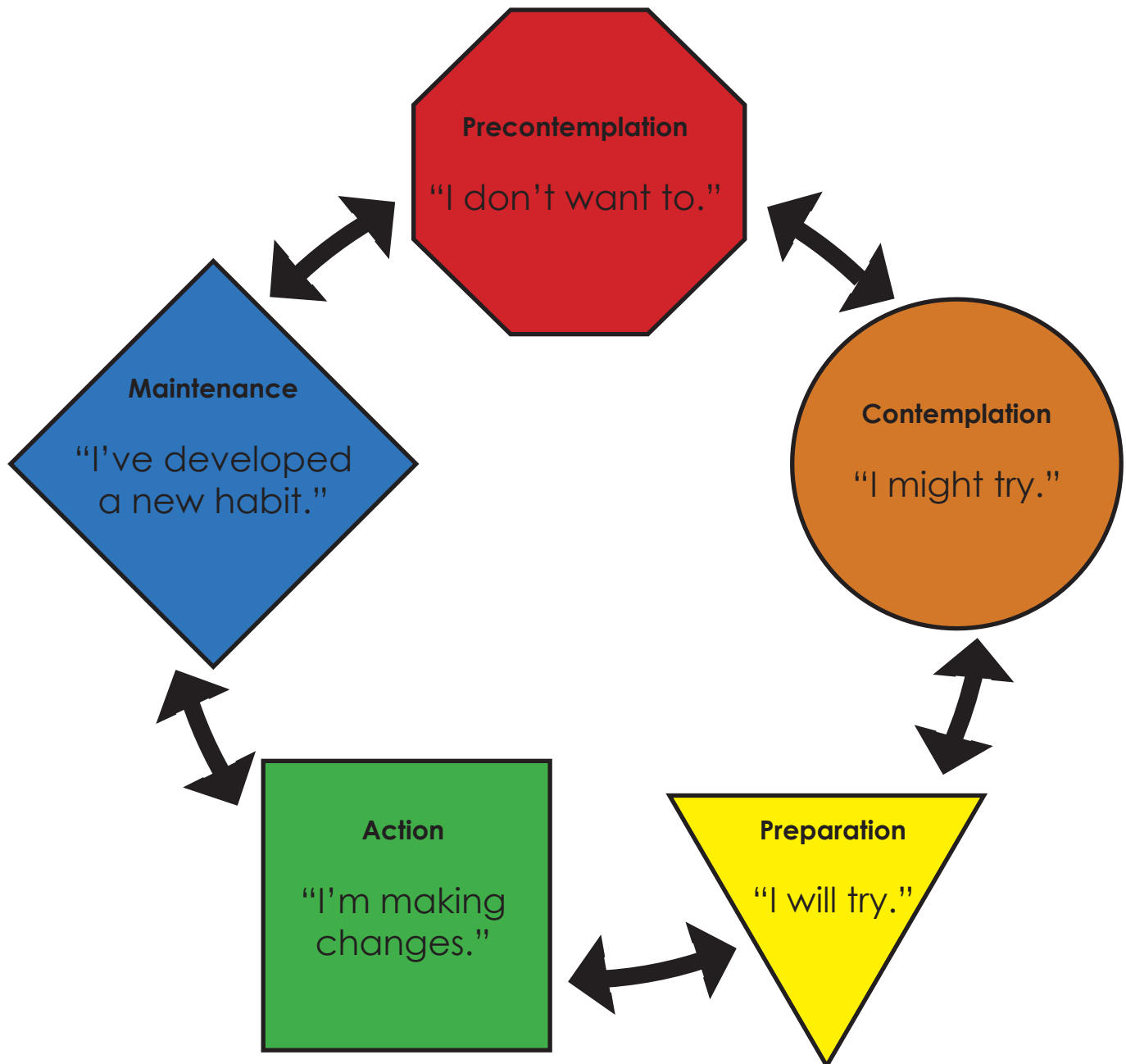
Just as being aware of your emotional thermometer is essential for knowing whether to use change or acceptance skills, it is also essential to understand what you can and cannot have control over.



Stages of Change



Stages of Change





DBT Adolescent Skills Diary Card

Instructions: Mark the days of the week you worked on each skill

General Skills - Necessary For All Skill Sets								
1.	Thinking Dialectically	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
2.	Validation of Others	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
3.	Validation of Self	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
4.	Identifying and Labeling Emotions	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
5.	Check My Own Emotional Thermometer	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
6.	Check Other's Emotional Thermometer	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
Core Mindfulness Skills								
7.	Wise Mind	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
8.	Observe	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
9.	Describe	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
10.	Participate	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
11.	Non-Judgmental Stance	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
12.	One-Mindfully	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
13.	Effectively/Doing What Works	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
14.	Radical Acceptance/Turn Your Mind to Be Willing	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills								
15.	DEAR MAN	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
16.	GIVE	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
17.	FAST	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
Emotional Regulation Skills								
18.	PLEASE MASTER	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
19.	Increasing Positive Emotions & Experiences	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
20.	Short-Term Goals	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
21.	Long-Term Goals	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
22.	Attend to Relationships	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
23.	Avoid Avoiding	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
24.	Be Mindful of Positive Experiences	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
25.	Be Unmindful of Worries	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
26.	Distract Yourself	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
27.	Opposite Action	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
Distress Tolerance Skills								
28.	ACCEPTS	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
29.	IMPROVE	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
30.	5-Senses/Self-Soothe (Crisis Survival Skills)	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU



The method to gaining competence with the DBT skills is relatively simple: you need to practice them. The more you practice the skills, the closer you come to effectively managing your emotions, behaviors, and relationships.