

The 4 Modules of DBT (Marsha Linehan)

- **Core Mindfulness Skills**

- Why? Focusing on the present ("living in the moment") without add-ons.
 - Mindfulness is simply being aware of what is happening right now without wishing it were different; enjoying the pleasant without holding on when it changes (which it will); being with the unpleasant without fearing it will always be this way (which it wont). – James Baraz
- Goals:
 - Reduce suffering and increase happiness
 - Increase control over the mind
 - Experience reality as it is
- Covers:
 - Introduces the concept of “Wise Mind”
 - Ex: Stone flake on a lake
 - Observe:
 - Ex. Notice your body sensations, observe with your eyes, observe sounds, observe smells around you, observe your urges to do something, observe sensations of touch on your skin, observe your breath, observe thoughts coming in and out of your mind like clouds in a sky.
 - Describe
 - Put words to your thoughts and feelings, ex. “sadness has just enveloped me”, or “I’m experiencing anger”. Research point: Describing and labeling emotion regulates emotions.
 - My example: my first lecture
 - Participate
 - Become one with whatever you are doing, completely forgetting yourself, throw all of your attention to the present moment.

- **Emotion Regulation Skills**

- Why?:
 - People with borderline personality disorder, emotion dysregulation or those who may be suicidal are typically emotionally intense and labile — frequently angry, intensely frustrated, depressed, and anxious. More likely to follow through in suicide.
 - This suggests that people grappling with these concerns might benefit from help in learning to regulate their emotions.
- Goals of emotion regulation skills:
 - Understand and name your emotions
 - Decrease frequency of unwanted emotions (stop unwanted emotions from happening in the first place, or change unwanted emotions once they start).
 - Decrease emotional vulnerability, increase resilience.

- Decrease emotional suffering, and manage extreme emotions so you don't make things worse.
 - Activities include:
 - Checking the facts – checking out whether your emotional reactions **fit the facts** of the situation. (Note, changing your beliefs and assumptions to fit just the facts (direct and observable) of a situation can change your emotional reaction to that situation.
 - Opposite action – When your emotions do not fit the facts, or when acting on your emotions is not effective, acting opposite (all the way) will change your emotional reactions to a situation. (Such as facing fears instead of running away).
 - Problem solving – when the facts themselves are the problem, taking steps to solve the problem will reduce frequency of negative emotions.
- **Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills**
 - Why?
 - The interpersonal response patterns –how you interact with the people around you and in your personal relationships can be the leading factor underlying distress. Some people have great difficulty navigating relationships because of earlier experiences or wounds that occurred in primary relationships, so they panic and become reactive if they think the relationship is threatened.
 - Goals of Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills:
 - Be skilful in getting what you want and need from others
 - *Q: Do you have more trouble asking for what you want, or saying no to unwanted requests? Are there some situations where it is easier?*
 - Build healthy relationships and end destructive ones
 - *Having the ability to repair relationships is more important than preventing ruptures from happening in the first place.*
 - *Don't let hurts and problems build up*
 - *Resolve conflicts before they get overwhelming*
 - Covers:
 - Guidelines for being effective at meeting your objectives (DEAR MAN)
 - Guidelines for relationship effectiveness and keeping the relationship (GIVE)
 - Guidelines for being effective in keeping respect for yourself (FAST)
 - “How to” guide for Validation, and “How to” recover from invalidation
 - Self-validation and Self-respect
- **Distress Tolerance Skills**
 - Why?
 - Most approaches to mental health treatment have paid little attention to accepting, finding meaning for, and tolerating distress.

- This task has generally been tackled by religious and spiritual communities and leaders. Dialectical behaviour therapy emphasizes learning to bear pain skilfully.
- DT skills are needed for getting through crisis situations, but are not intended to become a way of life. Over the long term, reality acceptance and problem solving have to be practiced to create a healthy and sustainable life.
- Goals of Distress Tolerance Skills
 - Survive crisis situations without making them worse
 - Accept reality when we can't change it, even if it's not how we would like for it to be (suffering = resisting reality x discomfort)
- Covers: Learning to accept oneself and the current situation. More specifically, people learn how to tolerate or survive crises using these four techniques: distraction, self-soothing, improving the movement, and thinking of pros and cons. Acceptance skills include radical acceptance, turning the mind toward acceptance, and willingness versus willfulness.

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Activity: STOP Skill

- **S**top
Do not just react. Stop! Freeze! Do not move a Muscle! Your emotions may try to make you act without thinking. Stay in control!
- **T**ake a step back
Take a step back from the situation. Take a break. Let go. Take a deep breath. Do not let your feelings make you act impulsively.
- **O**bserve
Notice what is going on inside and outside of you. What are the facts of the situation? What are your thoughts and feelings? What are others saying or doing?
- **P**roceed mindfully
Act with awareness. In deciding what to do. Consider your thoughts and feelings, the situation, other peoples thoughts and feelings. **THINK ABOUT YOUR GOALS.** Ask Wise Mind “Which actions make it better or worse?”

Activity #2: TIP The Temperature of your face to calm down fast!

- Take a deep breath and dunk your face in cold water while holding your breath (for as long as you can). The colder (think ice cubes in there) the better! Produces “dive response”

Activity #3: Squeeze an Ice Cube

- Focus on the sensations and take deep breaths.

Emotion Regulation Handout 12 (Emotion Regulation Worksheet 8)

Problem Solving

Step 1. Figure out and describe the problem situation.

Step 2. Check the facts (all the facts) to be sure you have the right problem situation!

If your facts are correct and the situation is the problem, continue with Step 3.

If your facts are not correct, go back and repeat Step 1

Step 3. Identify your goal in solving the problem.

- Identify what needs to happen or change for you to feel OK.
- Keep it simple, and choose something that can actually happen.

Step 4. Brainstorm lots of solutions.

- Think of as many solutions as you can. Ask for suggestions from people you trust.
- Do not be critical of any ideas at first. (Wait for Step 5 to evaluate ideas.)

Step 5. Choose a solution that fits the goal and is likely to work.

- If you are unsure, choose two solutions that look good.
- Do pros and cons to compare the solutions.
- Choose the best to try first.

Step 6. Put the solution into action.

- Act ! Try out the solution.
- Take the first step, and then the second . . .

Step 7. EVALUATE the results of using the solution.

It worked? Yea!!! It didn't work? Go back to STEP 5 and choose a new solution to try.

BEWARE! THE “YES – BUT” Barrier to Changing

What can I do when facing a problem?

- 1) Solve the problem or leave the situation
- 2) Change emotional state
- 3) Radically Accept circumstances for what they are
- 4) Stay Miserable (or make things worse)