Bullying and the Emotional Mind: Teaching DBT Skills to Foster Resiliency

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Objectives

- Understand DBT and Bullying Goodness of Fit
- Learn the Foundation of DBT
- Develop a Bullying Prevention Model Based on DBT Core Skills
- Cultivate DBT Strategies to help youth accept their feelings and to use thinking to change feelings

What is Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)?

- DBT is a cognitive-behavioral approach that emphasizes the psychosocial aspects of treatment.
- Premise of DBT is that individuals struggle to tolerate and regulate strong emotional states.
- Emotional dysregulation (affective instability) is caused by:
  - High sensitivity to emotional stimuli and heightened emotional intensity

Biology and Emotion Regulation

- Functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) studies in BPD show amygdala hyperactivity to specific types of stimuli:
  - “unresolved” life events, emotional faces, positive and negative emotional pictures, and emotionally-triggering scripts.
  - DBT targets amygdala hyperactivity
- part of the disturbed neural circuitry underlying emotional dysregulation.

Biology, the Amygdala, and Emotion Regulation

- Another premise is clients need validating environments in which they are taught to
- The goal of DBT is to teach healthy coping skills to help clients manage intense emotions without the use of self-destructive behavior, with the ideal result being improved relationships.

(Goodman et al., 2014)
DBT and Bullying: Goodness of Fit

in combination with biological vulnerabilities and are thought to be relevant in the etiology of bullying, BPD, depression, anxiety, and self-harm (Linehan, 1993).

• Research indicated in children under 12 who were bullied, there is an increased risk of developing poor mood and impulse control, unstable and intense personal relationships, and severe difficulty trusting the actions or motives of others (Wolke et al., 2012).

DBT and Bullying: Goodness of Fit

• Youth who engage in bullying have lower competence in managing their emotions, being empathetic, solving problems, and/or evaluating the consequences of their actions.
• Victims of bullying experience fear, isolation, anxiety, anger, hurt, and embarrassment. They have increase in health concerns and withdraw activities they once enjoyed.

Emotions can facilitate or impede youths’ peer relationships

Foundation of DBT

Paradigms
• Dialectics
• Behaviorism
• Mindfulness

Dialectical Principles
• Wholeness and Interrelatedness
• Polarity
• Continuous Change

Purpose
• Reducing dysfunctional behaviors
• Increasing skillful behaviors
• Building a life worth living

DBT and Bullying: Goodness of Fit

• Current research shows that DBT has been shown effective in treating transdiagnostic disorders.
• Emerging evidence suggests that DBT skills training (DBT-ST) reduces problems with emotions.
• DBT-ST has been shown to reduce emotion dysregulation, increase skills use, and reduce anxiety severity for individuals who met criteria for BPD, depression, anxiety, eating disorders, self-harm, and suicidal ideation.

Foundation of DBT Dialectical View

Opposites can co-exist

• A life worth living has positive and negative aspects
• Find ways to accept BOTH sides of a situation and find a synthesis that does not negate the reality of either.
Foundation of DBT
Teen Dialectics Examples

- There is no absolute truth; everyone has something to offer.
- I am doing the best I can and I can do better.
- I am tough and I am gentle. I may not have caused all of my problems, and I’m responsible for working on them.
- A life worth living has happiness, sadness, anger, and calm, and all of these things are valuable and necessary.

Obstacles to Dialectical Thinking

- **All Or Nothing**: If you’re not perfect, you’re a total loser.
- **Disqualifying the Positive**: The good stuff doesn’t count because the rest of your life is a miserable pile of crap.
- **Jumping to Conclusions**: You suddenly become a psychic mind reader and know exactly what everyone really thinks.
- **Emotional Reasoning**: You start thinking emotions are facts. I feel like she hates me, so she does.

Balanced Thinking

- Avoids all or none and accepts "both"
- Acceptance and hope
  - (Parents often feel that if they accept they give up hope; this dialectic needs to be re-enforced so they do not become hopeless)
- Independence and assistance
- Choices and limits
- Giving in and choosing priorities
- Firmness and gentleness

The Central Dialectic in DBT

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Balanced Language

- Help kids use less extreme or absolute words
- Minimize use of always, never, everyone, nobody,
- Use “I feel…” statements, instead of “You are…” statements.
- Instead of saying: “Everyone always treats me unfairly,” say “Sometimes I am treated fairly AND at other times I am treated unfairly.”

Creating Balance

- As a counselor, you balance understanding your clients’ behavior in the context of their life AND helping them to learn skills to manage their behaviors better.
  - An emphasis either on acceptance or on change is usually ineffective
- Validation means the acceptance that someone is doing the best he/she can in the context of his/her life is as true for parents as for the adolescent.
- Validation communicates empathy and acceptance and serves to de-escalate emotional situations.
Social Conformity Experiment

Creating Balance

It is important to remember, and to remind your clients, that behaviors have been learned; they can be unlearned and new behaviors can be learned to replace them.

DBT Balances

Skills Acquisition: teaching new behaviors

VS.

Validating and Reinforcing existing adaptive behaviors

Behaviorism Paradigm

A Bullying Prevention Model Based on DBT Core Skills

Mindfulness

Focusing Skills
Mindfulness

- Mindfulness is paying attention in a particular way; on purpose; in the present moment; and non-judgmentally.

- Jon Kabat-Zinn

Mindfulness is Awareness plus Acceptance of the current moment

Mindfulness Practice

Write Your Name S.L.O.W.L.Y.
- How do you hold your pencil?
- How much pressure do you use?
- Do your fingers?
- Does your whole hand move?
- What is your other hand doing?

Mindfulness Exercise Follow-Up

- How did it feel?
- What did you notice?
- What did you learn?
- Did you recognize something you did not expect?

Individuals who practice this exercise learn to observe interactions and slow down their responses, giving them time to find an effective response.

Taking Hold of Your Mind 3 States of Mind

Reasonable Mind
- Cool
- Rational
- Task-Focused
- Ruled by facts, reason and logic; Values and feelings are not important

Wise Mind
- Value both reason and logic; see the whole picture clearly

Emotional Mind
- Hot
- Mood-Dependent
- Emotion-Focused
- Ruled by emotions, mood, feelings to do or say things; Facts and reason are not important

Taking Hold of Your Mind 3 States of Mind

- Adolescents
  - Are driven by what they feel they need in Emotion Mind
  - Might “mask” their emotions or otherwise appear competent in Reasonable mind
  - Think about the most effective way to handle a situation in Wise Mind

- Parents
  - React in Emotion Mind
  - Lecture or give explanations in Reasonable Mind
  - Respond in Wise Mind

- We ask clients to ask themselves what Wise Mind would do and wait for the answer.
Practicing Mindfulness

**What Skills**
- Observe
- Describe
- Participate

**How Skills**
- Non-judgmentally
- One mindfully
- Effectively

What Skills

**Observe**
- Just notice, attend, experience being in the moment, what are you sensing – without words
- Let thoughts come in and go out
- Ex: Breathing → Doing
  - Feeling your chest rise & fall, how deep you breath, the sound of an exhale, the muscles moving, the feel of your breath on your skin → observing

What Skills

**Describe**
- Put words to an experience, label what is observed, but do not judge
- Describe a thought – recognize that it is a thought, not a fact
- Do not make assumptions about individuals, behaviors or motives. Does assume the intent of the behavior.
  - Sometimes people make an assumption—“They don’t like me.” The description of this might look like: they don’t invite me to lunch, they don’t make a response when I try to join their conversation, they avoid me, they always have little secret jokes etc.
- The description does not warrant the conclusion – there could be many different reasons people at school have cliques that have less to do with someone outside the clique than with some other factor.

How Skills

**Non-Judgmentally**
- Look at consequences of behavior and events vs. evaluating the behavior (good vs bad).
  - Your behavior is awful vs. your behavior is hurting me.
  - “When you act that way, I feel sad.”
  - “If you behave that way, you may be suspended.”
  - “If you do not change your behavior, you may not get what you want or meet your goals.”
- Change is initiated to create more desirable outcomes. (This reduces shame based feelings that can perpetuate behavior with negative outcomes)

How Skills

**One-Mindfully**
- Focus the mind to be in the moment; focusing completely on one activity at a time.
- Avoid reactions based on mood, negative thoughts, assumptions, expectations, worries etc.

What Skills

**Participate**
- Be involved in what you’re doing; get rid of self-consciousness and let go of your worries or fears
- Throw yourself totally into something; No compartmentalizing
- Ex: Have you ever had a conversation and found yourself nodding and giving facial cues?—your body is on automatic pilot while your mind is somewhere else.
- How often do you drive home without noticing and then suddenly you are home.
- Full participation is the ultimate goal in mindfulness.
How Skills

One-Mindfully
- This skill relies on being aware of your thoughts, feelings, and expectations, and observing them so you can be careful not to react based on an assumption or a mood.
- When you observe your thoughts before you speak, you can react without creating conflict. You can enter your wise mind.

Distress Tolerance

Crisis Survival Skills
Accepting Reality

• The emphasis is on skills for tolerating painful events and emotions when you cannot make things better right away; to reduce suffering and impulsivity.
• Accepting the experience of the present moment for what it is, without struggling to change it or willfully resisting it.

Distress Tolerance Skills

- Crisis Survival Skills
  - Getting through the moment of pain/distress without making the situation worse.
  - Short term benefit
- Each crisis survival skill is a method for coping with overwhelming emotions and tolerating situations.
  - Distracting
  - Self-soothe
  - IMPROVE the moment
  - Weigh the Pros and Cons

How Skills

Effectively
- Focus on what works
  - Stay away from thoughts of “right”, “wrong”, “should”, “should not”, “fair” and “unfair”.
- Do what is needed or asked in a particular situation, not the situation you WISH you were in.
- This skills means learning to give in and compromise when it leads to an effective or productive end result.
- LET GO of vengeance, useless anger, and righteousness that hurts you and doesn’t work.
**Distress Tolerance Skills**

**DISTRIBUTE**
- Do something else
- Imagine something else
- Sense – generate sensations to interrupt your focus on pain
- Think about something else
- Remember times when things were better
- Accept that pain is part of life
- Create meanings
- Take opposite action. Do the reverse of what you feel.

**Distress Tolerance Skills**

**SELF-SOOTHE the Five Senses**
- **Vision:** Notice what you see, find soothing things to look at.
- **Hearing:** Pay attention to what you can hear around you.
- **Taste:** Carefully savor flavors that the day brings you.
- **Smell:** Be aware of the memories that smell can bring.
- **Touch:** Find comfort in touch.
- **Movement:** Release energy and emotions through exercising, walking, dancing, etc.

**Distress Tolerance Skills**

**DISTRIBUTE with Wise Mind ACCEPTS**
- Reducing contact with emotional stimuli
  - Activities - keeping attention on other things
  - Contributing - taking care of others
  - Comparison - to worse situations
  - Emotions - opposite to what one is feeling
  - Pushing Away - decrease contact with painful cues
  - Thoughts - thinking of other things
  - Sensations - intense other sensations interfere with the physiological component of current negative emotions

**Distress Tolerance Skills**

**SELF-SOOTHE the Five Senses**

**Issues in Teaching Self-soothing**
- Self thoughts such as “I don’t deserve it.”
- Teach clients to self soothe as a way to lower their emotional baseline and to decrease emotional vulnerability. Don’t wait until you are in crisis to use these skills.
- Some people self soothe frequently as a way of avoiding dealing with problems.
- Encourage clients to practice using various senses rather than limiting themselves to one sense that might be more natural to them.
- For people who binge eat, it is best not to use triggering foods for self soothing since the effects often backfire.

**Distress Tolerance Skills**

**IMPROVE the moment**
- **Imagery:** Imagine a very relaxing scene.
- **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, greater wisdom, God, your own wise mind.
- **Relaxation:** Take a hot bath; get a message; breath deeply
- **One thing in the moment:** Focus your entire attention on just what you are doing right now.
- **Vacation:** Give yourself a brief vacation.
- **Encouragement:** Repeat over and over; “I CAN stand it;” “It won’t last forever;” “I will make it out of this;” “I’m doing the best I can do.”
Distress Tolerance Skills
Quick Relaxation Exercise

- Sit in a comfortable chair with your feet flat on the floor or lie down flat on your bed or floor. Close your eyes. If uncomfortable just gaze down at the floor.
- Arms and hands: Clench your fists and push your arms straight out in front of you.
- Legs and feet: Push your toes downwards, gently raise your legs, and stretch them out in front of you.
- Stomach: Push out your tummy muscles, take a breath and hold it.
- Shoulders: Scrunch up your shoulders.

Distress Tolerance Skills
Thinking of Pros and Cons

For the adolescent - to use safe or unsafe behaviors
- Evaluate the pros of using familiar behaviors which may be unsafe or dangerous.
- Evaluate the cons of using the familiar behaviors – what is the long-term consequence of this behavior?
- Look at the pros of a more skillful behavior – will it be safer
  - Is it more effective in reaching goals even if it less effective in managing pain in the moment?
- What are the cons of the safer behavior – why is it difficult to use it?
  - Does it work in the short-term to alleviate stress?

Distress Tolerance Skills
Thinking of Pros and Cons

- A way to evaluate choices between behaviors, to assess what behavior will be the most effective in the long run.
- Look at Pros and Cons of each possible choice.
- Make a list of the pros and cons of TOLERATING the distress- coping by using healthy skills. Make another list of the pros and cons of NOT TOLERATING the distress - that is, of coping by hurting yourself, abusing alcohol or drugs, or doing something else impulsive.

Distress Tolerance Skills
Thinking of Pros and Cons

- Increased self respect
- People around you will respect you
- Will help you get what you want
- Mastering Skills
- Can’t speak my mind
- Feel tense longer
- Don’t get to retaliate, just think about it
- Give up a moment of power
- Hurt Someone
- Some times it pays off
- Protect yourself/others
- Get satisfaction
- You get to end it
- Lose privileges
- Lose trust
- Lose self-respect
- Lose status

Distress Tolerance Skills
Thinking of Pros and Cons

Can’t speak my mind
Feel tense longer
Don’t get to retaliate, just think about it
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Lose status

Distress Tolerance Skills
Thinking of Pros and Cons

- Ineffective behaviors have a purpose – They provide immediate relief from pain.
- Effective choices have drawbacks – The student has to sit with the discomfort of the distress.
- The desire for immediate relief of anxiety and pain is present for children and is hard to let go of.
- Individuals need to accept some pain and discomfort in order for change to occur.
- Counselors need to understand and validate the pain and support the individuals through it.
- DBT is about long term change, not short-term relief.

Distress Tolerance Skills
Accepting Reality

Radical Acceptance
- Letting go of fighting reality, accepting reality, going with the flow, and tolerating the moment.
- Pain creates suffering only when you refuse to ACCEPT the pain.
- Deciding to tolerate the moment is ACCEPTANCE.
- ACCEPTANCE is acknowledging what is.
- ACCEPTANCE of reality requires an act of CHOICE (Turning the Mind) (“I don’t have to put up with this!”)
- You have to make an inner COMMITMENT to accept.
- ACCEPTANCE is replacing Willfulness with Willingness.
Distress Tolerance Skills

Accepting Reality

Accepting life in the Moment Skills
• Acceptance of “what is” will
  – Bring a sense of calm
  – Allow for more effective problem solving,
  – Allow you to see opportunities in the situation
    that you were not able to see when you were
    “fighting reality”.
  – Enable you to see more opportunities for
    change and hope.

Distress Tolerance Skills

Accepting Reality – Turning The Mind

Turn your mind
toward acceptance
and away from
rejecting reality

1. Notice ...
   • anger, bitterness, annoyance, falling into the sea of
     “Why me?”
   • when you are trying to...
     o escape reality; block things out; hide how you feel
2. Make an inner commitment to turn your mind
   toward acceptance
3. Practice turning your mind toward acceptance
   over and over again.
4. Develop a plan for catching yourself in the
   future

Distress Tolerance Skills

Accepting Reality Guidelines

Ways to get one’s body ready so that one’s mind can begin to accept
what “is”.
• Breathing/Observing one’s breath exercises :
  – Focus on breathing, helps to relax;
  – Helps individuals to accept and tolerate themselves, the
    world and reality as it is.
• Half-smiling exercises:
  – Relax face, neck and shoulder muscles and half-smile;
  – Accepting and tolerating with one’s whole body.
• Awareness exercises:
  – Helps with acceptance;
  – Become aware of simple things.

Distress Tolerance Skills

Accepting Reality – Willingness

Willingness is ...
• Allowing the world to
  be as it is
• Agreeing to participate
  in the world as it is
• Actively participating in
  reality
• What you need to
  overcome a threat

Willfulness is ...
• Saying NO, NO, NO
• Giving up
• Denying
• Pushing Away
• Avoiding

Distress Tolerance Skills

Steps to Turning Willfulness to Willingness

1. Ask yourself,
   – “What is the threat?”
   – “What is the catastrophe?”
2. Notice and observe willfulness
3. Radically accept the willfulness
4. Turn your mind towards willingness, acceptance, and
   participating in reality just as it is.
5. When it becomes difficult to Turn The Mind, adopt a
   (open arms & palms, half smile)
Emotion Regulation

De-escalation skills
Reduce Vulnerability and Emotion Episodes

Emotion Regulation

- Difficulties in regulating painful emotions are central to the behavioral difficulties.
- Painful feelings are “the problem to be solved”
- Dysfunctional and destructive behaviors are often behavioral solutions to intolerable pain, which regulate emotions.
- Feelings are caused by a person’s belief system or by a person’s interpretation about something that happened.
- The aim is to reduce suffering; not get rid of emotions.

Emotion Regulation Skills

- Understand and Name Emotions
  - Identify (observe and describe) emotion.
  - Understand what emotions do for you.
- Reduce Emotional Vulnerabilities to Emotion Mind
  - Decrease negative vulnerability
  - Increase positive emotions
- Change Emotional Response to Decrease Emotional Suffering
  - Let go of painful emotions through mindfulness and checking the facts.
  - Change painful emotions through opposite action
  - Change painful emotions through solving the problem

Emotion Regulation Skills

8 Primary Emotions

1. Anger
2. Sorrow
3. Joy
4. Fear
5. Disgust
6. Guilty/Shame
7. Interest
8. Surprise

Emotion Regulation

Emotion Vulnerability

- High sensitivity
  - Immediate reactions
  - Low threshold for emotional reaction
- High reactivity
  - Extreme reactions
  - High arousal dysregulates cognitive processing
- Slow return to baseline
  - Long lasting reactions
  - Contributes to high sensitivity to next emotional stimulus

Emotion Regulation

The Problem

AVOIDANCE OR ESCAPE

PROBLEM BEHAVIOR: alcohol & drugs, self-injury, aggression

EMOTION DYSREGULATION

TEMPORARY RELIEF

Reinforcement strengthens this whole process

e.g., others back off
Emotion Regulation: DBT Intervenes

**Avoidance or Escape**
- Teach how to prevent triggers
- CUE
- Reduce power of triggers and emotion vulnerability
- Without escape, emotion dysregulation should improve
- TEMPORARY RELIEF

**Emotion Dysregulation**
- Regulate or tolerate distress
- PROBLEM BEHAVIOR
- Teach alternative ways to avoid or distract
- Teach how to stop this behavior

**Problem Behavior**
- AVOIDANCE OR ESCAPE
- TEMPORARY RELIEF

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**Emotion Regulation Skills**

**Act Effectively Despite Emotional Arousal**
- Remember you are not your emotion: necessarily on emotion
- Block avoidance
  - Combat Myths: It’ll Change if I Wait, It’ll Kill Me, It’ll Last Forever
- Problem solving to change emotions
  - To reduce frequency of negative emotions

**Emotion Regulation Skills**

**Opposite to Emotion Action**
- Act to what you want to do
  - Walk away rather than abuse someone
  - Approach something you are afraid of
  - Do something active when you want to do nothing
  - Talk about something that you feel ashamed of
  - Watch a funny movie when you feel sad

**Emotion Regulation Skills**

- **Fear**
  - Hide
  - Approach
- **Anger**
  - Attack
  - Gently
- **Sadness**
  - Withdraw
  - Get Active
- **Guilt**
  - Avoid
  - Face

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**Emotion Regulation Skills**

- **Increase Emotional Tolerance**
  - Through mindfulness
  - By observing your emotion
    - Check the Facts
    - Do the facts of the situation justify the emotion?
    - Feel the emotion by experiencing them as a wave coming and going
      - You are not the wave
      - Don’t avoid it
      - Don’t judge it
      - Don’t make it bigger or smaller
      - Don’t hold on to it

**Emotion Regulation Skills**

- **Fear**
  - Hide
  - Approach
- **Anger**
  - Attack
  - Gently
- **Sadness**
  - Withdraw
  - Get Active
- **Guilt**
  - Avoid
  - Face

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**Emotion Regulation Skills**

- **Distraction**
  - Activities with focused attention
  - Self-soothing
- **Intense Exercise**
- **Relaxation**
  - Progressive muscle relaxation
  - Slow diaphragmatic breathing
  - Biofeedback
- **Temperature**
  - Ice cubes in hands
  - Face in ice water (whole body dunk)
Emotion Regulation Skills

5 steps to handling your feelings.

• **Name the Emotion** — Be specific how you feel.
• **Claim the Emotion** — Say: “This is my feeling. No one made me feel this way. How I am feeling is my response to this conflict.”
• **Tame the Emotion** — If you are uncomfortable with the intensity of your feelings, do physical or mental activities that reduces them.
• **Reframe the Emotion** — Say: “Is this the first time I had felt this way? Am I overreacting? What am I failing to understand about other person? How can I reframe my feelings in this situation?” Is it worth the battle/loss (even if I am right)?
• **Aim the Emotion** — Say: “What am I going to do with this emotion? Will I talk with someone (with assertive communication)?” Do I need to understand my part of the conflict? Am I willing to accept and forgive? Will I ask the other party to resolve the conflict without assuming?”

Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills

- *People Skills*
  - Assertiveness

**Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills**

Skills used to:
- **Accumulate Positive Emotions** via stating what you need, saying no, and coping with conflict.
- **Build Mastery** via balancing priorities versus demands and “wants” and the “shoulds” in order to gain mastery and self-respect.
- **Cope Ahead of Time** with emotional situations.
- **Take Care of Your Mind** by taking care of your body.
- **Interpersonal Effectiveness** skills used to build, maintain, or end destructive relationships; achieve objectives with others via stating what you need, saying no, and coping with conflict.
- **Observing and Describing Interpersonal Situations**
- **Factors Reducing Effective Assertiveness**

**Facts About Interpersonal Effectiveness**

1. I say, and do the correct thing, people will like me. If people don’t like me, it’s probably because I have done something bad or wrong.
2. I expected a situation to go away on its own.
3. I don’t deserve to get what I want or need.
4. If I need a request, I won’t share that I am a very weak person.
5. I cannot be really in touch if I can’t find this myself.
6. I have to do something I want to do before I make a request.
7. Taking requests is really good, feel self-centered, selfish (un-feminine).
8. It doesn’t make any difference: I don’t care really.
9. Obviously, the problem is just in my head. If I could just think differently I would just think differently and I would always be happy anyway.
10. That is a stereotypical (its really bad) to be thinking and talking about sex, will destroy my reputation.
11. I am not going to ask or prepare to always a selfish thing to do.
12. I would be willing to sacrifice my own needs for others.

**Propositional Reasoning**

“Propositional Reasoning” refers to the way we think about the world. It is the process of forming beliefs, attitudes, and values based on our experiences and the information we encounter. When we engage in propositional reasoning, we use logic and reasoning to evaluate and organize our beliefs.
Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills

• Interpersonal effectiveness skills include:
  – **Assertiveness** skills
  – **Communication** skills
  – **Refusal** skills
  – **Conflict resolution** skills

Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills

• Objective Effectiveness
  – **DEAR MAN or DIG**
  – Maintain the Relationship
  – **GIVE**
  – Maintain Self Respect
  – **FAST**
  – Your Goals
  – **RAN**

Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills

Create/Maintain Relationship: “**GIVE**”

• Gentle: be nice, no attacks, no threats, no judgement
• Interested: listen to other person; don’t interrupt, don’t assume
• **Validate**: convey understanding, verbally and nonverbally
• Easy Manner: smile, be lighthearted, use a little humor

Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills

Maintain Self-Respect: “**FAST**”

• Fair: validate your and the others feelings, needs, wishes
• no Apologies: don’t apologize for making the request or having an opinion
• Stick to values: avoid selling out your values and beliefs
• Truthful: don’t lie, exaggerate, or act helpless when you aren’t

Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills

Obtain Goal/Make Requests: “**DEAR MAN**”

• **Describe**: Describe the situation - Stick to the facts
• **Express**: Express your feelings and opinions about the situation
• **Assert**: Assert yourself by asking what you want clearly
• **Reinforce**: Reinforce or reward the person ahead of time by explaining consequences
• **Mindful**: Maintain your focus on your objectives (i.e., broken record), ignore if other person attacks, threatens or tries to change subject.
• **Appear Confident**: Be effective and competent, good eye contact, confident voice
• **Negotiate**: Be willing to give to get, offer and ask alternative solutions. Turn the table to other person. “What do you think we should do?”

Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills

Validation

• Acknowledging what is sane, true and valid about the client’s point of view. Validation must be authentic and genuine.

• Validation is not synonymous with approval, agreement, or sympathy.
Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills
Create A Validating Environment

DBT’s aim in creating a validating environment is to teach individuals to trust and validate their own emotions, thoughts and activities.

Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills
Validation

Teach children to validate others because:
• it helps their relationships go better
• it calms intense emotions and situations so that they can problem solve

Teach children to self-validate because:
• it quiets defensive or fearful emotions so they can problem solve.
• it allows them to let go of the pain and exhaustion that constant self-justification and self-doubt requires.

Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills
Invalidating Behaviors – The Don’ts

• Not paying attention, being distracted, being anxious to end the conversation
• Telling the other person what he/she DOES feel or SHOULD feel
• Pathologizing or criticizing what the other person thinks or feels
• Patronizing, condescending or treating the other person as fragile or incompetent
• Emotionally invalidating environments are generally intolerant of displays of negative feelings/emotions, especially when such displays do not match what others think the environment supports the emotion to look like!
• Not responding to or validating the other’s self-disclosure

Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills
Do’s of Validating

• Communicating that you are listening and not judging or blaming;
• Acknowledging how hard it is when his/her emotions seem to spin out of control and he/she feels powerless to control them.
• How painful it must feel to behave in ways that he/she may regret later or that upset others.
• Acknowledging how difficult and even embarrassing it is to be “different” when he/she wants to be like everyone else.
• Recognizing and acknowledging the circular nature of communication and how each are affected in a transactional way.
• Acknowledging the difficulty in his/her lives and letting him/her know you accept him/her in this moment even while you are helping him/her to change his/her behaviors.
• Accepting that the child is doing the best he/she can with the circumstances and difficulties in his/her life and the ways he/she have learned to manage their difficulties.
• If kids feel validated, they will be better able to receive feedback and change their own behaviors.

DBT and Teen Reactions

• “Staying in logical mind and using emotional regulation, I have been able to stay rational and calm and get what I need.”
• “The number one skill that I used was DEAR MAN, especially with my mother. I basically sat down and thought about how I could use each element of DEAR MAN in a conversation with her. DEAR MAN in combination with...just about everything else.”
• “The Mindfulness skill allowed me to heighten my awareness of my limits. I’m more aware of when I’m overworked, or over emotional and I know what triggers the overload.”
• “My experience here with DBT has been truly life changing. I’ve developed skills that will help me the rest of my life.”
Bullying No More: Understanding and Preventing Bullying

In Bullying No More, Dr. Kimberly L. Mason offers an arsenal of techniques to end the cycle of bullying. Rather than assigning blame and doling out punishment (response tactics which rarely work in these cases), Mason focuses on changing behavior by repairing relationships.

This down-to-earth, yet comprehensive guide will help readers:
- Recognize the signs and the different forms of bullying
- Understand the three main roles that children play in bullying
- Decipher the myths and facts about bullying
- Put proven intervention and prevention strategies into use
- Communicate more effectively with children

Covering aspects of bullying for all ages and taking into account modern forms via online, social media, and smartphone video and photo usage, this timely book will be an invaluable resource for parents, educators, youth leaders, or anyone else who deals with kids on a regular basis who want to intervene and protect children from the harmful effects of bullying.

I know that it's not always easy to keep your chin up when dealing with challenging clients and situations. I thank you for coming today to help youth use their wise mind to regulate their emotions, cope with distress, and improve their relationships.

Bullying and the Emotional Mind: Teaching DBT Skills to Foster Resiliency

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