Adolescent Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills Training

Melissa Butler, Ph.D., HSPP
What is DBT?

- “Dialectical Behavior Therapy”
- Developed by Marsha Linehan
DBT is helpful for people who have trouble controlling and regulating their emotions.
“What the Heck is DBT?”

- [https://youtu.be/Stz--d17ID4](https://youtu.be/Stz--d17ID4)
- Created by Esme Shaller at University of California San Francisco
Dialectics

- Two opposites can be true at the same time
- Create a new way of viewing the situation
Components of Adolescent DBT

• Weekly Individual psychotherapy
• Additional Family Therapy Sessions
• Multifamily Group Skills Training
• Youth and Parent Telephone Coaching
• Therapist Focused Consultation Teams
Components of Adolescent DBT: Weekly Individual Psychotherapy

DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOR THERAPY DIARY CARD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urge to:</th>
<th>Emotions:</th>
<th>Actions:</th>
<th>Drugs:</th>
<th>Urge</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Emotion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Self Harm</td>
<td>Suicide</td>
<td>Impulsive Behavior</td>
<td>Pain</td>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>Shame</td>
<td>Sad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>0-5</td>
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<td>0-5</td>
<td>0-5</td>
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<td>0-5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mon
Tues
Wens
Thurs
Fri
Sat
Sun

What I did well this Week:
Mon
Tues
Wens
Thurs
Fri
Sat
Sun

Intensity:
0 = not at all, 1 = A bit, 2 = Somewhat, 4 = VERY Strong, 5 = EXTREMELY STRONG

WILLS USED
0 = NOT THOUGHT ABOUT OR USED, 1 = THOUGHT ABOUT, NOT USED, DIDN’T WANT TO, 2 = THOUGHT ABOUT, NOT USED INTENDED TO
3 = TRIED, BUT COULDN’T USE THEM, 4 = TRIED COULD DO THEM BUT THEY DIDN’T HELP, 5 = TRIED, COULD USE THEM, HELPED
6 = DIDN’T TRY, USED THEM, DIDN’T HELP, 7 = DIDN’T TRY, USED THEM HELPED

HOW OFTEN DID YOU USE THEM?
Fill in: DAILY ___________ 2/3 TIMES WK: ___________ 1TIME WK ___________
Adolescent DBT Skills Training Modules

- Mindfulness
- Distress Tolerance
- Emotion Regulation
- Interpersonal Effectiveness
- Walking the Middle Path
MODULE 1: Mindfulness Skills

Mind Full, or Mindful?
What is Mindfulness?

- Paying attention
- On purpose
- In the present moment
- Non-judgmentally
Examples of Mindfulness Practice

- Mindful Breathing
- Mindful Observation
- Mindful Eating
- Mindful Listening
- Walking the Line
MODULE 2: Distress Tolerance Skills
Distress Tolerance

• Skills focus on tolerating and surviving crises

• Skills Include:
  – Crisis Survival Skills
  – Reality Acceptance Skills
"SUDS" Distress Ratings

The Subjective Units of Distress Scale --- or SUDS --- is an easy way to track and let others know how much distress you are having at any given time. The scale ranges from zero to 100.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUDS Rating</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Extreme Distress</td>
<td>Exploding or Completely Overwhelmed! The most you can imagine. Not able to think, only react.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90's</td>
<td>High to Extreme Distress</td>
<td>Ready to explode! You can't think very clearly. At risk to make very bad choices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80's</td>
<td>High Distress</td>
<td>High levels of fear, anxiety, sadness, anger, agitation, and/or body tension. These feelings cannot be tolerated for long. Bodily distress is substantial. It is difficult to focus on anything.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70's</td>
<td>Moderately High Distress</td>
<td>Feel agitated and tense. Beginning to feel overwhelmed. It's hard to focus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60's</td>
<td>Moderate Distress</td>
<td>Most people would describe as a &quot;bad day&quot; but still able to do what you need to do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50's</td>
<td>Mild to Moderate Distress</td>
<td>Unpleasant, nagging negative mood state (i.e. frustrated, feeling down, or worried) but is not enough to produce many bodily symptoms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40's</td>
<td>Mild Distress</td>
<td>Mild feelings of tension, mild worry, mild sadness, or annoyance or irritation. Unpleasant but easily tolerated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30's</td>
<td>&quot;Normal&quot;</td>
<td>Alert (but not distressed). Amount of tension and stress needed to keep your attention from wandering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20's</td>
<td>Peaceful/Calm</td>
<td>Warm, mellow, contented feeling. Like when relaxing at the beach, or at home in front of a warm fire on a cold, wintery day, or walking peacefully in the woods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10's</td>
<td>Very Relaxed</td>
<td>Awake but very, very relaxed; almost closing off. Mind wanders and drifts. Drowsy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zero</td>
<td>Complete Relaxation</td>
<td>No distress at all. Slow, deep breathing. Asleep.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TIPP Skills – used to change body chemistry quickly

**T** – Temperature
Change your body temperature using cold water or ice.

**I** – Intense exercise

**P** – Paced breathing
Breathe in to the count of 5, hold then breathe out to the count of 7.

**P** – Paired muscle relaxation
Tense your muscles when breathing in and relax them when breathing out.
Temperature
Four Square Breathing

Repeat at least 4 times....
Progressive Muscle Relaxation for Kids

- Squeeze a lemon
- Stretch like a cat
- Chew that carrot
- Hide in your shell
- Swing up high
- Squeeze through a fence
- Get that fly off your nose
- Squish your toes in the mud
- Relax
Distraction Techniques

- Count Backwards from 100 by 7 (or from 20 by 3)
- 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Exercise
- Alphabetize DVD collection
- Count Freckles, Ceiling tiles, anything
- Say alphabet backwards
- Find the Rainbow
Crisis Survival Kit

• Usually includes a list of 10 “tools” and an actual kit of items
Radical Acceptance

• **When faced with a difficult problem:**
  – You can problem-solve
  – Change how you feel about the problem
  – Accept it
  – Stay miserable (no skill use)
  – Make things worse (act on urges)

• **When you can’t solve the problem or change your emotions about the problem, try acceptance**
Radical Acceptance

• Skill of accepting the things you can’t change

(Miller, Rathus, & Linehan, 2017, p.304)
MODULE 3: Emotion Regulation Skills
1. Understanding and Naming emotions
   a. Understanding the function of emotions
   b. Identifying obstacles to changing emotions
   c. Identifying and labeling emotions

2. Changing unwanted emotions

3. Reducing Vulnerability to Negative Emotions

4. Managing extreme emotions and difficult situations
“Ride the Wave”
Skill

- EXPERIENCE YOUR EMOTION
- As a WAVE, coming and going.
- Don’t try to GET RID of emotion.
- Don’t PUSH it away.
- Try not to BLOCK emotion.
- Try not to SUPPRESS emotion.
- Don’t try to KEEP emotion around.
- Don’t HOLD ON to it.
- Don’t AMPLIFY it.
Opposite Action

- Each emotion has an action urge
  \( (\text{sad} = \text{shut down, isolate}) \)

- Practice doing the opposite
  \( (\text{opposite action} = \text{be active, be with people}) \)
Pleasant Events List – accumulate positive emotions

- Meditating, yoga
- Watching TV
- Going for a walk
- Listening to music
- Taking a bath
- Coloring
- Painting nails
- Pet dog
- Call a friend
- Read a book
- Lighting candles
- Getting a massage
- Go out for coffee
- Being alone
- Daydreaming
- Dancing
MODULE 4: Interpersonal Effectiveness

- Asking for what one needs
- Saying no
- Managing interpersonal conflicts
- Skills to maintain close and intimate relationships
DEAR MAN

• Describe the situation
• Express your feelings
• Assert and ask for what you want or say “no”
• Reinforce - the person by stating positive benefits
• Mindful and stay focused on what you want
• Appear confident
• Negotiate – be willing to give to get
GIVE Skills – keeping the relationship

• **G**entle – be nice and respectful, no attacks, no threats, no judging, no sneering
• **A**ct **I**nterested
• **V**alidate – with words and actions that you understand the other person’s feelings and thoughts
• **E**asy **M**anner – smile, use humor, leave attitude at the door
Module 5: Walking the Middle Path

Skills Covered:

• Works on balancing acceptance and change
• Validation skills
• Behavioral Change Strategies
Validation vs. Invalidation

Invalidation

Increased Conflict & Distress

Emotion Dysregulation
Validation

• **Validation** – communicates that a person’s feelings, thoughts, and actions are understandable

• **Invalidation** – communicates that a person’s feelings, thoughts, actions in a particular situation make no sense.

• “manipulative” “stupid” “overreaction” “attention-seeking,” or not worthy of time, interest, or respect
We can invalidate with the best of intentions....

- Jane: “I’m a terrible person.”
- Jenny: “What are you talking about? You’re great.”
Ten Things to Avoid Saying to Your Teen

- You just want attention
- You shouldn’t feel that way
- Yes, but....
- Just be happy
- Don’t worry about it
- You’re being manipulative
- I’m not going to talk about it
- It’s not a big deal. It could be worse
- You’re being stupid (selfish, lazy, etc.)
- You don’t know what you’re talking about
Validation

• The Validation skill is rated by adolescents and parents as the most helpful (Rathus et al., 2015)
DBT Resources

• Behavioral Tech LLC –
  [www.behaviortech.org](http://www.behaviortech.org)
• [www.BPDCentral.com](http://www.BPDCentral.com)
• Mindfulness: [www.dbtselphelp.com](http://www.dbtselphelp.com)

• Apps:
  – Stop, Breathe, Think, & Relax
Evaluating Adolescent DBT: Does it Work?

Meta-analyses:
- Cook & Gorraiz (2016)
- Iyengar et al. (2018)

Randomized Clinical Trials:
- Mehlum et al. (2014).
- McCauley et al. (2018)
DBT Skills Training Alone – shows promise but more data needed

Valentine et al. (2015)
Contact Information

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References


