

# Dialectical Behaviour Therapy and Treatment

Monday, March 20, 2023

## Overcoming Anxiety, Depression, and Mental Health Challenges with DBT Skill

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Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) is an evidence-based treatment approach that has gained significant popularity in the field of mental health. As a close cousin to the widely known Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), [DBT is a type of talk therapy](#) that focuses on training individuals with the necessary skills to overcome a range of mental health struggles, including anxiety and depression.

DBT skills training is structured around four key modules, each of which teaches practical and applicable skills. These modules focus on **mindfulness, interpersonal effectiveness, emotion regulation, and distress tolerance**. Rooted in the concept of dialectics, DBT helps individuals navigate the tension between seemingly opposing constructs, such as acceptance and change.

By learning and practicing these skills, individuals can develop a greater sense of control over their thoughts and emotions, leading to improved mental health and an enhanced quality of life. As such, DBT is proving to be an effective tool in helping individuals overcome a wide range of mental health challenges.

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# The Power of DBT Skill Training

It's possible that you're already aware of the profound transformative effects of Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), and if that's the case, then feel free to skip ahead to the next section. Nevertheless, while the benefits of DBT are evident, mastering its skills and applying them to your personal experience can be a daunting endeavor to undertake on your own.

It's important to emphasize seeking guidance from a qualified professional can be an essential aspect of effectively acquiring these skills, particularly if you're grappling with clinically significant issues such as anxiety, depression, or suicidal ideation. If you're curious about how DBT can help you surmount your mental health struggles, it may be worthwhile to reach out to a provider to learn more.

By taking that crucial first step and exploring the possibilities of Dialectical Behavior Therapy, you'll be opening yourself up to a journey of self-discovery and transformation. Don't hesitate to seek out a provider to discuss whether DBT might be the ideal fit for you.

This article is the first of a series on Dialectical Behavior Therapy and is intended to give an introduction to DBT and the skills training that makes this model so effective for so many. Check back for future installments of the DBT series to learn more and dive deeper into the skills and resources DBT has to offer.

## The History of Dialectical Behavior Therapy

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) has a rich history rooted in the personal and professional experiences of its founder, psychologist [Marsha Linehan](#). Her own struggles with mental health, including suicidal ideation, borderline personality disorder, and schizophrenia, inspired her to develop a treatment model that would effectively help others dealing with similar conditions. Drawing from her own experiences, Linehan recognized that many individuals with mental health struggles deal with conflicting thoughts and concepts, often described as "black and white" thinking. In her work, Linehan sought to teach her clients to embrace the complexities of life and recognize that multiple contradicting ideas can coexist.

Initially, DBT was developed to treat borderline personality disorder, but it has since been researched and found to be effective for a range of diagnoses, including suicidal behaviors, eating disorders, anxiety, depression, and substance use. Incorporating Zen philosophies, DBT aims to help clients develop a deeper understanding of their emotions, internal cues, and reactions. Linehan skillfully blended [Cognitive Behavior Therapy](#), [humanism](#), and [Zen principles](#) to create an effective treatment model. In fact, DBT was the first to incorporate mindfulness into therapy as a formal intervention.

The evolution of DBT over the years has shown that the original vision of Linehan has been realized. DBT is an evidence-based intervention that has helped countless individuals struggling with mental health issues. As we continue to study and learn

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more about this innovative model, we can undoubtedly expect to see even more exciting developments in the field of mental health treatment.

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## The Modules Broken Down

In order to effectively address the areas of life that are identified as deficient or compromised in the DSM definition of mental health diagnoses, DBT relies heavily on skill education. To better comprehend the purpose and organization of DBT, it is crucial to have a basic understanding of the four modules that are covered in the therapy.

## The Four Modules of DBT: A Brief Overview

DBT is a comprehensive approach to therapy that involves skill-building in four main areas. These modules are designed to help clients develop the skills they need to manage difficult emotions, communicate effectively, regulate their behavior, and cope with distress. Let's take a closer look at each of the four modules.

### Mindfulness

Mindfulness skills are integral to DBT therapy. Adopted from Eastern meditation practices, these skills help clients become more self-aware, introspective, and present in the moment. Practicing mindfulness is beneficial for emotional regulation, impulsivity, and managing emotionally-charged reactions.

### Interpersonal effectiveness

Interpersonal effectiveness skills focus on developing positive social skills and relationships, regardless of one's emotional state. These skills are particularly useful for conflict resolution and maintaining meaningful, positive connections with others.

### Emotion regulation

Emotion regulation skills are designed to help clients gain control over their intense emotions, learn to self-soothe, and act in a thoughtful way. This includes labeling emotions, understanding how emotions affect behavior, and developing strategies to decrease negative emotions and increase positive ones.

### Distress tolerance

Distress tolerance skills are essential for managing the negative emotions, distress, and pain that are an inevitable part of life. This module helps clients learn to accept what they cannot change and manage their emotions during difficult times, through skills such as self-soothing and de-escalation.

### DBT & Me

The acquisition of skills through [Dialectical Behavior Therapy](#) (DBT) can prove invaluable in the process of recognizing one's emotions, internal stimuli and

managing their reactions. With consistent application and possibly the aid of a qualified professional, individuals can gain deeper insights into their emotional tendencies and seamlessly integrate these skills into their daily lives. For those who require additional guidance in utilizing these skills to overcome mental health challenges such as anxiety or depression, expert assistance is available.

Seeking therapy following a mental health diagnosis can be difficult and intimidating. It can be helpful to look into different modalities and types of therapy to help familiarize yourself with the process to feel more comfortable.

This series of articles will also provide in-depth information that could help you decide if DBT is a good fit for you and how to pursue it. DBT skills are great evidence-based resources to help understand and process emotions and regulate distress and communicate your feelings in effective ways. If you think DBT may be a good fit for you, [reach out](#) and contact [Thira Health](#) to get more information and set up a consultation.

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