

DBT Skills Training

Enhancing Capabilities to Change

Presented by:

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Skills Group

- Skills Group is held once a week for 2 - 2 ½ hours
- Two facilitators per group (at least one is a Master's-level clinician)
- Generally 6-8 clients per group
- Recommend:
 - 12 - 15 year old group
 - 16 - 18 year old group
 - 19 - 22 year old group
 - 23 years old and up group
- Use “Skills Training Manual for Borderline Personality Disorder” by Marsha Linehan as primary manual to teach skills and learn group format

Targets for DBT Skills Training

Target # 1:

Eliminate **THERAPY DESTROYING** behaviors (examples next slide)

Target # 2:

Increase **SKILL ACQUISITION** (Mindfulness, Distress Tolerance, Interpersonal Effectiveness and Emotion Regulation skills)

Target # 3:

Decrease **THERAPY INTERFERING** behaviors (not paying attention, leaving early, refusing to participate, doodling, etc.)

Therapy DESTROYING Behaviors

- Attacking each other (verbally or physically)
- Monopolizing group time (after repeatedly instructing a client not to)
- Threatening behaviors (verbal and non-verbal)
- Engaging in life-threatening behavior in group
- Throwing objects
- Yelling
- Constant use of foul language
- Coming to group high or intoxicated
- Foul odor or poor hygiene
- Offensive/Inappropriate dress attire

Rules of Group

- Clients who drop out of therapy are out of therapy
- In order to be in group, clients must be in on-going individual therapy
- Clients are not to attend group under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Clients are not to discuss past or present NSIB with other clients outside of group
- Client who call one another for help when FEELING suicidal, must be willing to accept help from the person they called
- Information obtained during group is confidential
- Client who are going to miss or be late should call their skills trainers ahead of time
- Clients may not form “private” relationships outside group
- Sexual partners are not allowed in group together

Format of Group

- 10 - 15 minutes = Mindfulness Exercise
- 45 minutes = Homework Review
- 5 - 10 minutes = Break
- 45 minutes = Teach Skill
- 5 minutes = Wind Down

Roles of Skills Trainers

- Primary Leader:
 - Begins group on time
 - Conducts behavioral chain analysis on those who are not compliant with homework assignments
 - In charge of moving the group from one person to the next during homework review
 - Teaches the skill to the group
 - Enforces the group rules, norms and expectations
 - Seen as “the bad cop” by the group members

Roles of Skills Trainers

- Co-Leader:
 - Observes any dialectical tension in the group and mediates
 - Rings the bowl if any judgments are made
 - Validates and soothes the “down” client
 - Offers alternative ways of teaching skills
 - Provides skills coaching or one-on-one attention to clients who need it
 - Typically seen as “the good cop” by the group members

Diary Cards

Name:

Dates:

CORE MINDFULNESS SKILLS

	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
Wise Mind: reasonable (logical) mind/emotional mind							
Observe: just notice without reacting - thoughts/feelings							
Describe: put words on experiences - JUST THE FACTS							
Participate: do it, throw yourself into something							
Non-Judgmental Stance: don't judge others or yourself as good/bad, worthy/unworthy, fair/unfair							
One-Mindful: do one thing at a time, let go of distractions, be in the moment							
Effectiveness: do what works, play by the rules, let go of vengence/anger and who/what is right or wrong							

DISTRESS TOLERANCE SKILLS

Distract with ACCEPTS: Activities, Contribute to others, Compare to others, change Emotions, Push away crisis thoughts, focus on positive Thoughts, feel Sensations							
Self-Soothe: with Vision, Touch, Hearing, Smell, Taste							
IMPROVE the moment: Imagery, Meaning, Prayer, Relaxation, Focusing on one crisis at a time, Vacation, Encouragement							
Pro's and Con's: of using skills vs. suffering							
Radical Acceptance: it is what it is, freedom from suffering requires acceptance from deep within - doesn't mean approve; totally accepting the crisis as it is							

INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS SKILLS

DEAR MAN: Describe, Express feelings, Assert, Reinforce, stay Mindful, Appear confident, Negotiate							
GIVE keep relationships: Gentle approach, act Interested, Validate, use an Easy manner							
FAST self respect: be Fair, no Apologies, Stick to values, be Truthful							

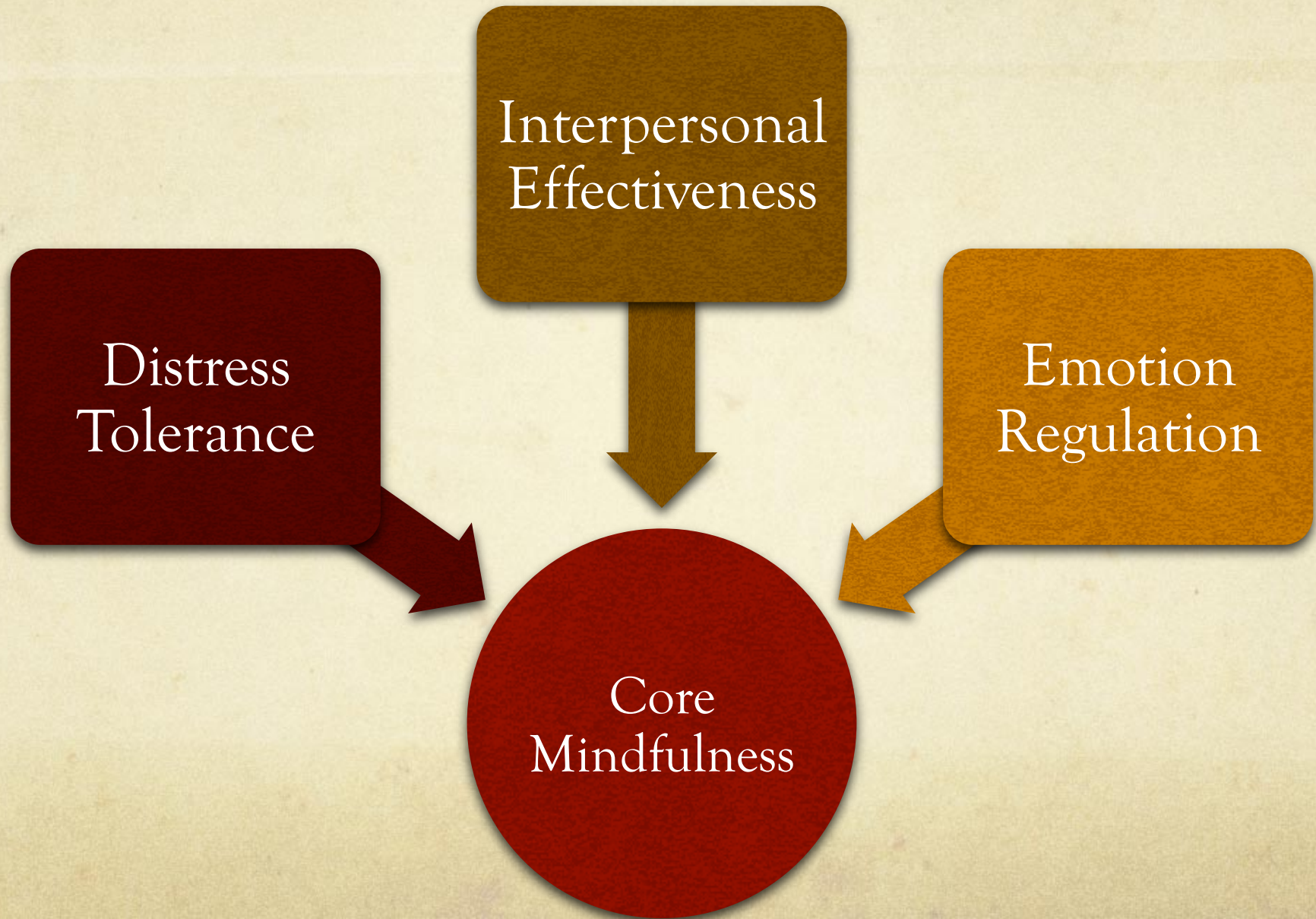
EMOTION REGULATION SKILLS

Reduce Vulnerability PLEASE: treat Physical iLness, balance Eating, Avoid mood altering drugs, balance Sleep, Exercise							
Build Mastery, do something that makes you feel good about yourself and makes you feel in control							
Build Positive Experiences: do pleasant things that are possible now and will build a life worth living							
Opposite Action: try things you are afraid of, get active when down; doing opposite to emotion							

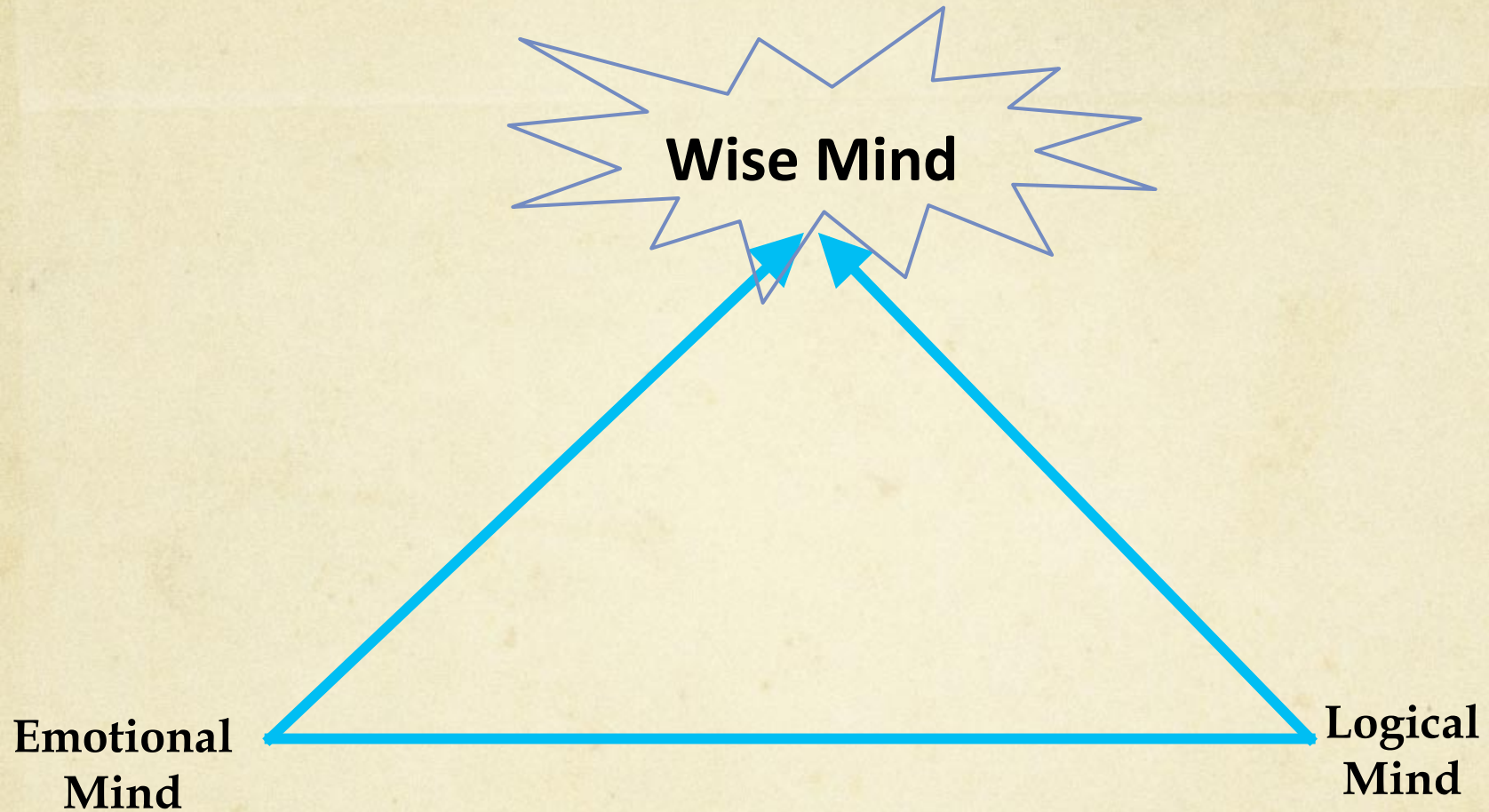
Homework Review

- Have clients share their efforts to practice their skills they are being taught
- Primary leader will go around the circle and ask each client to share
- Not practicing skills should be analyzed in-depth (behavioral chain analysis)
- Prod each client gently to analyze their own behavior, to validate their difficulty and counter their natural tendency to judge themselves and if needed offer more effective strategies for the coming week
- Client-to-client praise, validation and problem solving is encouraged and reinforced.

Order of Modules



WISE MIND *



* Adapted from: Linehan, M.M. (1993) *Skills Training Manual for Treating Borderline Personality Disorder*. The Guildford Press, New York and London

Core Mindfulness Skills

Living a life of awareness

Mindfulness Skills

- The “core” skills of DBT
- Means to be completely in touch with and aware of the present moment while taking a non-evaluative and non-judgmental approach to the experience
- “Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way; On purpose, in the present moment and non-judgmentally.”
– Jon Kabat-Zinn
- Three “What” Skills (Observe, Describe, Participate)
- Three “How” Skills (Non-Judgmental Stance, One-Mindful and Effectiveness)

Observe

- Sensing an experience as just an experience
- Observing without attaching or pushing away (teflon mind)
- Stepping away from in order to observe (in a non-dissociative way)
- Practice observing without labeling the experience
- Being alert to feelings, thoughts and urges
- Prolong nothing; Terminate nothing

Describe

- Goal of observe = describe
- Put labels and words on the experience
- Only describe what you see and what you know
- Use “just the facts”
- Move away from interpreting, assuming and evaluating
- No adding or subtracting
- Not what you think, but only what you know

Participate

- Goal of describe = participate
- Participate is the goal of life
- Enter wholly into the experience and become the moment you are in
- Let go of self-consciousness; fear of failure; fear of judgment
- Spontaneously throw yourself in (all in) with a Wise Mind

Non-Judgmental Stance

- Judging is a shorthand way of evaluating consequences as good or bad, fair or unfair, worthless or worthwhile
- Judging is the addition of your thoughts or opinions to situation (either yourself, others or reality)
- Taking a non-judgmental stance means to see reality as it is
- Judging causes us unending problem emotions

One-Mindful

- Opposite of mindlessness and multi-tasking
- Doing one thing mindfully (aware) at a time
- Controlling attention but not what you see
- Learning to switch attention from one task to another
- 3 reasons to practice being one-mindful:
 - 1) You just have to suffer the moment you are in
 - 2) You won't miss out on this moment
 - 3) You increase effectiveness

Effectiveness

- Root word of effectiveness is “effect” (result, goal, outcome, objective, desire, change)
- Focus your attention on “doing what works”
- “Doing what works” means:
 - Play by the rules
 - Letting go of who is right vs who is wrong
 - Letting go of what’s fair vs unfair
 - Letting go of anger and vengeance
 - “Don’t cut off your nose to spite your face”

Distress Tolerance Skills

Crisis survival skills

Distress Tolerance

- Learning how to tolerate and survive a crisis without making it worse
- You cannot avoid every single crisis
- A crisis is short-term and doesn't last forever
- You know you are in a crisis when you want it resolved
RIGHT NOW
- Sometimes you cannot solve your crisis so you will have to tolerate and get through it skillfully

Distract with Wise Mind ACCEPTS

- A = Activities (the more strenuous the better)
- C = Contribute (do something nice for someone else)
- C = Compare (thinking about a time when it was worse)
- E = Emotions (create opposite emotion)
- P = Put away (shelve the crisis and come back to it later)
- T = Thought (repeat a positive thought over and over)
- S = Sensations (temperature, intensity and pressure)

IMPROVE the moment

- I = Imagery (improve the situation in your imagination)
- M = Meaning (finding meaning and purpose in life)
- P = Prayer (pray with words; pray for acceptance)
- R = Relaxation (pace breathing; body scan; progressive relaxation)
- O = One crisis at a time (focus and tolerate just this crisis)
- V = Vacation (take a vacation from adulthood)
- E = Encouragement (positive self-talk, cheerleading statements, affirmations)

Self-Soothe

- Teaching clients how to soothe their 5 senses:
- Touch
- Taste
- Smell
- Vision
- Hearing

PROS AND CONS*

	PROS	CONS
YES		
NO		

* Adapted from: Linehan, M.M. (1993) *Skills Training Manual for Treating Borderline Personality Disorder*. The Guildford Press, New York and London

RADICAL ACCEPTANCE

4 ways you can respond to a crisis:

- 1) Solve the crisis
- 2) Change how you think/feel about the crisis
- 3) Accept the crisis
- 4) Stay miserable

- ▣ Radical = total; complete; all the way; 100%
- ▣ Radical Acceptance = total acceptance
- ▣ Acceptance DOES NOT equal Approval
- ▣ Accept what is; accept the current moment; accept what should be
- ▣ Willingness vs Willfulness
- ▣ “Turning the Mind” over and over and over again

Interpersonal Effectiveness

Assertiveness Training 101

Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills

- Teaching clients how to make requests in ways that increases the probability of them getting that request met
- Saying “no” to other people’s demands
- Maintain and improve relationships in life
- Increase self-respect and have others respect your client as well

Objective Effectiveness: DEAR MAN

- Ask yourself, “What do I want and how do I want to go about getting it met”?
- D = Describe (describe the situation clearly using just the facts)
- E = Express how you feel (use “I” statements)
- A = Assert your objective (state your need or your “no”)
- R = Reinforce your objective (explain why it’s important)
- M = stay Mindful (don’t get diverted or distracted)
- A = Appear confident (“act as if”)
- N = Negotiate (be willing to give to get)

Keep Relationship Effective: GIVE

- Ask yourself, “How do I want the other person to feel about me after this is all said and done?”
- G = be Gentle (no attacks; no threats)
- I = show Interest (active listening)
- V = Validate (try and understand the other person’s position)
- E = use an Easy manner (relax, be light on your feet, use humor when appropriate)

Self-Respect Effective: FAST

- Ask yourself, “How do I want to feel about myself when this is all said and done?”
- F = be Fair (do not act helpless when you’re really not)
- A = no Apologies (don’t apologize for how you feel and demanding your rights be met)
- S = Stick to values (don’t go against your values just to be liked and included)
- T = be Truthful (no lies; be honest)

Emotion Regulation

Getting in control

Emotion Regulation Skills

- Learn how to identify and label emotions
- Learn how to reduce emotional vulnerability
- Learn how to decrease emotional suffering and increase positive emotions
- Learn how to change or reduce an emotion by acting opposite to what the emotion is trying to get you to do

Reduce Vulnerability: PLEASE

- PL = treat Physical illness: (take care of your sickness)
- E = balance Eating: (balanced diet)
- A = Avoid mood altering drugs and alcohol
- S = balance Sleep (sleep hygiene)
- E = get Exercise (get active every day)

Build Positive Experiences

- Doing fun things both in the short term and long term
- Plan for positive experiences to occur
- Be mindful to how you feel while participating in the positive experience
- It's hard to feel like life is worth living if you are not doing fun things!

Build Mastery

- Opposite to learned helplessness
- Do things that make you feel like you are in control and confident
- Try challenging things and see it through to the end
- Start by making a list and writing out goals

Opposite Action

- Every emotion has an action
- Action fuels more emotion
- Every emotion has an opposite action
- When you want to decrease your emotion, do the opposite action to the emotion
- Do the opposite action **ALL THE WAY!**

Communication Strategies

- Also known as “stylistic” strategies
- Viewed as dialectic, these two styles must form a balance. This balance generates the synthesis.
- In order to synthesize the two, the clinician must be able to switch seamlessly between the two with comfortable rapidity.
- This rapid and seamless switching is seen as the style that represents the synthesis or balance.
- Not so much the “what” of DBT, but the “how” .
- 2 main communication strategies: reciprocal and irreverence

Reciprocal Communication

- Display responsiveness to the client's emotional status and needs.
- Soothe by showing interest and warmth.
- Reduce emotional intensity.
- Use self-disclosure to communicate the clinician's reactions, attitudes, etc.
- Communicate therapist vulnerability.
- Offers genuineness.