

What is DBT?

Overview

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) is a cognitive behavioral treatment that was originally developed to treat chronically suicidal individuals diagnosed with borderline personality disorder (BPD). In addition, research has shown that it is effective in treating a wide range of other disorders such as substance dependence, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and eating disorders.

Who Can Benefit?

People who struggle with:

- Inadequate sense of self
- Low self-esteem
- Impulsive, self-damaging behaviour and/or suicidal behaviour
- Big mood swings, intense emotions
- Chaotic relationships, fear of abandonment, and an inability to sustain relationships
- Dissociation, depersonalization

What skills are taught in DBT?

DBT includes four sets of behavioral skills.

- ***Mindfulness***: the practice of being fully aware and present in this one moment
- ***Distress Tolerance***: how to tolerate pain in difficult situations, not change it
- ***Interpersonal Effectiveness***: how to ask for what you want and say no while maintaining self-respect and relationships with others
- ***Emotion Regulation***: how to change emotions that you want to change

What does "dialectical" mean?

The term "dialectical" means a synthesis or integration of opposites. The primary dialectic within DBT is between the seemingly opposite strategies of acceptance and change (accepting that you're doing the best you can, and want to do more).