

DBT for Football Officials (and Life in General)

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What does Dialectical Mean in DBT?

- Dialectical = two opposite ideas can be true at the same time, and when considered together, can create a new truth and a new way of viewing the situation. There is always more than one way to think about a situation.

What is Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)

- DBT is an effective treatment for people who have difficulty controlling their emotions and behaviors.
- DBT aims to replace problem behaviors with skillful behaviors.
- DBT skills help people experience a range of emotions without necessarily acting on those emotions.
- DBT helps people create a life worth living

Goals of Skill Training (Problems to Decrease)

- Reduced awareness and focus; confusion about self (Not always aware of what you are feeling, why you get upset, or what your goals are, and/or have trouble staying focused)
- Emotional Dysregulation (mood changes with little control and/or steady negative emotional state).
- Impulsivity (acting without thinking it all through)
- Interpersonal problems (keeping relationships steady, keeping self respect, getting what you want)
- Family Challenges (extreme thinking, absence of flexibility, difficulty navigating conflict)

Goals of Skills Training (Behaviors to Increase)

- Core Mindfulness Skills
- Emotion Regulation Skills
- Walking the Middle Path Skills
- Distress Tolerance Skills
- Interpersonal Effectiveness

DBT Assumptions

1. People are doing the best they can.
2. People want to improve
3. People need to do better, try harder, and be more motivated to change.
4. People may not have caused all of their own problems and they have to solve them anyway.
5. People must learn and practice new behaviors in all different situations in their lives.
6. There is no absolute truth

Mindfulness: Taking Hold of your Mind

- Being in control of your mind rather than letting your mind be in control of you.
1. Full awareness (Opened Mind): Being aware of the present moment (e.g., thoughts, emotions and physical sensations) without judgment and without trying to change it.
 2. Attentional Control (Focused Mind): Staying focused on what thing at a time.
 3. Non-Judgmental: Not evaluating as good or bad or right or wrong – open for things being what they are
 4. Non-Attachment: Let things come and go

Mindfulness: Why bother?

- Use mindfulness to know when to use skills rather than old emotional reaction habits
- Give you more choices and more control over your behavior. It helps you slow down and notice emotions, thoughts and urges (i.e., increases self awareness) and helps you chose a behavior more thoughtfully, rather than act impulsively and make situations worse.
- Lesson your pain, tension, and stress and in turn can even improve your health.

Three States of Mind

1. Emotional Mind (Is “hot” and ruled by your feelings and urges)
2. Reasonable Mind (Is “cool”, ruled by thinking, facts and logic)
3. Wise Mind (includes both reason and emotion; it is the wisdom within each person and the state of mind to access to avoid acting impulsively, and when you need to make an important decision). Wise mind helps us think more clearly in the presence of strong emotions.

Mindfulness “What” Skills

- Observe
 - Just notice the experience in the present moment
 - Don't push away your thoughts and feelings. Just let them happen, even if they're painful
- Describe
 - Describe only what you observe without interpretations. Stick to the facts. Instead of “that person has an attitude”, you can describe that person as “rolling their eyes, speaking with a loud voice”
- Participate
 - Throw yourself into the present moment (it's OK to feel sad)
 - Fully experience the moment without being self conscious

Mindfulness “How” Skills

- Don't Judge
 - Notice but don't judge as good or bad
 - When you find yourself judging, don't judge your judging.
- Stay Focused
 - Concentrate your mind: Let go of distractions and refocus your attention when it drifts, again and again
- Do What Works
 - Be effective: Focus on what works to achieve your goal
 - Don't let emotions control your behavior
 - Act as skillfully as you can to achieve your goals

Distress Tolerance

- Why bother tolerating painful feelings and urges?
 - Pain is part of life and can't always be avoided
 - If you can't deal with your pain, you may act impulsively
 - When you act impulsively, you may end up hurting yourself, hurting someone else, or not getting what you want.

Crisis Survival Skills – Distract with Wise Mind

“ACCEPTS”

- Activities - Do something like call a friend, go for a walk
- Contributing – Contribute to (do something nice for) someone
- Comparisons – Compare yourself to those less fortunate. Compare how you are feeling now to a time you were doing worse.
- Emotions – Create different emotions. Listen to soothing or uplifting music, get active when you are sad
- Pushing Away – Push the painful moment out of your mind temporarily, build an imagery wall between you and the situation.
- Thoughts – Replace your thoughts. Read or count backwards from 100 every other number, repeat words of a song
- Sensations – Intensify other sensations. Hold or chew ice, listen to loud music, squeeze a stress ball

Crisis Survival Skills – “IMPROVE” the Moment

- Imagery – Imagine very relaxing scenes of a calming, safe place. Imagine things going well.
- Meaning – Find or create some purpose, meaning, or value in pain. Make lemonade out of lemons.
- Pray – Open your heart to a supreme being, ask for strength to bear the pain.
- Relaxation – Try to relax your muscles, get a massage.
- One thing in the moment – Focus your entire attention on what you are doing right now
- Vacation – Give yourself a brief vacation; take a short walk, get a coffee, take a one hour breather from hard work.
- Encouragement – Cheerlead yourself. “I can stand it”, “It won’t last forever”, “I’m doing the best I can”

Accepting Reality – Choices we can make

- When you can't solve the problem or change your emotions about the problem, try acceptance as a way to reduce your suffering
- Why bother accepting reality
 - Rejecting reality does not change reality
 - Changing reality first requires accepting reality
 - Refusing to reality can keep you stuck in unhappiness, anger, sadness, bitterness or other painful emotions
- Radical Acceptance
 - Radical Acceptance is the skill of accepting the things you can't change
 - Radical = complete and total accepting in mind, heart and body
 - Acceptance – seeing reality for what it is, even if you don't like it
 - Acceptance can mean to acknowledge, recognize, endure, not give up or give in.

Walking the Middle Path

- Dialectics – More of What it is.
 - There is always more than one way to see a situation and more than one way to solve a problem
 - All people have unique qualities and different points of view
 - Change is the only constant
 - Two things that seem like (or are) opposites can both be true
 - Honor the truth on both sides of a conflict. This does not mean giving up your values or selling out. Avoid seeing the world as “black and white”, “all or nothing” ways.
 - This perspective helps pave the road to the middle path by helping you
 - Expand your thoughts and ways of considering life situations
 - “Unstick” standoffs and conflicts
 - Be more flexible and approachable
 - Avoid assumptions and blaming

Middle Path – Thinking Mistakes

- All-Or-Nothing Thinking, Black-and-White Thinking. If you are not perfect, you're a total loser. If you don't get everything you want, it feels like you got nothing.
- Catastrophizing (Fortunetelling Error). You predict the future negatively without considering more likely outcomes.
- Emotional Reasoning. "I feel...", therefore it is. I feel my supervisor hates me, therefore he does. Not always reflective of facts.
- Personalization. You see yourself as the cause of things you absolutely have no control over or the target of stuff that may have absolutely nothing to do with you. We insert ourselves as the cause when we shouldn't

How we can Validate Ourselves

- Actively listen and pay attention to yourself. Be mindful of your thoughts, feelings and behaviors
- Describe your feelings without passing judgment. “Wow, I’m really angry right now”.
- Accept that it OK to have your emotions. It’s OK to feel sad sometimes
- Acknowledge that the emotion may make sense in the situation. Show tolerance for yourself and your emotions. “It makes sense that I’m not able to focus very well with the stress I am under”

Emotion Regulation – Opposite Action to Change Emotions

- Emotions come with specific ACTION URGES that push us to act in certain ways
- These are common urges associated with a sample of emotions
 - Fear – escaping or avoiding
 - Anger – attacking or blame
 - Sadness – Withdrawing, becoming passive, isolating
 - Jealousy – Verbal accusations, attempt to control, acting suspicious
- Acting Opposite = acting opposite to the action urge when the emotion is doing more harm than good.
 - Fear/Anxiety – Approach: approach events, tasks, places, people you afraid of, over and over, confront
 - Anger – Gently Avoid: gently avoid the person you are angry with (rather than attacking). Take a time out and breathe in and out deeply and slowly. Be kind rather than mean.
 - Sadness – Get Active: Build mastery and increase pleasant activities
 - Jealousy – Let go of Controlling other's actions

Interpersonal Effectiveness – “FAST” Skills

- (be) Fair – Be fair to yourself and the other person
- (no) Apologies – Don't over apologize for your behavior, for making a request or being you. If you wronged someone though, don't under apologize.
- Stick to Values – Stick to your own values and opinions. Don't sell out to get what you want, to fit in, or to avoid saying “no”.
- (be) Truthful – Don't lie, don't act helpless when you are not, don't make up excuses or exaggerate

Interpersonal Effectiveness – “THINK” Skills

- Think....about it from the other persons perspective
- Have empathy – what might he or she be feeling or thinking?
- Interpretations – Can you think of more than one interpretation or explanation for the other person’s behavior?
- Notice – ways the other person has been trying to make things better, to help, or to show he or she cares
- Use Kindness – Can you use kindness and be gentle when you approach the other person?

Final Thoughts

- Use these tools and skills to lead a better life as well as be a better official
- Be humble and stay positive
- Have fun
- Be patient
- Keep expectations real
- Be kind to yourself. We are all just imperfect human beings
- Be honest with yourself – Be the best self evaluator
- You are Enough