

Overview of DBT Skills Training for Suicidal Adolescents

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Main References

- 1) Miller, Alec, et al. *Dialectical Behavior Therapy with Suicidal Adolescents*. New York: The Guilford Press, 2007. Book.
- 2) DBT 911: A great application for smartphones with built-in exercises

DBT Structure

- Individual Therapy: One 1 hour session per week
- Phone Coaching
- Skills Group: One 2-2.5 hour group per week
- Family Therapy/Involvement (variable)
- Consultation Group: One 1.5-2 hour group per week

Individual Therapy and Skills Group

Individual Therapy

Life Threatening Behaviors

Therapy Interfering Behaviors

Quality of Life Interfering Behaviors

Essential Life Skills

Skills Group

Mindfulness

Distress Tolerance

Interpersonal Effectiveness

Emotion Regulation

OUTLINE

- Skills Groups
 - Diary Card
 - Behavioral Chain Analysis

- Individual Therapy
 - Mindfulness
 - Distress Tolerance
 - Interpersonal Effectiveness
 - Emotional Regulation

INDIVIDUAL THERAPY

Individual Therapy Tools

- Diary Card
- Behavioral Chain Analysis
- Suicide Risk Assessment

Diary Card

- Patient is to fill out a Diary Card prior to every session
- Should stick to the most important issues
- Examples of things to include:
 - Actual attempts at SI/self-harm
 - Urges to SI/self-harm
 - Drug/Alcohol Use
 - Emotions
 - Medication Compliance
 - YOU CAN BE CREATIVE!

Behavioral Chain Analysis

- Step-by-step approach to looking objectively at events that led up to self-harm
- First, patient documents in detail the series of events
- Second, patient documents thoughts and feelings that accompanied each event
- Lastly, therapist works with patient to generate alternative solutions/interject places where skills could be used

Guidelines for a Behavioral Chain Analysis

1) Describe the specific PROBLEM BEHAVIOR (example cutting or a suicide attempt)

- A) Be very specific and detailed. Avoid vague terms.
- B) Identify exactly what you did, said, thought, or felt
- C) Describe the intensity of the behavior and other characteristics of the behavior that are important
- D) Describe the problem behavior in enough detail that an actor in a play or movie could recreate the behavior exactly

Guidelines for a Behavioral Chain Analysis

2) Describe the specific PRECIPITATING EVENT that started the whole chain

A) Identify the environmental event that started the chain. Always start with some event in your environment, even if it doesn't seem to you that the environmental event caused the problem behavior. Here are some possible questions to get to this:

1) When did the sequence of events that led to the problem start?
problem start?

2) What was going on the moment the problem started?

3) What were you doing, thinking, feeling, and imagining at the time

4) Why did the problem behavior happen on that day instead of the day before?

Guidelines for a Behavioral Chain Analysis

3) Describe the VULNERABILITY FACTORS happening before the precipitating event. What factors or events made you more vulnerable to a problematic chain? Areas to examine include the following:

- A) Physical illness, unbalanced eating or sleeping, injury
- B) Use of drugs or alcohol, misuse of prescription drugs
- C) Stressful events in the environment (positive or negative)
- D) Intense emotions, such as sadness, anger, fear, or loneliness
- E) Previous behaviors of your own that you found stressful

Guidelines for a Behavioral Chain Analysis

4) Describe in excruciating detail the CHAIN of EVENTS that led up to the problem behavior

* Imagine that your problem behavior is chained to the precipitating event in the environment. How long is the chain? Where does it go? What are the links? Write out all links in the chain of events, no matter how small. Be very specific, as if you are writing a script for a play.

followed
feeling, or action
What next?

A) What exact thought (or belief), feeling, or action the precipitating event? What thought, feeling, or action followed that? What next?

there
occurred?
acted differently at
thought, feeling or

B) Look at each link in the chain after you write it. Was there another thought, feeling, or action that could have occurred? Could someone else have thought, felt, or acted differently at that point. If so, explain how that specific action came to be.

C) For each link in the chain, ask yourself: is there a smaller link I could describe?

Guidelines for a Behavioral Chain Analysis

5) What were the CONSEQUENCES of this behavior? Be specific. How did other people react immediately and later? How did you feel immediately following the behavior? How about later? What effect did the behavior have on you and your environment?

Guidelines for a Behavioral Chain Analysis

6) Describe in detail different SOLUTIONS to the problem

A) Go back to the chain of your behaviors following the prompting event. Circle each point or link where, if you had done something different, you would have avoided the problem behavior

B) What could you have done differently at each link in the chain of the events to avoid the problem behavior? What coping behaviors or skillful behaviors could you have used?

Guidelines for a Behavioral Chain Analysis

7) Describe in detail a PREVENTION STRATEGY for how you could have kept the chain from starting by reducing your vulnerability to the chain.

8) Describe what you are going to do to REPAIR important or significant consequences of the problem behavior

SKILLS GROUPS

MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness Training

- Overarching Philosophy: help patients be more in touch with themselves and their environments in the moment
- 3 States of the Mind
- What Skills
- How Skills

Mindfulness - 3 States of the Mind

- Emotional Mind
- Reasonable Mind
- Wise Mind

Mindfulness - “What” Skills

- Observe
- Describe
- Participate

Mindfulness - “How Skills”

- Non-Judgementally
- One Mindfully
- Effectively

DISTRESS TOLERANCE

Distress Tolerance

- Learn Crisis Survival Skills. Core skills include:
 - Self-Soothing Skills
 - Improve the Moment
 - Learn to Evaluate Pros and Cons
 - Distract Yourself with ACCEPTS
- Other Skills Include:
 - Breathing Exercises
 - Half-Smiling Exercises
 - Turning the Mind/Radical Acceptance/Accepting Reality

Distress Tolerance - Distraction

- Activities:
- Contributing:
- Comparisons:
- Emotions:
- Pushing Away:
- Thoughts:
- Sensations:

INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Interpersonal Effectiveness

- Keeping Relationships with GIVE
- Keeping Self-Respect with FAST
- Getting What you Want with DEAR MAN
- Factors Reducing Interpersonal Effectiveness
- Self-Affirming Statements for Interpersonal Effectiveness
- Looking into Asking for What You Want/Saying No

GIVE and FAST

- be Gentle
- act Interested
- Validate
- use an Easy manner

- be Fair
- no Apologies
- Stick to your values
- be Truthful

DEAR MAN

- Describe
- Express
- Assert
- Reinforce
- stay Mindful
- Appear confident
- Negotiate

EMOTIONAL REGULATION

Emotion Regulation

- Reducing vulnerability to negative emotions via PLEASE MASTER
- Letting go of emotional suffering
- Mindfulness of the current emotion
- Changing emotions by acting opposite to the current emotion
- Steps for increasing positive emotions

PLEASE MASTER

- PhysicalL illness
- balance Eating
- Avoid mood-Altering drugs
- balance Sleep
- get Exercise
- become a **MASTER**/build **MASTERY**