

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)

DBT is one type of cognitive behavioral therapy that focuses specifically on teaching people how to live in the moment, develop healthy coping mechanisms, regulate their emotions, and improve their relationships with others. DBT has been extensively studied and shown to help a variety of mental health conditions, like ADHD, generalized anxiety disorder (GAD), eating disorders and more.

What is unique about DBT?

- **Support Oriented**- helps individuals identify their strengths and build on them to help them feel better about themselves and their life.
- **Cognitive Based**- helps identify thoughts, assumptions, and beliefs that make life harder.
- **Collaborative**- requires constant attention to relationships, whether that be with the therapist, family, or friends.
- DBT has two main components: **individual weekly psychotherapy sessions**, which emphasizes problem-solving behavior for the past week's issues that arose in the person's life, and **weekly group therapy sessions**, where people learn skills from one of the four different modules in DBT.

What should I expect if I do DBT?

- There are four distinct modules that practitioners use in DBT.
- The first module is **mindfulness**. Practicing mindfulness helps the individual to be aware in the present moment.
- The second module is **interpersonal effectiveness**. This teaches individuals the skills to form healthy relationships with others while still caring for oneself.
- The third module is **distress tolerance**. This teaches individuals acceptance of things they cannot control and constructive alternative responses for in-the-moment functioning.
- The fourth module is **emotion regulation**. Emotional regulation helps individuals label their emotions without judgment.

How do I find someone who provides DBT services?

- Many clinicians are well-versed in DBT and can provide DBT services. While certification in DBT is recommended, it is not required for clinicians at this time. When interviewing therapists, be sure to ask if they offer DBT services.

What if I can't find anyone who does DBT who takes my insurance (or what if I cannot find a provider who can see me soon)?

- DBT is one form of cognitive behavioral therapy, but there are several other effective forms of therapy, like cognitive therapy or rational emotive behavior therapy (REBT). All forms of CBT, including DBT, address an individual's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in order to improve overall functioning.

