Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)

Part 1

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“Emotional intelligence” refers to the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships.

Emotional intelligence . . . Is seen in terms of being able to monitor and regulate one’s own and other’s feelings, and to use feelings to guide thoughts and actions . . .

Peter Salvoy and John Mayer
“Emotional Intelligence,” Imagination, Cognition, and Personality

....For students, who must learn most lessons about emotions from their parents and other caregivers, it must include the ability to control impulses, delay gratification, motivate themselves, read other people’s body language and social cues, and cope with life’s ups and downs. . .

John Gottman, Ph. D.
Raising an Intelligent Child
Why Learn a New Treatment?

- The old one **doesn't work** (or doesn't work well)
- Alternative have **better outcomes**
- Alternative is **more efficient** (financial or human resources)
- Alternative is **preferred** by providers (lower burnout) or is **more humane** and is at least as effective and efficient

**CONSUMER OUTCOMES**
- The other treatments do not have established efficacy for individuals who are chronically suicidal and meet the criteria for Borderline Personality Disorder
- **DBT Consumers Outcomes**
  1. reduces suicidal or other severe life threatening behaviors
  2. reduces substance abuse or other types of additions or obsessions
  3. improves social functioning (increases relations to emotions)
  4. reduces anger or other “ruling” emotions
  5. global improvements (individually identified)

**EFFICIENCY & COSTS**
- Cost for DBT is approximately 50% of treatment as usual
  1. Significantly fewer days admitted outside designated home
  2. Fewer and less severe behaviors to “hurt oneself”
  3. Fewer emergency room or emergency medical visits
  4. Less individual & group therapy dropout
Frames are both windows on the world and lenses to bring the world into focus.

Frames filter out some things while allowing others to pass through easily.

Frames help order our experience and decide what action to take.

Bolman and Deal, 2009
Definition of Dialectics:

1 “... The process of thought by which such contradictions are seen to merge themselves in a higher truth that comprehends them.”


2 “Debate ... Establishing truths on both sides rather than disproving one argument”

HINTS FOR THINKING DIALECTICALLY

- Avoid words like “Always” and “Never”
- Practice looking at other points of view
- Remember that no one has absolute truth
- Use “I feel” statements
- Remind yourself that the only constant is change
- Accept that different opinions can both be legitimate
- Consider that we all have both good qualities
- Check out your assumptions – do not put words in other peoples mouth or expect others to read your mind
- Try to appreciate how different from each other we all are and what a gift that is
DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOR THERAPY (DBT)

➢ aims to change problem behavior

➢ teach new skills

➢ improve quality of life

➢ help people learn to value themselves and each other
DSM-IV Diagnostic Criteria
For Borderline Personality Disorder

- A pattern of intense and unstable interpersonal relationships
- Frantic efforts to avoid real or imagined abandonment
- Identity disturbance or problems with sense of self
- Impulsivity that is potentially self damaging
- Recurrent suicidal or parasuicidal behavior
- Affective instability
- Chronic feelings of emptiness
- Inappropriate intense or uncontrollable anger
- Stress-related paranoid ideation or severe disassociative symptoms
Emotion Dysregulation is a combination of Emotional Vulnerability and Inability to Modulate Emotions.
EMOTIONAL DYSREGULATION

- Affective Dysregulation
  Problems with Anger (or other strong emotions)

- Interpersonal Dysregulation
  Chaotic Relationships
  Fears of Abandonment

- Self Dysregulation
  Identity Disturbance/Difficulties with Sense of Self
  Sense of Emptiness

- Behavioral Dysregulation
  Serious Behaviors/Threats
  Impulsive Behaviors

- Cognitive Dysregulation
Why Bother with Theory?

- Gives you a way to:
  - formulate the problems in front of you
  - develop a treatment/person centered plan

- Gives staff and individuals a common language to talk about problems and develop a treatment/person centered plan

- Gives you a way to go into the treatment and research literature and find out what’s new
A PERVASIVE DYSFUNCTION OF THE EMOTION REGULATION SYSTEM

BIOLOGICAL VULNERABILITY TO EMOTIONS

TRANSACTING WITH.....

INVALIDATING ENVIRONMENTS

YEILDS.....

BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS:

- Impulsivity
- Interpersonal conflicts
- Emotional instability
- Confusion about self
This means that you have…

◊ **A High sensitivity**
  – Your feelings get hurt more easily
  – You often have an emotional reaction when others do not

◊ **A High reactivity**
  – Your reactions are more extreme than others
  – When your emotions are so intense it becomes difficult for you to think clearly

◊ **It takes a long time for you to CALM yourself down and return to normal**
  – Your reactions are long lasting
  – This makes you more vulnerable to the next situation

But You Look Fine!!
DIALECTICAL DILEMMA

Emotional Vulnerability

Reflects a sense of:
- Emotional agony
- Falling into the abyss
- Loss of control
- Task impossibility

Self-Invalidation

- Self-directed hate & contempt
- Dismissal of pain & difficulty
- Unrealistic expectations
This is an environment that invalidates your experiences.

You are told that your responses are: **WRONG, INCORRECT, INAPPROPRIATE OR OTHERWISE INVALID**
and
You are Told it is EASY to CHANGE

Here are some examples of invalidating comments:

- You shouldn’t feel that way, no one else does.
- It won’t help to cry about it.
- Just get over it. Forget about it.
- If you keep it up I’ll get worse.
- You are are smarter than that!
- You are to sensitive…
- If you just had a better attitude you could do this.
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Vs Zen

Cognitive Behavior Therapy
- Technology of Change
- Problem Solving
- Rationality
- Logic

Zen Practice
- Technology of Acceptance
- Validation
- Intuition
- Paradox
Balance Skills

- Emotion Regulation
- Mindfulness
- Change
- Acceptance
- Self-Regulation
- Interpersonal Effectiveness
- Distress Tolerance
DBT Assumptions

- Person is doing best he/she can.
- Person wants to improve.
- Person needs to do better, try harder, and be more motivated to change.
- Person may not have caused all of her own problems, but he/she has to solve them anyway.
- The lives of emotionally dysregulated individuals are unbearable as they are currently being lived.
- People must learn new behaviors in all relevant contexts of their lives.
- Person cannot fail in DBT.
- Staff treating emotionally dysregulated persons need support.
- Individuals are not fragile.
PRIMARY TARGETS IN DBT

DIALECTICAL SYNTHESIS

Pre-treatment Targets: Commitment

➢ Orienting and AGREEMENT ON GOALS

1ST Stage Targets: Stability, Connection and Safety

1. Decrease SUICIDAL BEHAVIORS
2. Decrease THERAPY INTERFERING BEHAVIORS
3. Decrease QUALITY OF LIFE INTERFERRING BEHAVIORS
4. Increase BEHAVIORAL SKILLS:
   ➢ MINDFULNESS CORE SKILLS
   ➢ INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS
   ➢ EMOTION REGULATION
   ➢ DISTRESS TOLERANCE

2nd Stage Targets: Exposure and Emotionally Processing the Past

5. Decrease POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS

3rd Stage Targets: Synthesis

6. Increase RESPECT FOR SELF
7. INDIVIDUAL GOALS
All people are in our life for our own learning~