

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)



What is DBT?

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) is an evidenced-based type of cognitive behavioral therapy that combines teaching skill sets and balancing acceptance of emotions with strategies for behavioral changes. DBT originated from the work of psychologist Marsha Linehan in the 1980's out of the University of Washington, who worked with people living with borderline personality disorder

(BPD), people experiencing self-harm or ongoing thoughts of suicide. DBT can be effective in treating many other psychological disorders including eating disorders, substance use disorders, and treatment-resistant depression, ADHD, generalized anxiety disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, and more. Researchers have found that DBT is effective regardless of age, sex, sexual orientation, and race/ethnicity.

What does DBT Involve?

DBT involves a long-term commitment from therapists and clients to work together in four areas:

1. Weekly individual therapy with a trained professional, usually 60 minutes once per week
2. Weekly skills-training sessions, usually practiced within a group setting including homework assignments and role-playing, usually two to three hours on a weekly basis
3. Consultations are available between the client and therapist throughout the week in between sessions as needed
4. Weekly therapist consultation to review cases and discuss progress amongst the clinical team, offering professional feedback and suggestions to set clients up for success

DBT teaches individuals how to live in the moment, cope with stress, regulate emotions, and improve relationships with others. Examples of the skills trainings incorporated include:

Mindfulness	Enhances awareness of thoughts and emotions to respond with intention rather than impulse
Emotion Regulation	Teaches strategies to identify, understand, and manage intense emotions
Interpersonal effectiveness	Improves relationship skills, assertive communication, and conflict resolution
Distress Tolerance	Builds stamina to stressful situations and provides tools to navigate crises without making situations worse

Finding a DBT Therapist

Sourcing support and help can be daunting and time-consuming, but it is important to seek the right type of help. Utilize the following links to find a DBT Therapist:

- Find a Therapist: <https://www.findatherapist.com/local/new-hampshire/dbt/>
- New Hampshire Department of Health & Human Services: <https://childrensbehavioralhealthresources.nh.gov/find-services>

Download the DBT Fact Sheet

For a printable PDF Fact Sheet from the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, download at: <https://www.abct.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/dialectical.pdf>

Learn More From the Sources

The Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies: <https://www.abct.org/fact-sheets/dialectical-behavior-therapy/>

