



## **DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOR THERAPY**

### *Managing & Controlling Stress*

Many people suffer chronically from depression and mood problems that lead to recurring suicidal thoughts, self-harming behaviors, impulsiveness and dysfunctional relationships. These people often become dissatisfied with traditional counseling and psychotropic medications because they perceive little benefit. Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) is a model aimed at teaching skills to help manage and control emotional distress and reduce harmful and impulsive behaviors.

#### **WHAT IS DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOR THERAPY?**

DBT was originally developed by Marsha Linehan to treat people with Borderline Personality Disorder. Research indicates that DBT is also effective in treating symptoms of other mood disorders, including self-harming behaviors. Recent evidence shows that DBT is successful in helping people with histories of trauma, abuse and chemical dependency. DBT involves two components: individual therapy in which the client and therapist assess moods and behaviors with a weekly diary card and aim to reduce therapy interfering behaviors, and group therapy in which the client learns specific skills to help improve quality of life.

#### **WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM IT?**

DBT is helpful for people who do not respond to traditional therapy and psychiatric medication. Those who can benefit from DBT may have any or all of the following symptoms:

- A pattern of unstable and intense relationships
- Impulsivity
- Recurring suicidal behaviors, threats or gestures (including cutting and other selfharming behaviors)
- Intense and unstable moods
- Difficulty regulating emotions
- Chronic feelings of emptiness
- Intense anger and difficulty controlling anger
- Unstable self-image or sense of self



### WHAT IS INVOLVED IN DBT?

Those participating in DBT treatment will learn and develop skills that are broken into four modules:

1. Mindfulness practice helps clients accept and tolerate powerful emotions by becoming more aware of their emotions and reactions through meditative exercises.
2. Distress Tolerance skills help clients become capable of calmly recognizing negative situations and finding ways to tolerate the associated emotions in order to allow them to make less impulsive decisions.
3. Interpersonal Effectiveness helps clients reduce volatile and dysfunctional relationships by teaching them how to effectively obtain what they need or want, while developing the ability to accept disappointments, through problem solving and assertiveness.
4. Emotion Regulation skills are taught to help clients learn to manage and regulate emotions such as intense feelings of anger, sadness, or anxiety.

If you are struggling or know someone struggling with feelings of emptiness, chronic suicidal thoughts, and selfharming behaviors, seek help now and see how DBT can change your life!

### RESOURCES

Description of DBT - [behavioraltech.org/resources/whatisdbt.cfm](http://behavioraltech.org/resources/whatisdbt.cfm)

Tools for consumers - [behavioraltech.org/resources/tools\\_consumers.cfm](http://behavioraltech.org/resources/tools_consumers.cfm)

Mindfulness exercises - [behavioraltech.org/resources/mindfulness.cfm](http://behavioraltech.org/resources/mindfulness.cfm)

Consumer self help website - [dbtselfhelp.com](http://dbtselfhelp.com)

Make an appointment today with one of our other qualified clinicians 800.593.1950