



DBT

Skills Cheat Sheet

A quick guide to skills that help manage emotions, stress, and relationships.

What is DBT?

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) teaches practical tools to help people manage overwhelming emotions, tolerate distress, and improve relationships. DBT focuses on learning skills that help you respond to challenges more effectively rather than reacting impulsively.

1. Mindfulness

Mindfulness is the foundation of DBT. It helps you slow down and become aware of your thoughts, feelings, and surroundings without judgment.

Practice:

- Notice what you are feeling in the moment.
- Focus on your breath or your senses.
- Observe thoughts without trying to change them.

Helpful question:

“What am I noticing right now?”

2. Distress Tolerance

Distress tolerance skills help you get through difficult moments without making the situation worse.

Examples:

- Take slow, deep breaths
- Use cold water or a quick walk to reset your body
- Distract yourself with a healthy activity
- Remind yourself: “This feeling will pass.”

These skills are especially helpful during intense emotions or crises.

3. Emotion Regulation

Emotion regulation helps you better understand and manage strong emotions.

Helpful steps:

- Name the emotion you are feeling
- Identify what triggered it
- Take actions that support your emotional health (sleep, movement, balanced thinking)

The goal is not to eliminate emotions but to respond to them in healthier ways.

4. Interpersonal Effectiveness

These skills help you communicate clearly, set boundaries, and maintain healthy relationships.

Practice:

- Express your needs respectfully
- Set limits when necessary
- Listen and validate others while also respecting your own needs

Healthy communication can strengthen relationships and reduce conflict.

**Meet one of our clinicians
who specializes in DBT:**



Tristan Schneck

Remember:

Emotions are not the problem—how we respond to them matters. DBT skills help you pause, choose a helpful response, and move toward a life that feels more balanced and meaningful.



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