

Bringing DBT Skills to Schools: Overview and Implementation Ideas

Icelandic Psychological Association

James J. Mazza, PhD

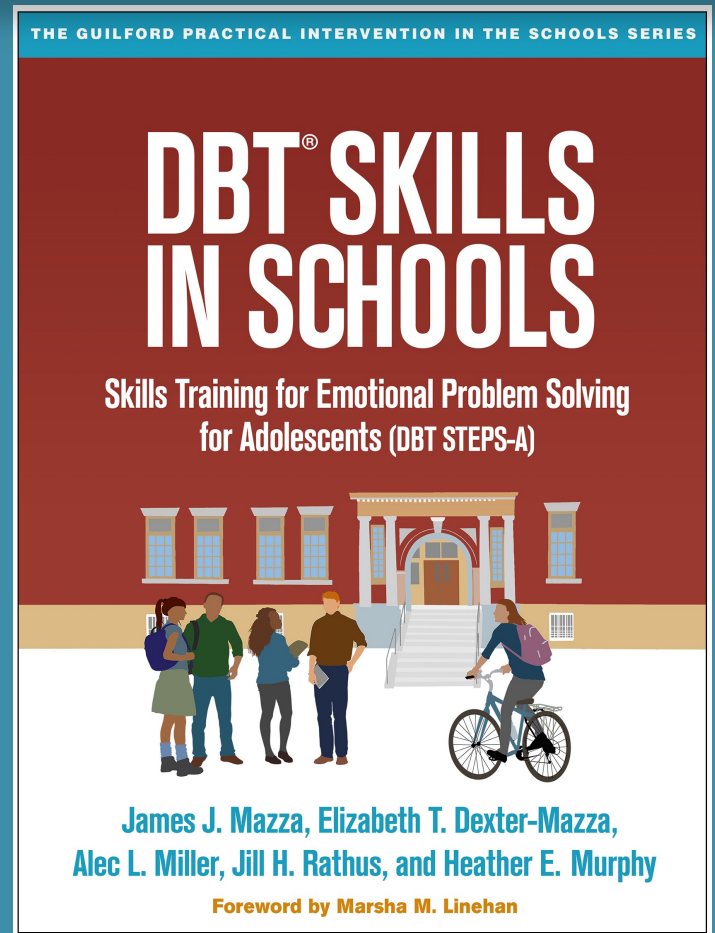
16 March, 2023



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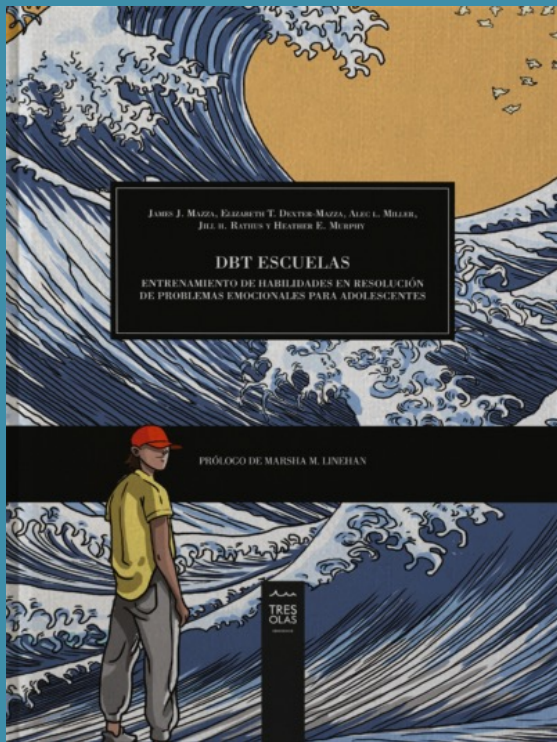
Disclosure Statement:

James Mazza is a co-author of the DBT STEPS-A curriculum and retain IP rights, receive royalties, consulting fees, and honoraria for its use.

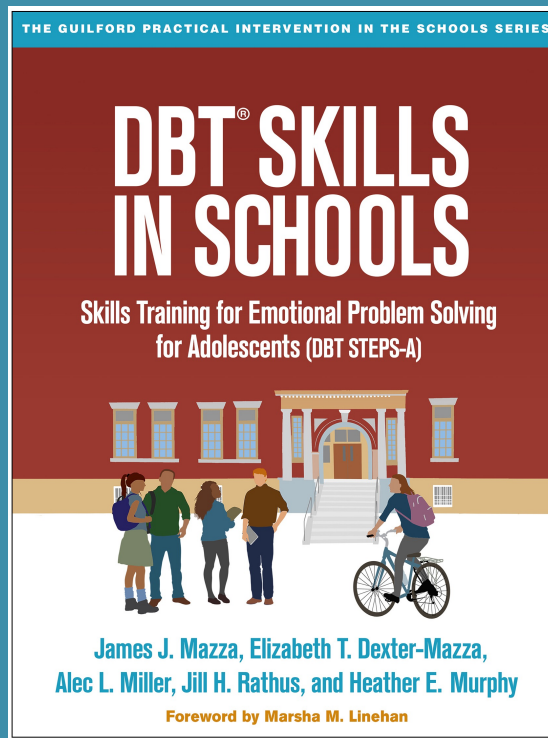


Bringing DBT Skills to Schools: Overview and Implementation Ideas

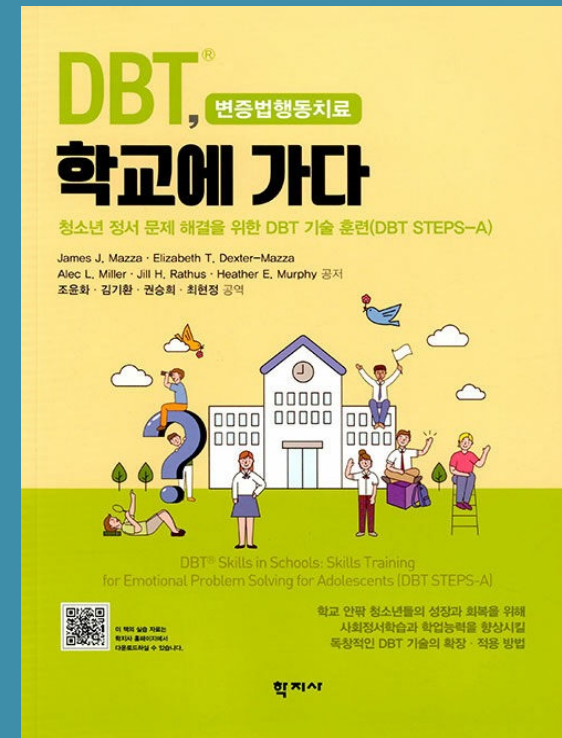
Spanish



English



Korean



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Workshop Objectives

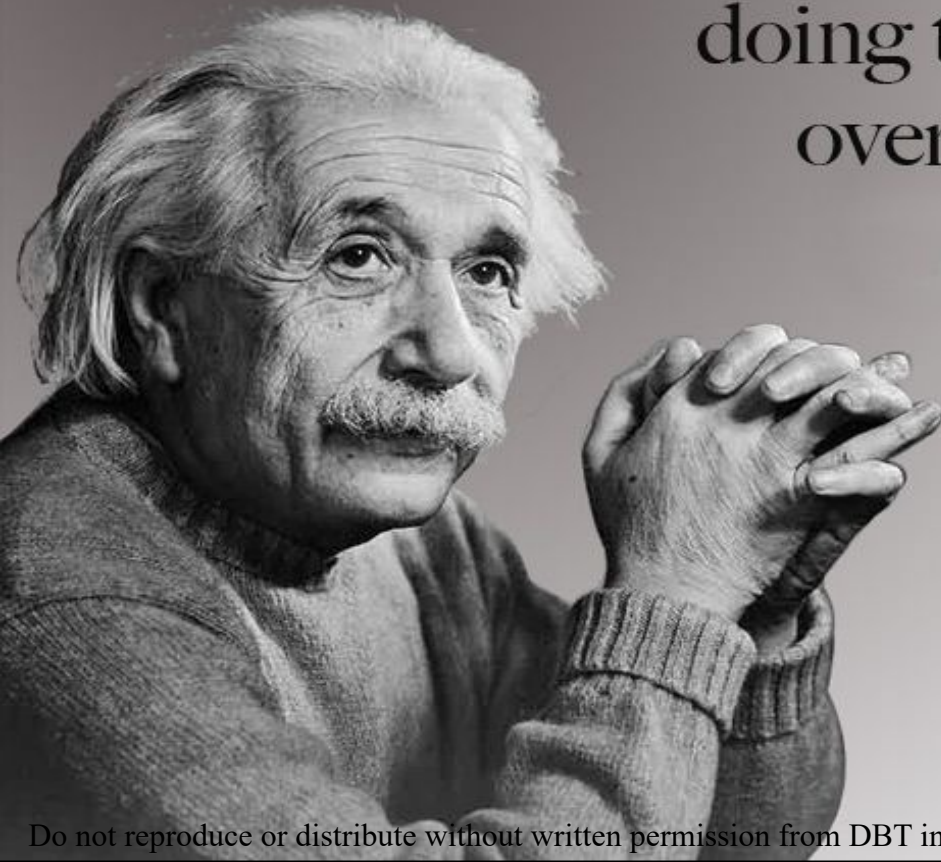
- 1. Understand the development of and rationale for the DBT STEPS-A curriculum in middle and high schools.**
- 2. Understand how the DBT STEPS-A curriculum can be implemented within a Multi Tier Systems of Support model**
- 3. Understand how DBT STEPS-A curriculum in a school differs from comprehensive DBT clinical treatment.**
- 4. Understand the sequence of the curriculum and how it can be adapted to fit my setting.**
- 5. Identify and address the common barriers to effective implementation.**

DBT SKILLS: What is the Problem?

Whatever we are currently doing is not working!

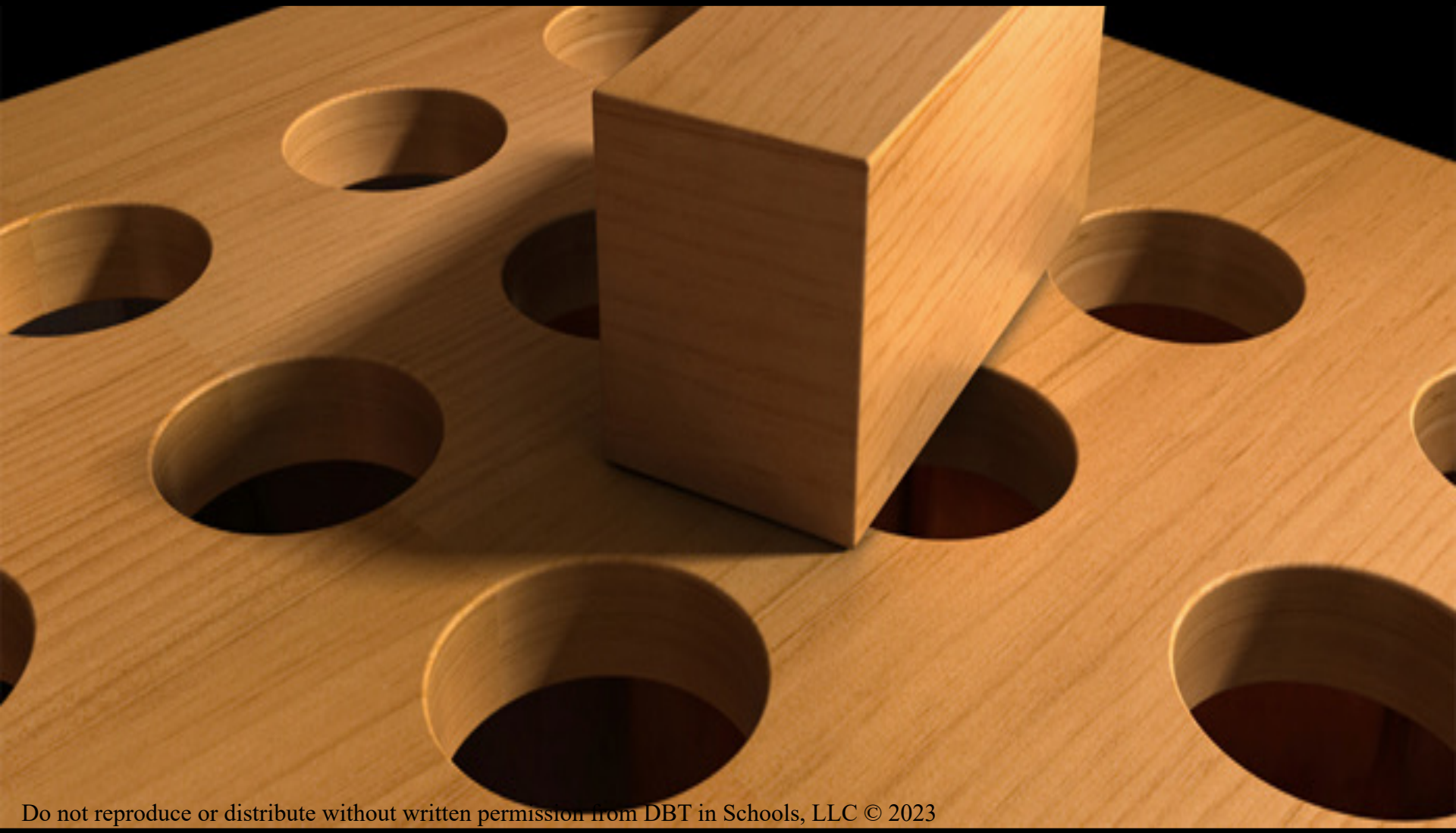
INSANITY:
doing the same thing over and
over again and expecting
different results.

~ Albert Einstein



DBT SKILLS: What is the Problem?

Are we focused on the right problem?



DBT SKILLS: What is the Problem?

Do we have the right tools?



DBT SKILLS: What is the Problem?

Are we focused on the right area?

You Can't Solve Upstream
Problems Down Stream

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PERHAPS WE NEED TO
CHANGE OUR LENS!

When “I” is replaced by
“WE” even ILLNESS
becomes WELLNESS

(Malcolm X)

A mental health playbook to support your child

By Dr. Neha Chaudhary, CNN

Published 10:16 AM EDT, Mon October 10, 2022



- **Provide quality education on mental health**
- **Create safe spaces to talk**
- **Give them a tool kit of coping skills**
- **Have a plan for extra support**
- **And a safety plan for crises**
- **Include youth voices**

By incorporating a formal curriculum on what mental health means and what conditions look like, schools could [exponentially improve kids' knowledge bases on the topic](#). It would help them identify if they're struggling before it's too late, help friends in need or even spot and dispel misinformation when they come across it in places they traditionally turn to — such as social media.

Current State of Mental Health in Schools

Risky Sex

**Drug & Alcohol
Prevention**

**Suicide
Prevention**

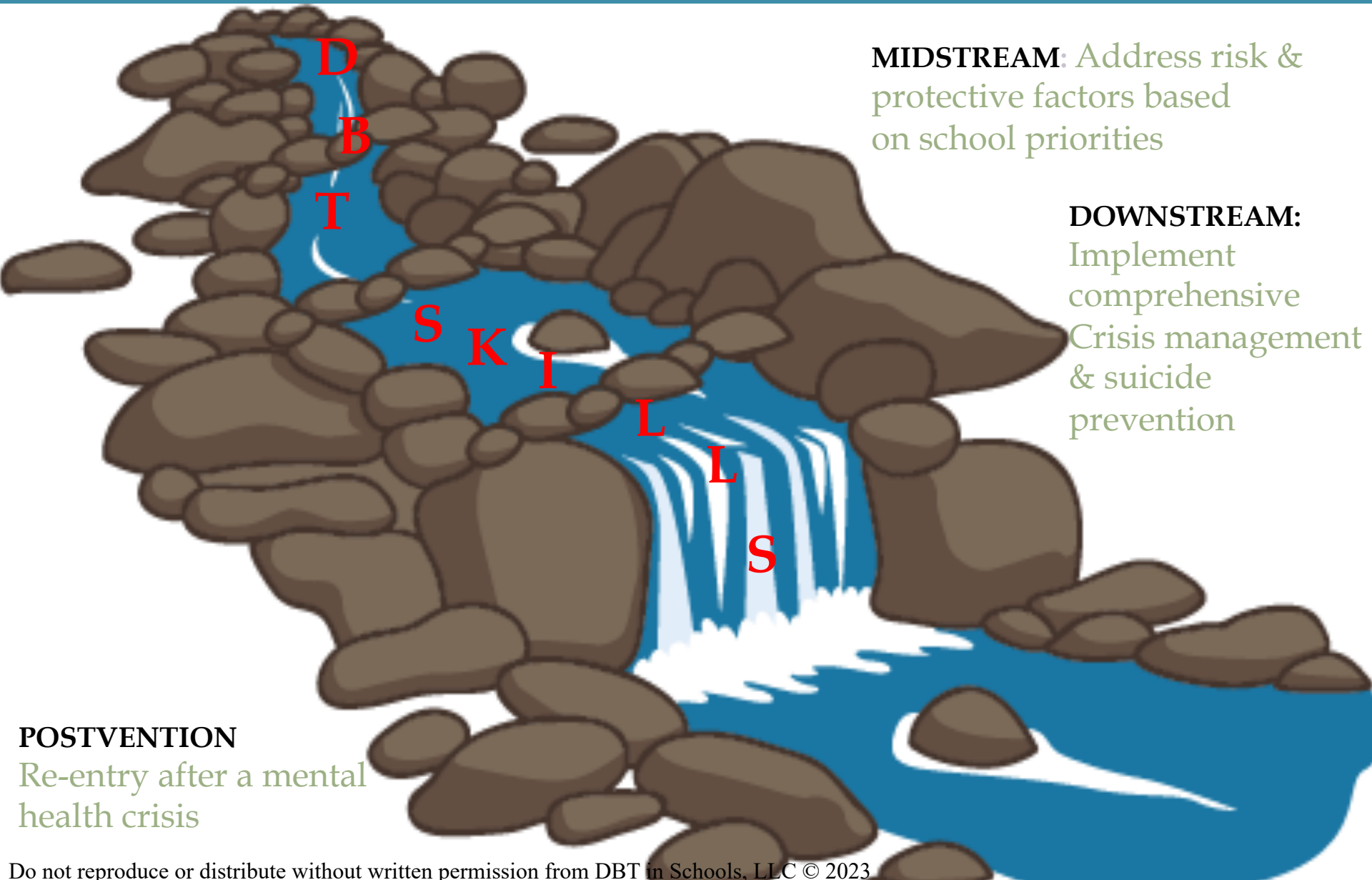
**Bullying
Prevention**

Common foundation: Coping strategies and Decision-Making

DBT STEPS-A

DBT SKILLS in Schools

Proactive Approach to Mental Wellness



MIDSTREAM: Address risk & protective factors based on school priorities

DOWNSTREAM: Implement comprehensive Crisis management & suicide prevention

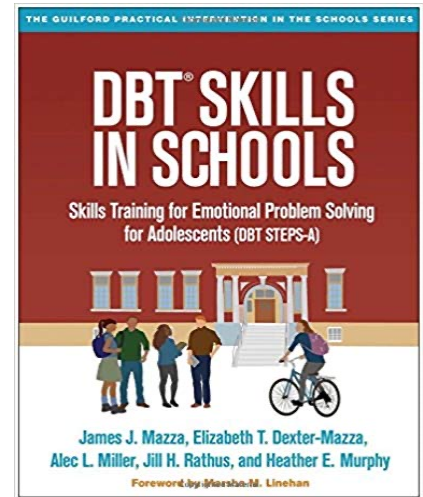
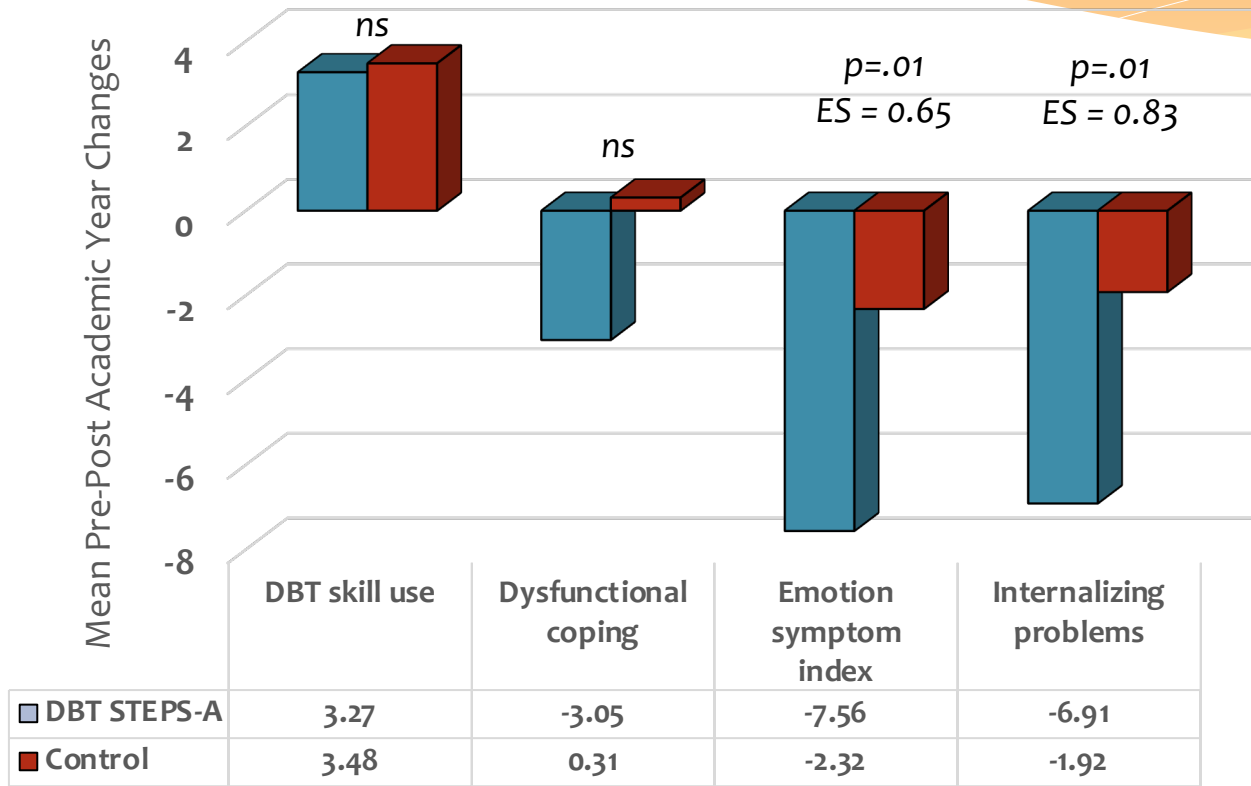
POSTVENTION

Re-entry after a mental health crisis

DBT STEPS-A in Irish Post-Primary Schools

72 female students aged 15-16 years

DBT STEPS-A was superior in reducing emotion symptoms and internalizing problems.



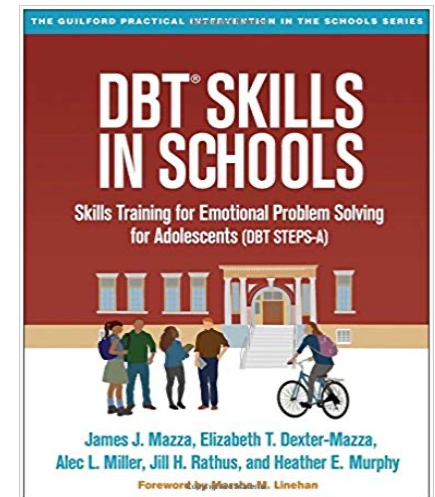
Flynn, Joyce, Weihrauch, & Corcoran, 2018, *Child Adolesc Ment Health*

DBT STEPS-A in Alternative Staten Island Middle School

31 Middle School Behavior Referrals
(N=31)

DBT STEPS-A was significant in reducing behavior referrals compared to year before

| Grade Referrals | Less behavioral referrals <small>n = 01</small> | More behavior referrals <small>n = 01</small> |
|---|--|--|
| 6 th to 7 th Grade Before STEPS-A | 1 | 30 |
| 7 th to 8 th Grade 1st year STEPS-A | 25 | 6 |



Poisson Coeff = $-.83$ (SE = $.12$), $t = -6.88$, $p < .001$, ES = $-.55$

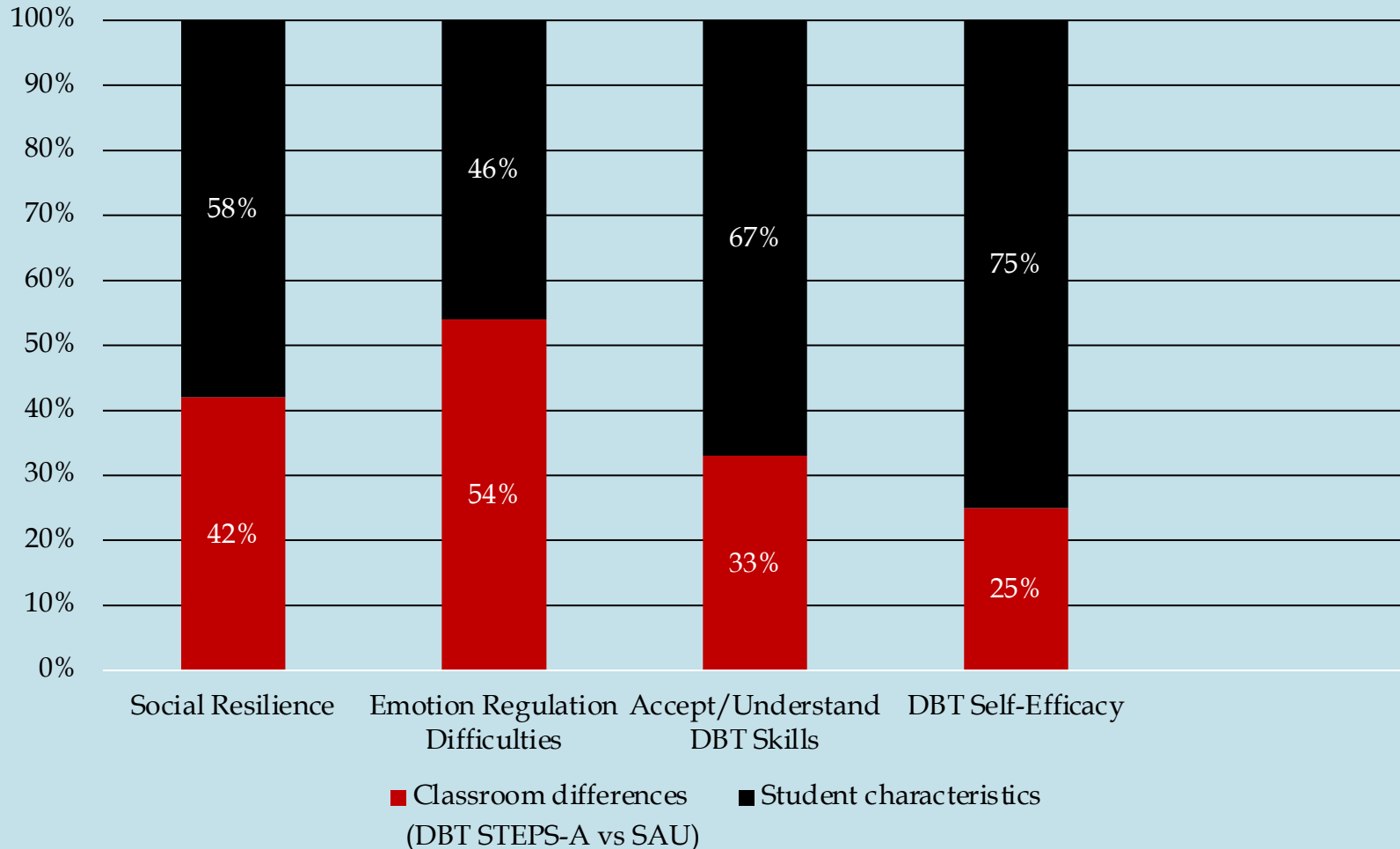
Unpublished Data from New Venture Charter Schools (2019)

DBT STEPS-A Effectiveness Data:

Martinez et al., 2021: School Mental Health
N= 94 9th graders in rural North Carolina
(49% students of color)

n = 42 DBT STEPS-A
n = 52 Controls

Impact of DBT STEPS-A



Current State of SEL in schools?



In your school:

1. What are you doing to address the students SEL needs (including mental health?)
 - a. what is currently being done?
 - b. what still needs to be done?

2. What barriers are getting in the way of your school implementing SEL programs?
 - a. personnel resources?
 - b. allocation of time?
 - c. administrative support?

3. What strategies and/or factors have you identified that need to be accounted for in implementing a universal SEL program like DBT STEPS-A?

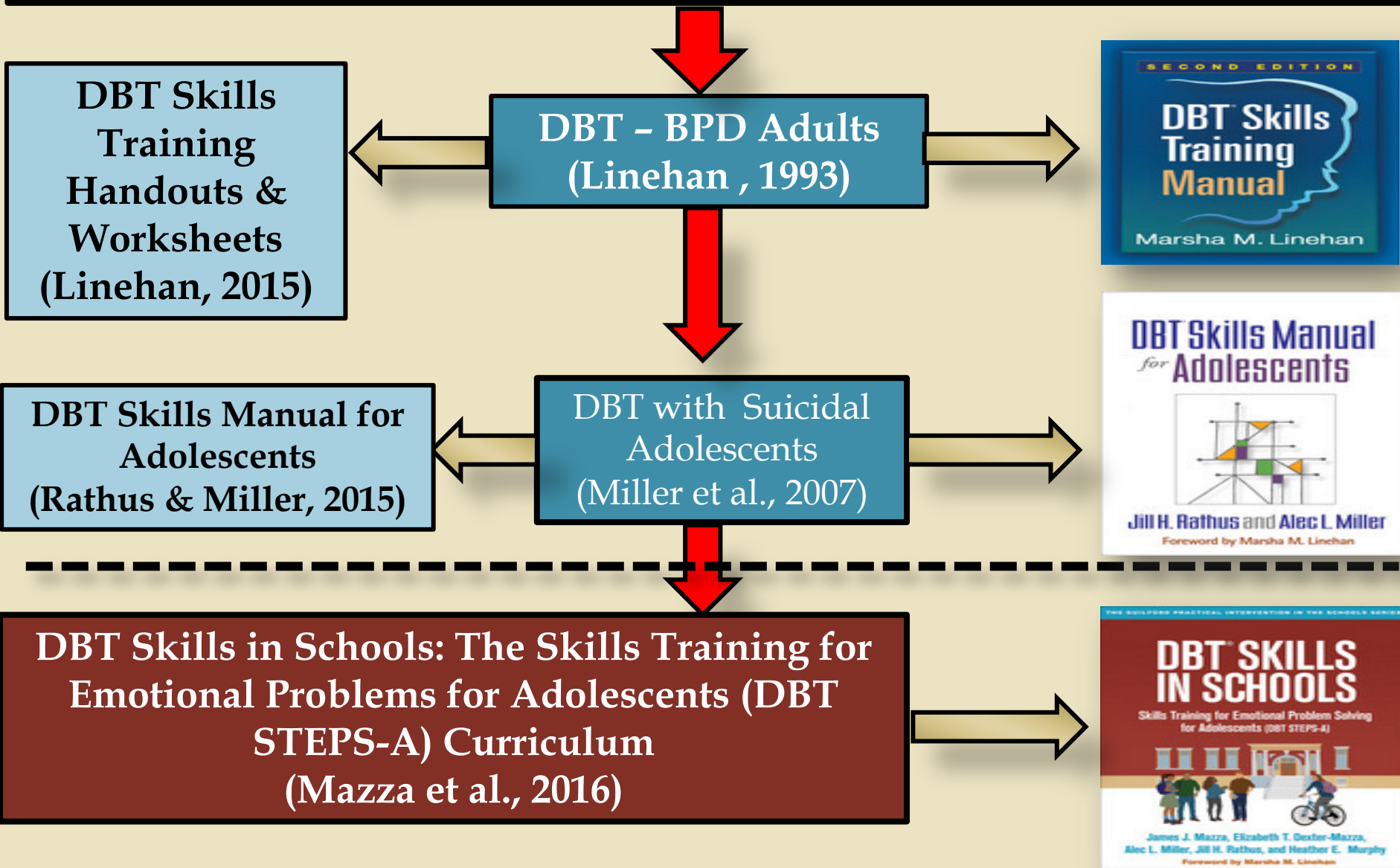
DBT SKILLS: What is the Problem?

\$Million Dollar Question

*How do we help
our youth?*

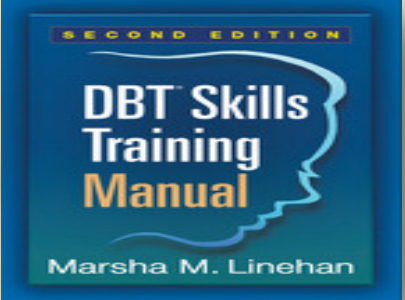


We look for evidenced based interventions to guide us....



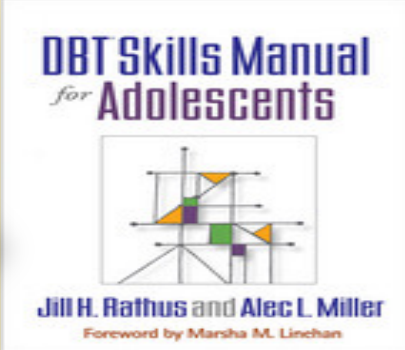
DBT Skills Training Handouts & Worksheets (Linehan, 2015)

DBT - BPD Adults (Linehan, 1993)

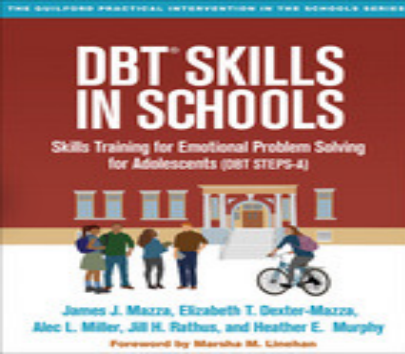


DBT Skills Manual for Adolescents (Rathus & Miller, 2015)

DBT with Suicidal Adolescents (Miller et al., 2007)

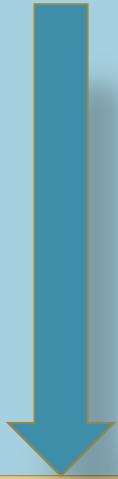


DBT Skills in Schools: The Skills Training for Emotional Problems for Adolescents (DBT STEPS-A) Curriculum (Mazza et al., 2016)



BACKGROUND & FOUNDATION

DBT

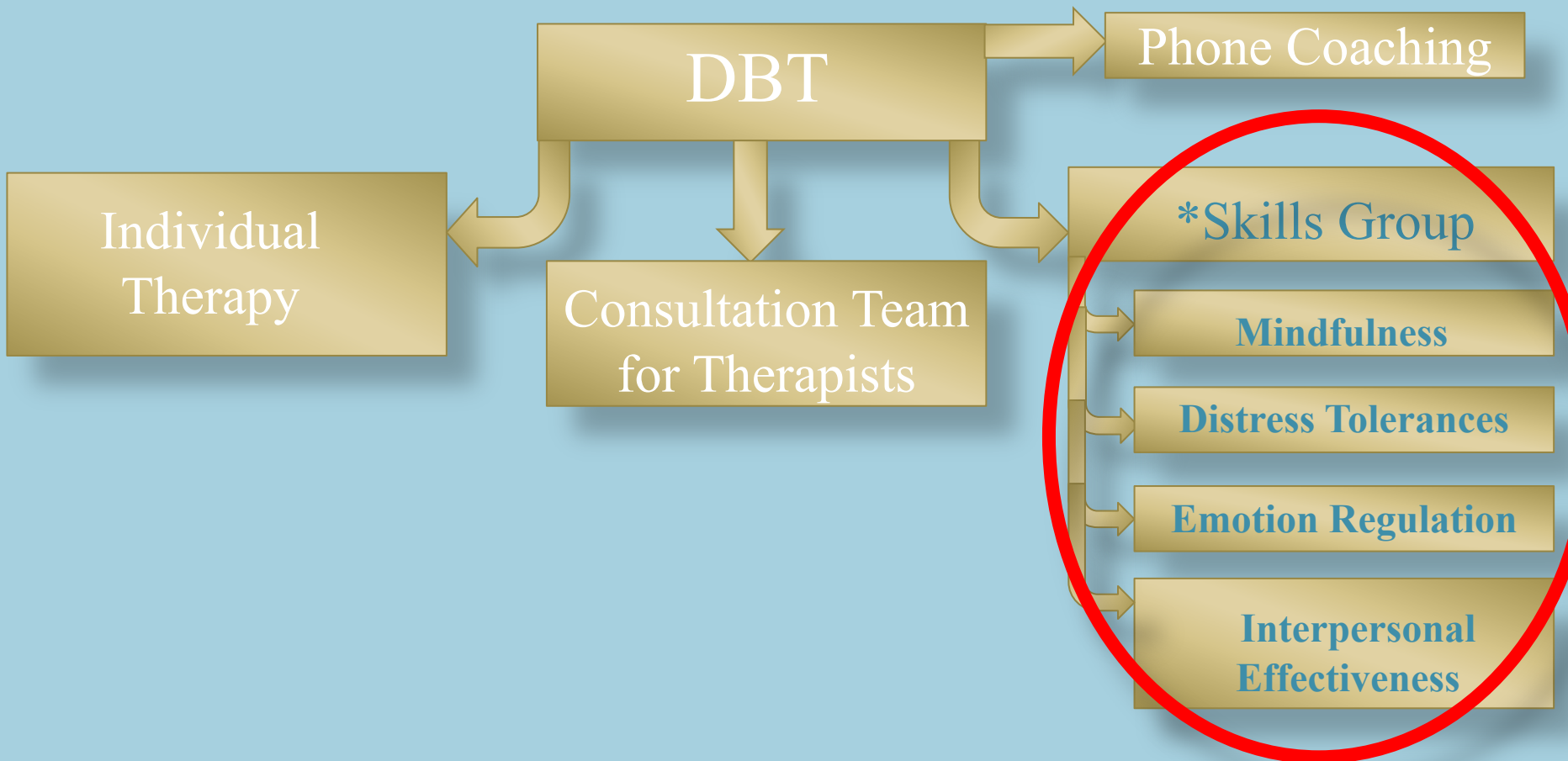


DBT
STEPS-A



DBT STEPS-A: Development

Components of Comprehensive Outpatient DBT



CURRICULUM STRUCTURE



DBT STEPS-A: Curriculum Structure

DBT STEPS-A

```
graph TD; A[DBT STEPS-A] --> B[Curriculum]; A --> C[Structure]; B --> D[1. Designed at the universal level for general education teachers  
A. Ideal – Motivated teacher  
B. Profess. Staff – school psychs & counselors, school social workers  
2. Manualized lessons AND provides degree of flexibility  
3. Teacher Manual  
4. Student Workbook]; C --> E[1. Designed for 50 minute periods  
A. 30 lessons – standard  
B. Flexible curriculum  
2. Format – similar to a class  
3. Covers the 4 domains  
4. Standardized with Rathus & Miller – DBT for adolescents];
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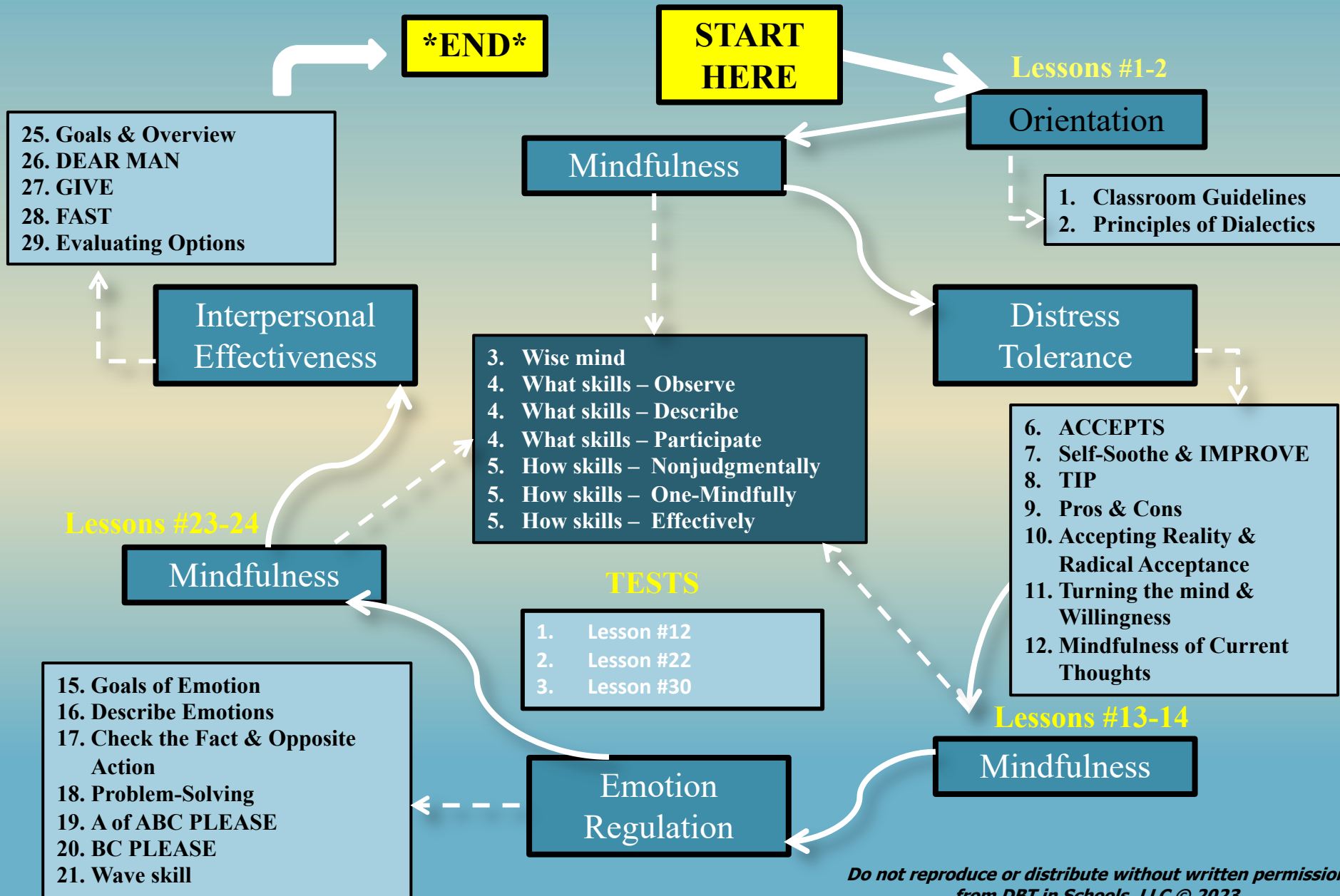
Curriculum

1. Designed at the universal level for general education teachers
 - A. Ideal – Motivated teacher
 - B. Profess. Staff – school psychs & counselors, school social workers
2. Manualized lessons AND provides degree of flexibility
3. Teacher Manual
4. Student Workbook

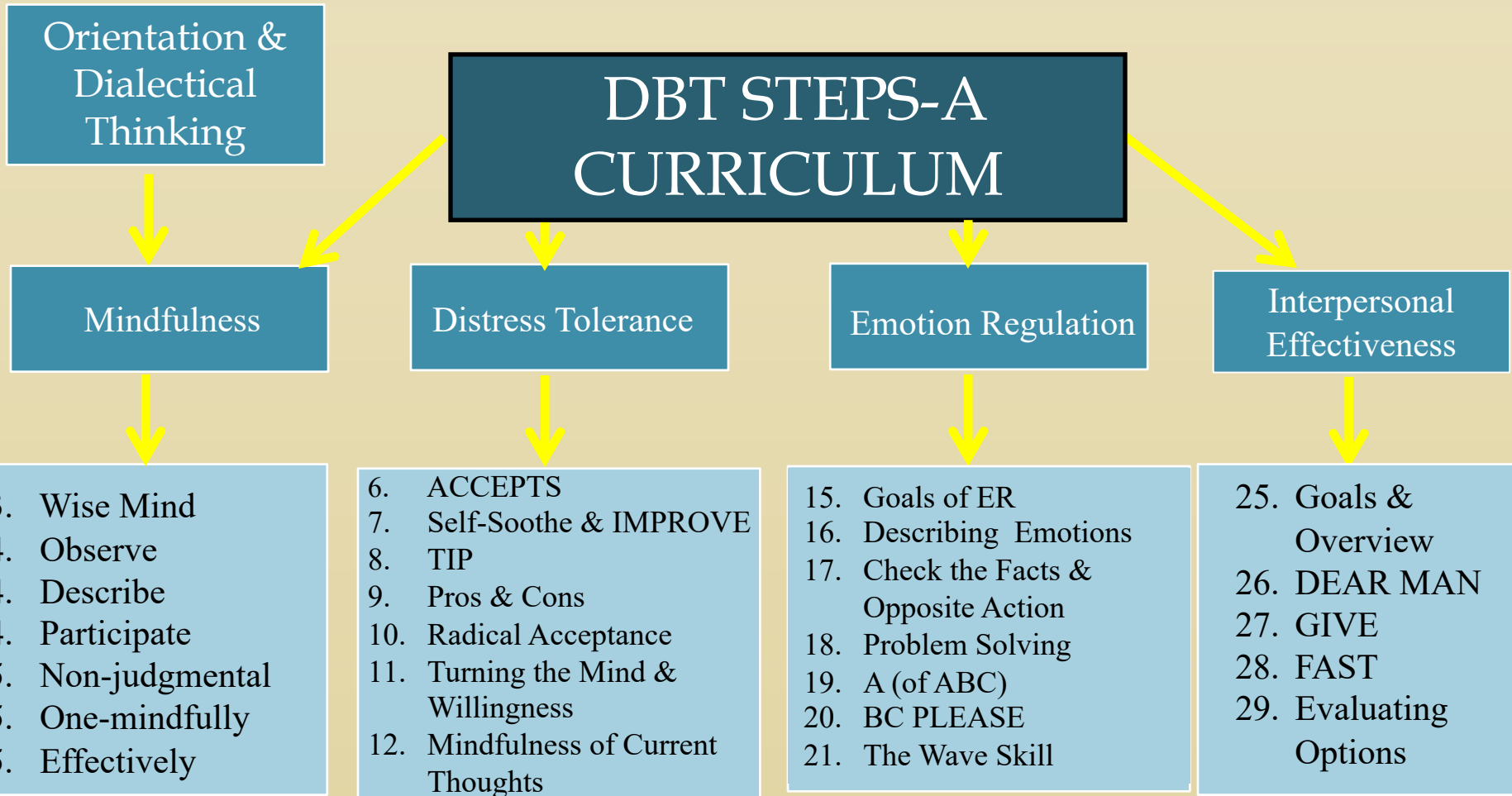
Structure

1. Designed for 50 minute periods
 - A. 30 lessons – standard
 - B. Flexible curriculum
2. Format – similar to a class
3. Covers the 4 domains
4. Standardized with Rathus & Miller – DBT for adolescents

Recommended Sequence of the DBT STEPS-A Modules – Universal (Tier I)



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DBT STEPS-A: Starting a Class

- Determine number of lessons you will be able to teach
 - Preferably all of them!
- How long will each class be? (45 minutes to 90 minutes)
 - Length of class will help determine number of students per class
- Size of class
- Open or closed class
- 1 or 2 Teachers?
 - Depends on focus population of the class
 - Clinical focus or Life Skills focus

Common Struggles Teaching DBT STEPS-A

1. Relevant Examples:

- Clinical versus Universal
 - Identify examples that are relevant to your students that are similar to other same aged peers, not just those who are struggling.
 - Where do you see the need for skills show up in everyday life?
 - Global Pandemic
 - Sports field/court/track
 - Academic expectations/performance
 - Relationships
 - Performance: musical, dance, debate

Common Struggles Teaching DBT STEPS-A

2. Time Management:

- Teach skills versus process struggles

- Goal is to teach skills first, generalize skills second
- Teach how to use skills rather than process how skills can be helpful

3. Engagement:

- Mixed media

- Peer to peer discussion and exercises

- Stand-up for lecture as would do IRL (remote learning)

- Use personal examples that demonstrate effective skill use

4. Name of the Class

- DBT vs DBT STEPS-A vs STEPS-A vs Wellness...

- Choose a name that will resonate with students

- Choose a name that will increase buy-in

DBT STEPS-A: Curriculum Structure

Lesson structure

- 1. Each lesson is structured similarly (50 minutes)**
 - a) Mindfulness (5 minutes)**
 - b) Homework Review (10 minutes)**
 - c) Teaching new lesson (30 minutes)**
 - d) Lesson summary & assignment of homework (5 minutes)**

- 2. Each lesson provides:**
 - a) Main Points**
 - b) Materials needed**
 - c) Lesson Overview and Timeline**
 - d) Detailed lesson plan (includes examples)**
 - e) Homework assignment**

LESSON 9

Distress Tolerance

Pros and Cons

SUMMARY

This lesson covers the final crisis survival skill: pros and cons. When people are trying to resist a powerful urge to engage in a problem behavior, using pros and cons helps them to think about the positive and negative aspects of tolerating their distress rather than acting on it. This process will help them have a stronger understanding of the decision they are making. For many people who struggle with impulsive decisions or with choices made in emotion mind, completing a pros-and-cons list at a time when not in crisis will help to decrease the likelihood of their acting on these behaviors in the future. Therefore, students will complete a pros-and-cons list for one of their primary target behaviors in class today.

MAIN POINTS

1. Pros and cons can be used to choose between two courses of action, and can be written out ahead of time to prepare for urges to engage in problem behaviors.
2. Unlike typical lists of pros and cons, the list used in DBT STEPS-A has four boxes, not two columns.

MATERIALS

1. Handouts for this lesson:
 - Handout 9.1. Distress Tolerance: Pros and Cons
 - Homework 9.2. Distress Tolerance: Practice with Pros and Cons (additional copies of this sheet should be provided; see the discussion of the homework assignment at the end of this lesson)
2. Extra student skills binders, with pens or pencils, for students who attend class without materials.
3. Dry-erase markers or chalk for writing on the board.

4. One small piece of chocolate for each student, for the mindfulness exercise.
5. Diary cards: Have new diary cards ready to distribute at the end of class. If possible, highlight the “Pros and cons” skill.

PREPARATION

1. Review the lesson plan as well as handouts in student skills binder.
2. Arrange desks in the classroom, if possible, so that students are able to see each other.

LESSON OVERVIEW AND TIMELINE

- Mindfulness exercise (5 minutes)
 - Observing and describing: Eating chocolate (3 minutes)
 - Describing observations of the exercise (2 minutes)
- Homework review (10 minutes)
 - Homework 8.2. Distress Tolerance: Using TIP Skills for Managing Extreme Emotions
 - Diary cards
- Introduction of main ideas (5 minutes)
 - Pros and cons compare advantages and disadvantages of behaviors.
- Discussion: Pros and cons (25 minutes)
 - Review of Handout 9.1. Distress Tolerance: Pros and Cons (5 minutes)
 - Pros and cons have four boxes.
 - Use wise mind to make a weighted decision.
 - Class exercise: Completing a pros-and-cons list (20 minutes)
 - Draw a pros-and-cons grid on the board.
 - Focus on both short-term and long-term goals.
 - Evaluate facts about and validity of each item.
- Lesson summary (3 minutes)
 - Review main points.
 - Pros and cons of engaging in a behavior *and* of not engaging in the behavior should be included in each list.
 - Identify both short- and long-term consequences.
 - Check the validity of each of our pros and cons.
- Homework assignment (2 minutes)
 - Homework 9.2. Distress Tolerance: Practice with Pros and Cons
 - Complete a pros and cons for at least one of your own target behaviors.
 - Diary cards

DETAILED LESSON PLAN

Mindfulness Exercise (5 minutes)

Observing and Describing: Eating Chocolate (3 minutes)

Welcome the class and introduce the exercise. For this exercise, you will need one small piece of chocolate for each student (e.g., Hershey's Kisses, miniatures). Say:

We are going to begin with another mindfulness practice that involves observing and describing. So often we eat food mindlessly and barely even taste it. Today we are going to eat chocolate mindfully. Who can remember what skill has us eating mindfully?

Elicit (or give) this answer: self-soothe with taste. Pass out one piece of chocolate to each student. Explain:

Remember, we have more senses than just our eyes, but so often we rely on our sight for our observation. Today we are going to use our eyes, noses, and mouths to observe a piece of chocolate. The reason I say we are going to use all three is because when I tell you to begin, I don't want you just to open the chocolate and eat it. When I give the signal to begin, you will observe the chocolate in your hands: Observe the wrapper, the shape, anything and everything about it. When you are ready, you will open the wrapper. Notice the color, the texture, the shape, the way that the chocolate feels, the way that it smells. You can decide if you want to put the chocolate in your mouth or not. If you decide to eat the chocolate, put the chocolate in your mouth when you are ready, but don't start chewing or swallowing right away. Notice the sensations on your tongue, the urge to chew, the taste as part of it dissolves from the enzymes in your saliva. Simply observe the chocolate in your mouth without acting on it, and only allow swallowing to occur as a natural reflex.

NOTE: You may have one or more students in your group who do not want to do this practice for various reasons (e.g., they have an allergy, they hate chocolate, or they have an eating disorder). Giving them the option not to eat the chocolate may alleviate this problem, but if it does not, you may decide to have other options available (such as a raisin or a cup of water). Ideally, you want to encourage the students to practice the observing part of the exercise and choose not to put the chocolate in their mouths. They can observe the wrapper, the smell, the patterns on the chocolate from the wrapper, and so on. Once you have explained this to students as necessary, continue:

When I say 1, that's the signal to sit in the mindful or wide-awake position we have often used before. As you know, this means keeping our feet flat on the floor, sitting up straight, and putting our hands in our laps. For this exercise, we will keep our eyes open.

When I say 2, that's the signal to take a deep breath. When I say 3, that's the signal to begin the practice, and I will begin handing out the chocolate. As usual, I'll say, "Stop," to end the exercise.

Introduction of Main Ideas (5 minutes)

Say to students:

People can have powerful urges to engage in problematic behaviors, such as arguing with parents, skipping class or school, avoiding homework or studying, drinking, drugs, shoplifting, and so on. But there are usually better outcomes for tolerating distress.

So how do you decide whether or not to act on those urges?

Allow students to answer. Then continue:

Most people often weigh the pros and cons of doing a behavior. For instance, they might ask themselves, "How much trouble will I get in versus how much fun will I have?" Pros and cons help a person to compare the advantages and disadvantages of different options when a decision needs to be made.

You make decisions every day when weighing your options; you just usually don't formally write these out. For example, you make a decision at night whether to do your homework or watch YouTube videos. You most likely think of the pros of how much more fun the videos would be, but then you think of the cons of getting in trouble or earning a bad grade. Let's hope that this outweighs the pros of watching the videos and you do your homework!

Today we are going to learn how to complete a list of pros and cons. However, this one will be a little different from simply looking at the advantages and disadvantages of acting on crisis urges.

Discussion: Pros and Cons (25 minutes)

Review of Handout 9.1. Distress Tolerance: Pros and Cons (5 minutes)

Instruct students to turn to Handout 9.1. Say:

This version of pros and cons can be used when you are deciding between two courses of action, or trying to resist a powerful urge to engage in a destructive behavior. Either you can write this out when the situation comes up, or, if it is a problem behavior that you have been working on stopping, you can write out your pros and cons ahead of time and have the list handy to pull out the next time an urge hits to engage in the problem behavior. It can serve as a reminder for all of the reasons that you do not want to engage in it.

Highlight that this version of a pros-and-cons list has four boxes.

Completing a pros-and-cons list is an example of dialectics: That is, there can be pros as well as cons to both of the courses of action you are considering. There are some pros to your problem behavior; otherwise you would not do it. The key here is that once we have listed all of the pros and cons of both acting on an urge and not acting on an urge we then go back and make a decision in wise mind. At times the pros of engaging in a behavior may have a longer list than the cons of not acting on it. When this occurs, it is important

that we don't weigh each item with equal importance and that we understand whether each item is a short- or long-term consequence. Once we do this, wise mind will help us to make the decision.

**CLASS EXERCISE: COMPLETING A PROS-AND-CONS LIST
(20 MINUTES)**

Draw the pros-and-cons grid on the board. Figures L9.1 and L9.2 are two examples of pros-and-cons lists. One is for using drugs at a party; the second is for posting revealing pictures of oneself on social media. You may choose which example to use with your class. Tell students:

We are going to discuss the urge to [use drugs at a party] [post revealing pictures or sexually explicit pictures of yourself on social media] and create a list of pros and cons for this behavior.

Elicit responses from the class. Be sure to focus on both short-term and long-term goals. (These are designated in Figures L9.1 and L9.2 with the abbreviations ST and LT.) Explain:

The pros and cons can be either short-term or long-term consequences. Often the short-term consequences are more attractive or tempting than the long-term ones. However, the long-term ones are the goals we are striving toward—the exact reasons why we are learning to tolerate our distress. For example, having fun with your friends for one night is enjoyable in the short term, but not studying for tomorrow's test and failing it will have long-term repercussions on your ability to play in the next game or to pass the course.

Once the pros-and-cons list on the board is completed, discuss with students what a wise mind decision would be.

Finally, it is important for us to go back and to evaluate the facts about or validity of each of the pros and cons. Sometimes you may identify a consequence that is actually not true and may be emotion-based. For instance, if you are debating whether or not to sleep late instead of getting up early to exercise, you may think, "If I skip waking up early to exercise before school, I will have more energy to get through the day." The reality of this statement is that if one does exercise in the morning, it often increases one's energy throughout the day, and not exercising in the morning may decrease one's energy for the day. Let's look back at our list and see if we need to check the facts about any of our pros and cons.

You can use one of these examples, depending on whether you have used the sample list in Figure L9.1 or Figure L9.2:

Pros: "It's the only way to have fun." Check the facts: Have you ever had fun with friends before without using drugs?

Pros: "Only my friends will see the pictures, and I trust their feedback." Check the facts: You can't control what happens to a picture once it is posted or texted.

Highlight:

Just because your pros-and-cons list may favor [not using drugs] [not posting pictures on social media], this does not mean that acting in wise mind will be easy. Once you have made your wise mind decision, you may need to employ other skills to help you tolerate not doing the behavior.

If time allows, engage the class in another pros-and-cons exercise, using an example generated by one of the students. Have one to four students come up to the board and fill in one of the quadrants in the pros-and-cons grid, as the class generates pros and cons for the behavior.

Lesson Summary (3 minutes)

Congratulate the students for their hard work and coming up with such great examples and participating in class today. Ask for a volunteer to briefly review the main points of pros and cons. The review should include these points:

- Pros and cons of engaging in a behavior *and* of not engaging in the behavior should be included in each list.
- It is important to identify both short- and long-term consequences. Often short-term consequences are more powerful, but we want to keep our eye on long-term goals.
- It is also important to check the validity of each of our pros and cons.

Homework Assignment (2 minutes)**Homework 9.2. Distress Tolerance: Practice with Pros and Cons**

Distribute extra copies of Homework 9.2. Tell students that their homework assignment will be to complete at least one copy of Homework 9.2 for one of their own target behaviors. Remind them that they should use a behavior that they are committed to stopping, and that they should keep in mind both their long-term and short-term goals. Add these instructions:

If the behavior that you want to change is one of the behaviors that we talked about on the first day that we don't discuss in class, then complete the pros-and-cons sheet for that behavior because that is important. On one of the extra worksheets provided, complete a different set of pros and cons for a behavior that would be appropriate to share in class.

Remember that when you create your own pros-and-cons sheet for a problem behavior ahead of time, it can then be used to resist the problem behavior or urge when you are in emotion mind. Just like your list of the ACCEPTS skills, you want to have this pros-and-cons list handy for when the urge hits.

Review the homework sheet and ask if there are any questions.

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Why Wait? Let's Jump Right In!!!

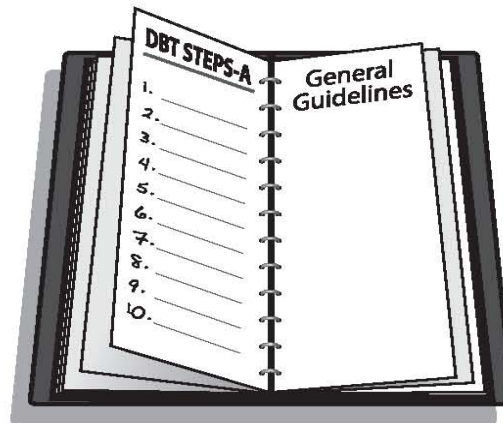


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Orientation Lessons:

- ▣ Lesson 1: Introduction to Skills
 - Rules of the Class/Group
 - Identifying Target Behaviors
 - Issues of confidentiality
- ▣ Lesson 2: Dialectics
 - Middle Path – Dialectics

General Guidelines



General school rules apply, including but not limited to the following:

1. Attend each class. Arrive on time.
2. Your binder includes all of the handouts and homework assignments for this course. You are expected to bring your binder to each class, with your homework completed.
3. Be nonjudgmental: No put-downs. Abusive language or behavior will not be tolerated.
4. What is discussed in the class stays in the class. Information about other people in the class may be private and should be respected.
5. We will identify target behaviors for each of us that you are willing to work on increasing or decreasing in class. We will refer to these identified behaviors as "target behaviors" in class, rather than naming the specific behaviors themselves.

TARGET BEHAVIORS



DBT STEPS-A: Target Behaviors

Terminology: use “target behaviors” in class/group rather than identify the actual behaviors

1. Use of “target behavior” helps students with some privacy issues (i.e., intimate relationships, suicide attempts, self-harming, etc.)

2. Contagion effect
 - a) Suicide attempts
 - b) Self-harming behavior
 - c) Drinking/drug use
 - d) Sexual behaviors



HANDOUT 1.2

Goals of DBT STEPS-A

| Problems | Skills |
|---|--|
| Behaviors to Decrease | Behaviors to Increase |
| 1. Difficulty managing emotions (fast, intense mood changes with little control, or a steady negative emotional state; your emotions control your actions) | 1. Emotion regulation skills |
| 2. Confusion: reduced awareness and focus (distraction) (you are not always aware of what you are feeling, why you get upset, or what your goals are; and/or you have trouble staying focused) | 2. Mindfulness skills |
| 3. Impulsiveness (acting without thinking it all through; escaping or avoiding emotions) | 3. Distress tolerance skills |
| 4. Relationship problems (pattern of difficulty keeping relationships, getting what you want, keeping self-respect; loneliness) | 4. Interpersonal effectiveness skills |

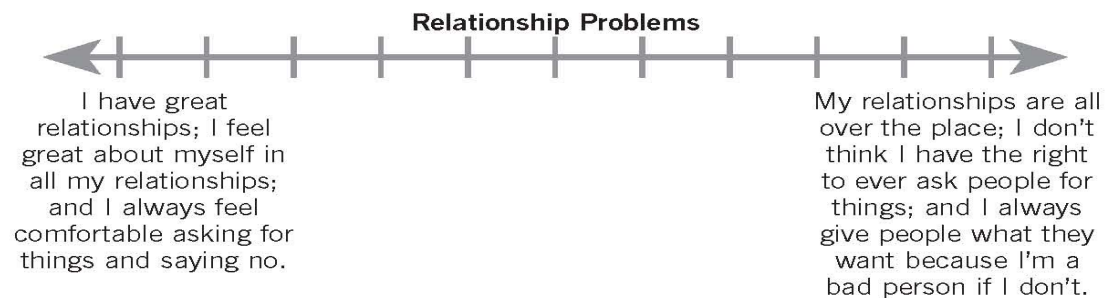
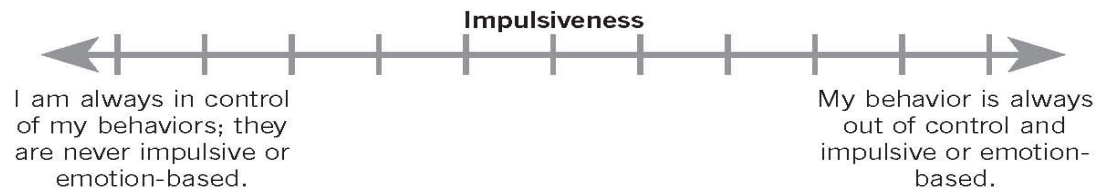
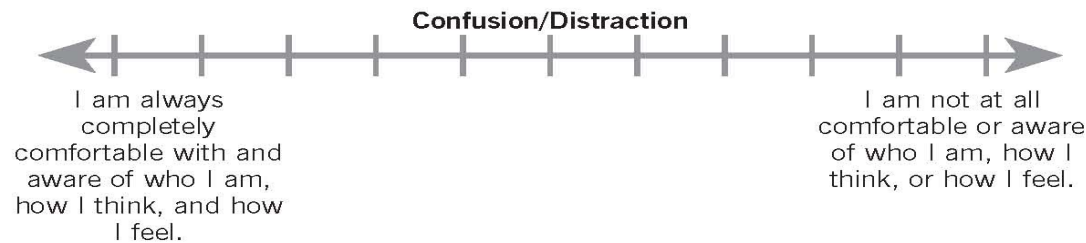
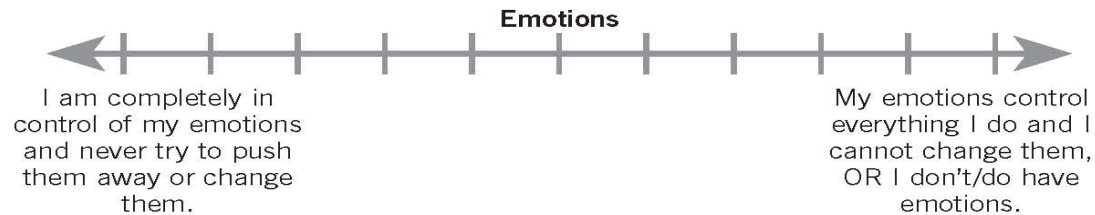
| Goals for DBT STEPS-A: What are your goals? | |
|---|-----------------------|
| Behaviors to Decrease | Behaviors to Increase |
| 1. | 1. |
| 2. | 2. |
| 3. | 3. |
| 4. | 4. |
| 5. | 5. |

(continued)

Goals of DBT STEPS-A (page 2 of 2)

Where do you fall on each continuum of problems?

Place an X on each continuum for where you think you are. Sometimes people think that they fall on both sides of a continuum and rarely in the middle. If that is true for you, you can place two X's on the continuum.



Bringing DBT Skills to Schools: Overview and Implementation Ideas

Orientation Lessons:

Lesson 2: Dialectics

- The teaching of dialectics
- Key dialectic – Acceptance & Change



Bringing DBT Skills to Schools: Overview and Implementation Ideas

Dialectics:

- Helps us get unstuck
- Provides perspective
- Foundation for validation

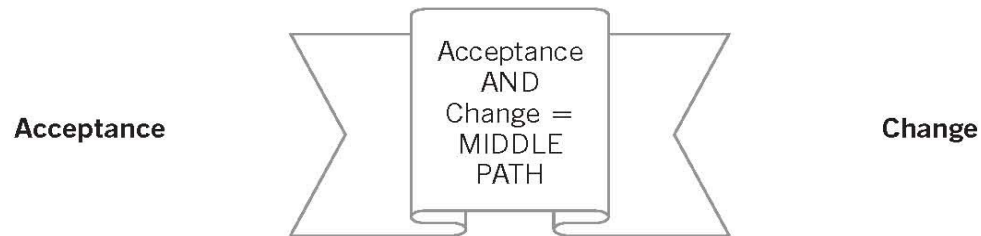


HANDOUT 2.1

Dialectics: What Is It? What's the Big Deal?

Dialectics teach us:

- There is always more than one way to see a situation and more than one way to solve a problem.
- All people have unique qualities and different points of view.
- Change is the only constant.
- Two things that seem like (or are) opposites can both be true.
- Trying to **honor the truth** on both sides of a conflict is the best approach. This does not mean giving up your values or selling out. Avoid seeing the world in “black-or-white,” “all-or-nothing” ways. Trying to honor the truth on both sides does not mean compromise.

**Examples:**

I am doing the best I can, **AND** I need to do better, try harder, and be more effective and more motivated to change.

I can do this, **AND** it's going to be hard.

My mom is strict, **AND** she really cares about me.

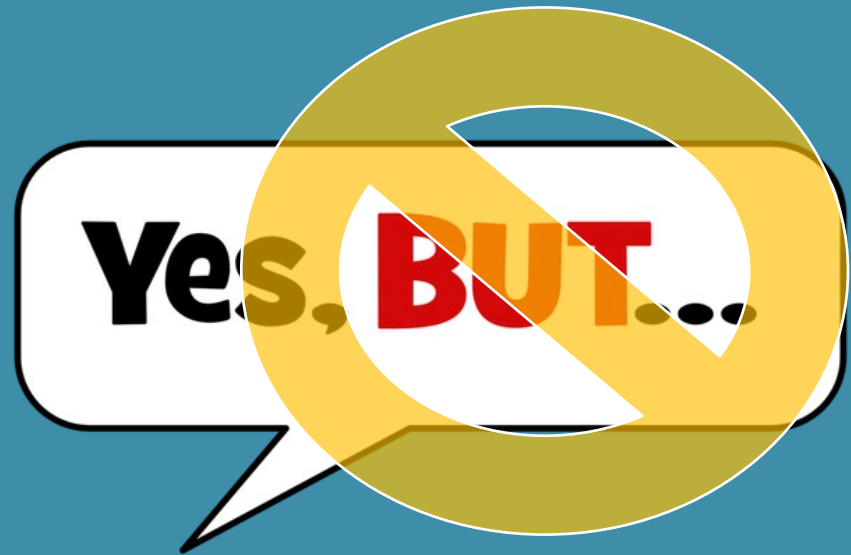
You are tough, **AND** you are gentle.

This perspective helps pave the way toward the middle path by helping you:

- Expand your thoughts and ways of considering life situations.
- “Unstick” standoffs and conflicts.
- Be more flexible and approachable.
- Avoid assumptions and blaming.

Dialectical
Thinking:
Replace
“But” with
“And”

Laying the foundation for
multiple perspectives and
validation of self & others.



The Interrelatedness of Values and Goals



Bing Bong



SADNESS



JOY



Riley

Keep an eye out for:

- What value did Bing Bong and Joy share?
- What goal did they have and how did that relate to their value?
- How did Bing Bong's goal change? Why?
- Did his value change when he changed his goal?
- Where did you see a dialectic?

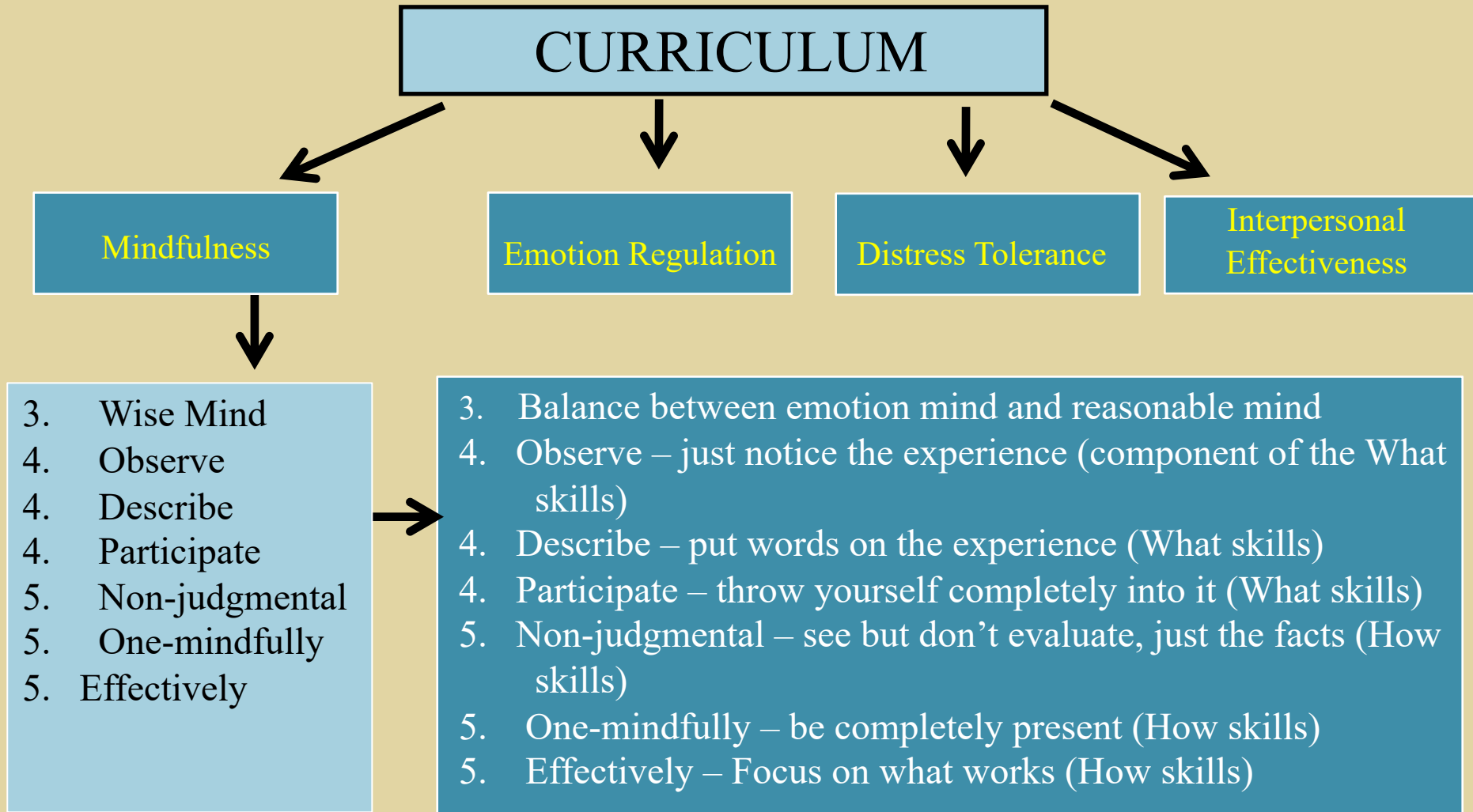
Values and goals and how are they related?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tXj61BxEy2M&ebc=ANyPxKqCZs3Jha3vCdd7sW4PwTOLOfoIwLF683Mgu6VrotL9crpzvq67S0pFILYYPUVL2sXrVydbmZiUjvrn0G-3kQ62mz1CdG>

Finding Dialectics in Everyday Life

Bringing DBT Skills to Schools: Overview and Implementation Ideas



HANDOUT 3.1

Mindfulness: Taking Hold of Your Mind

From:

To:



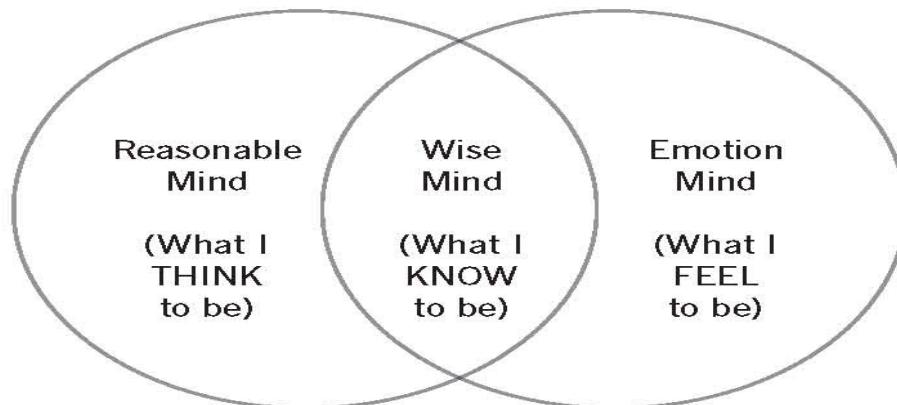
Mindfulness: Being in control of your mind, rather than letting your mind be in control of you.

1. **Full Awareness (Opened Mind):** Being aware of the present moment (i.e., thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations) without judgment and without trying to change it.
2. **Attentional Control (Focused Mind):** Staying focused on one thing at a time.

Practice, practice, practice!

Mindfulness: Three States of Mind

Pg. 376



Emotion mind is “hot”—ruled by your feelings and urges.

Emotion mind is: _____

When I am in emotion mind, I . . . (please describe what you do or think): _____

Reasonable mind is “cool”—ruled by facts, reason, and logic.

Reasonable mind is: _____

When I am in reasonable mind, I . . . (please describe what you do or think): _____

Wise mind includes both reason and emotion—the wisdom within each person. It is the state of mind to access when you want to make an important decision.

Wise mind is: _____

When I am in wise mind, I . . . (please describe what you do or think): _____

Practicing Wise Mind

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Mindfulness skills often require a lot of practice. Like any new skill, it is important to practice first when you don't need the skill. If you practice in easier situations, the skill will become automatic, and you will have it when you need it. Practice with your eyes closed and with your eyes open.

1. **Stone flake on the lake.** Imagine that you are by a clear blue lake on a beautiful sunny day. Then imagine that you are a small flake of stone, flat and light. Imagine that you have been tossed out onto the lake and are now gently, slowly, floating through the calm, clear blue water to the lake's smooth, sandy bottom.
 - Notice what you see, what you feel as you float down, perhaps in slow circles, floating toward the bottom. As you reach the bottom of the lake, settle your attention there within yourself.

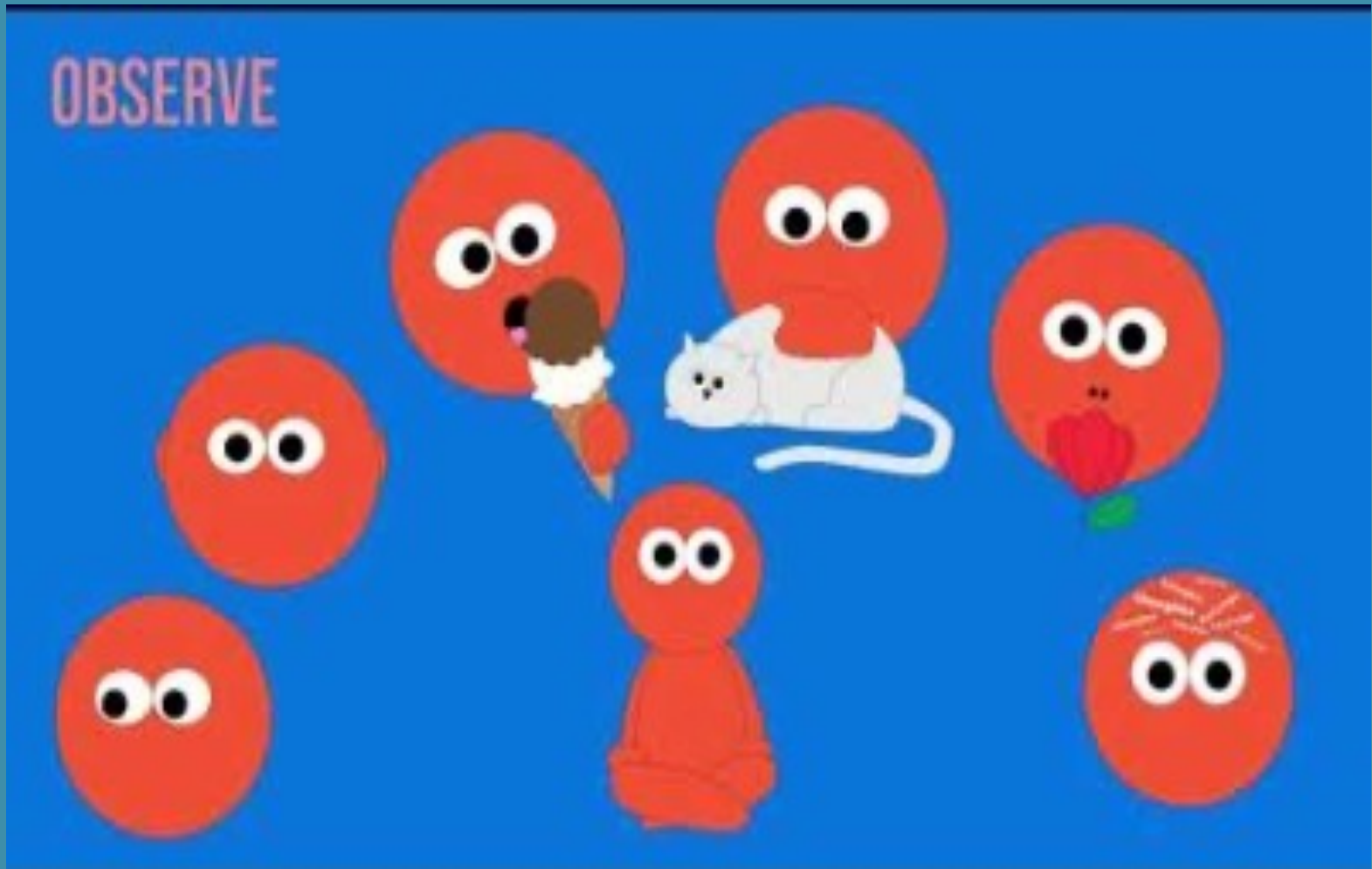
2. **Walking down the spiral stairs.** Imagine that within you is a spiral staircase, winding down to your very center. Starting at the top, walk very slowly down the staircase, going deeper and deeper within yourself.
 - Notice the sensations. Rest by sitting on a step, or turn on lights on the way down if you wish. Do not force yourself further than you want to go. Notice the quiet. As you reach the center of yourself, settle your attention there—perhaps in your gut or your abdomen.

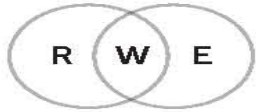
3. **Breathing “Wise” in, “Mind” out.** Breathing in, say to yourself, “Wise”; breathing out, say, “Mind.”
 - Focus your entire attention on the word “Wise,” then focus it again entirely on the word “Mind.”
 - Continue until you sense that you have settled into wise mind.

4. **Asking: Is this wise mind?** Breathing in, ask yourself, “Is this [action, thought, plan, etc.] wise mind?”
 - Breathing out, listen for the answer.
 - Listen, but do not give yourself the answer. Do not tell yourself the answer; listen for it.
 - Continue asking during each inhale. If no answer comes, try again another time.

Continued

The WHAT Skills





Mindfulness: “What Skills”

Observe

- Engage in wordless watching: Just notice the experience in the present moment.
- Watch your thoughts and feelings come and go, as if they are on a conveyor belt.
- Observe both inside and outside yourself, using all of your five senses.
- Have a “Teflon mind,” letting experiences come into your mind and slip right out (not holding on).
- Don’t push away your thoughts and feelings. Just let them happen, even when they are painful.
- *Note:* We cannot observe another’s inner experience (e.g., “He’s upset”)—only external features (e.g., a tear rolling down a cheek) or our thoughts about another’s experience (“I observed the thought, ‘He’s upset’”).

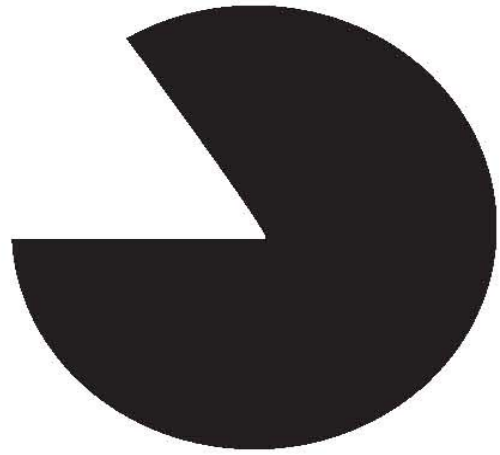
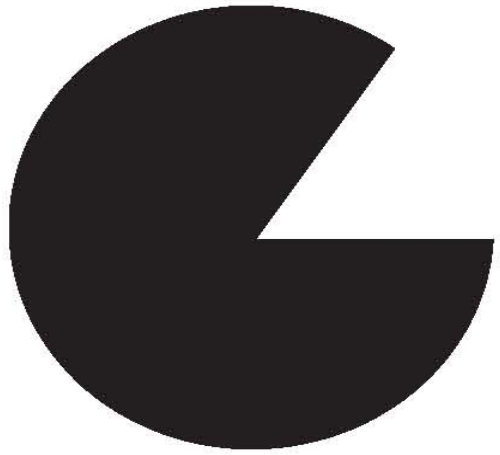
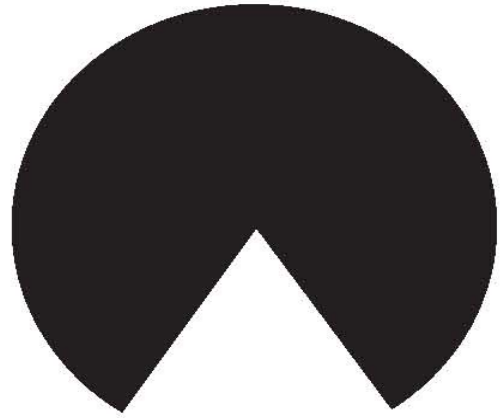
Describe

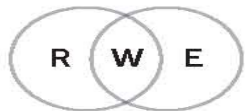
- Put words on the experience. Label what you observe with words. Some examples are: “I feel sad,” or “My face feels hot,” or “I feel my heart racing.”
- Describe only what you observe *without* interpretations. Stick to the facts! Instead of “That person has an attitude,” you could describe that person as “rolling his [or her] eyes and speaking with a loud voice.”

Participate

- Throw yourself into the present moment fully (e.g., dancing, cleaning, taking a test, feeling sad in the moment). Try not to worry about tomorrow or focus on yesterday.
- Become one with whatever you’re doing: Get “into the zone.”
- Fully experience your feelings without being self-conscious.
- Experience even negative emotions fully to help your wise mind make a decision about what to do (instead of acting impulsively).

Mindfulness: Observing Practice





Mindfulness: “How Skills”

Nonjudgmentally

- Notice, but don't evaluate or judge. Stick to the observable facts.
- Acknowledge the harmful and the helpful, but don't judge it. For example, replace “He's a jerk” with “He walked away while we were talking.”
- You can't go through life without making judgments; your goal is to catch them so you have more control over your emotions.
- When you find yourself judging, don't judge your judging.
- Discriminating/differentiating judgments: _____
- Evaluating judgments: _____
- Three steps to being nonjudgmental:
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____

One-Mindfully

- Stay focused: Focus your attention on *only* one thing in this moment. Slow yourself down to accomplish this.
- Stop doing two things at once (the opposite of multitasking).
- Concentrate your mind: Let go of distractions, and refocus your attention when it drifts, again and again.
- Stay focused so that the past, future, and current distractions don't get in your way.

Effectively

- Be effective: Focus on what works to achieve your goal.
- Don't let emotions control your behavior, cutting the cord between feeling and doing.
- Play by the rules (which may vary at home, school, work).
- Act as skillfully as you can to achieve your goals.
- Let go of negative feelings (e.g., vengeance and useless anger) and “shoulds” (e.g., “My teacher should have . . .”) that can hurt you and make things worse.

Distress Tolerance Skills

Crisis Survival Skills

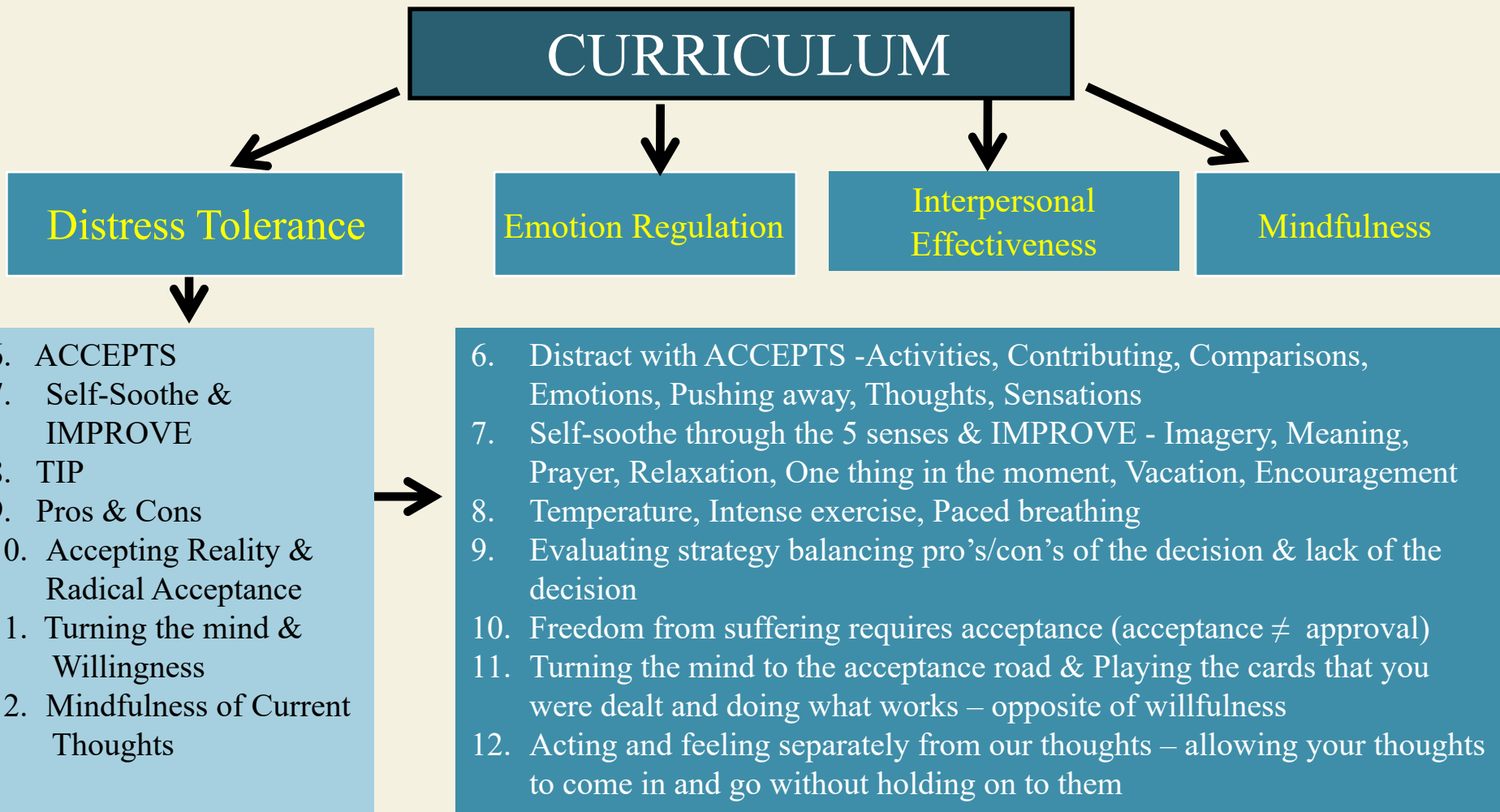
- ▣ Lesson 6: ACCEPTS
- ▣ Lesson 7: Self Soothe and IMPROVE
- ▣ Lesson 8: TIP
- ▣ Lesson 9: Pros and Cons

Accepting Reality Skills

- ▣ Lesson 10: Accepting Reality & Radical Acceptance
- ▣ Lesson 11: Turning the Mind & Willingness
- ▣ Lesson 12: Mindfulness of Current Thoughts and
Test and Review

DBT STEPS-A): Implementation and Training

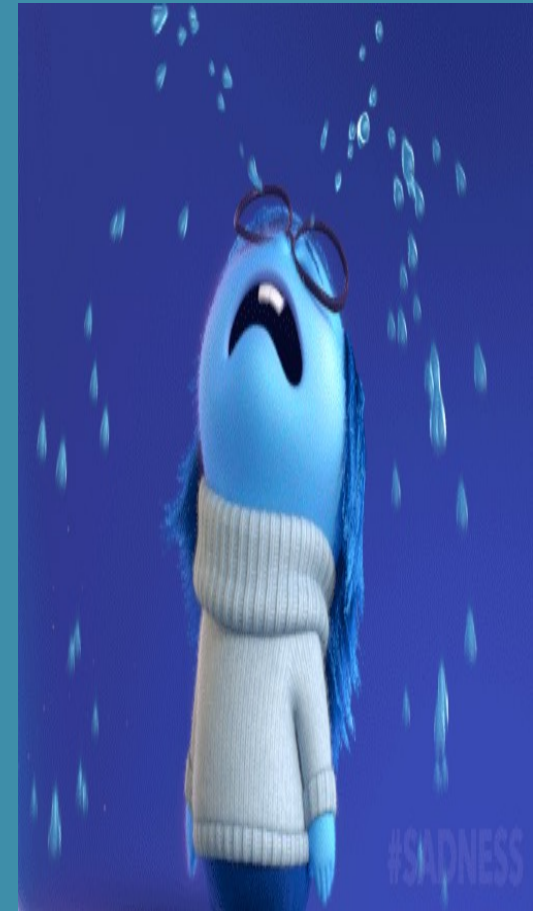
Second module is Distress Tolerance



6. ACCEPTS
7. Self-Soothe & IMPROVE
8. TIP
9. Pros & Cons
10. Accepting Reality & Radical Acceptance
11. Turning the mind & Willingness
12. Mindfulness of Current Thoughts

6. Distract with ACCEPTS -Activities, Contributing, Comparisons, Emotions, Pushing away, Thoughts, Sensations
7. Self-soothe through the 5 senses & IMPROVE - Imagery, Meaning, Prayer, Relaxation, One thing in the moment, Vacation, Encouragement
8. Temperature, Intense exercise, Paced breathing
9. Evaluating strategy balancing pro's/con's of the decision & lack of the decision
10. Freedom from suffering requires acceptance (acceptance ≠ approval)
11. Turning the mind to the acceptance road & Playing the cards that you were dealt and doing what works – opposite of willfulness
12. Acting and feeling separately from our thoughts – allowing your thoughts to come in and go without holding on to them

Distress Tolerance Skills: Crisis Survival Skills



Emotions Thermometer

Distress Tolerance Skills

Crisis Survival Skills

- ▣ Lesson 6: Distract with wise mind ACCEPTS



Distress Tolerance: Distract with Wise Mind ACCEPTS

Distract yourself with . . .

Activities

Do something. Call, email, or visit a friend; watch a favorite movie or TV show; play video games; write in a journal; clean your room; go for a walk or run; exercise intensely; read a book; listen to music, go online and download music or apps; play a game with yourself or others.



Contributing

Contribute to (or do something nice) for someone. Help a friend or sibling with homework; make something nice for someone else; give away things you don't need; surprise someone with a big hug, a note, or a favor; volunteer.

Comparisons

Compare yourself to those less fortunate. Compare how you are feeling now to a time when you were doing worse. Think about others who are coping the same as or less well than you.

Emotions

Create different emotions. Watch a funny TV show or emotional movie; listen to something soothing or to upbeat music; get active when you are sad; go to a store and read funny greeting cards or joke books.

Pushing away

Push the painful situation out of your mind temporarily. Leave the situation mentally by moving your attention and thoughts away; build an imaginary wall between you and the situation; put the pain in a box and on a shelf for a while.

Thoughts

Replace your thoughts. Read; do word or number puzzles; count numbers, colors in a poster, tiles on a wall, or anything else; repeat words to a song in your mind.

Sensations

Intensify other sensations. Hold or chew ice; listen to loud music; take a warm or cold shower; squeeze a stress ball; do sit-ups or push-ups; pet your dog or cat.

Distress Tolerance Skills

Temperature



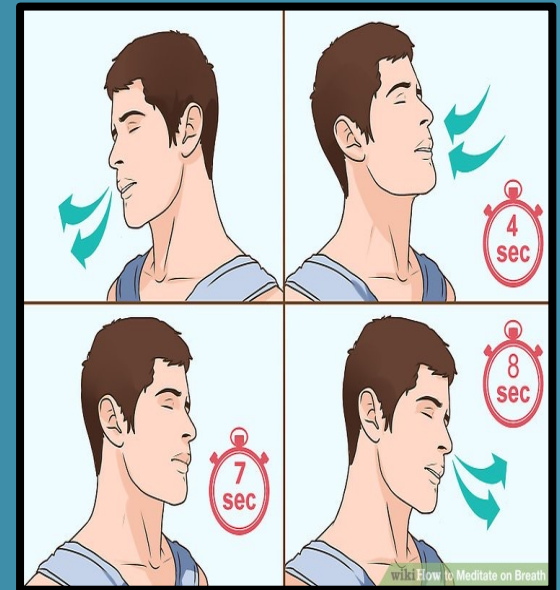
- Cold
- Wet
- Face
- Bent over
- Hold Breath

Intense Exercise



- 20 minutes
- Stop

Paced Breathing



- Exhale longer than inhale
- Parasympathetic NS

Distress Tolerance Skills

Crisis Survival Skills: Lesson 9: Pros and Cons



HANDOUT 9.1



Distress Tolerance: Pros and Cons

Select one crisis (emotionally upsetting situation) where you found it *really* hard to tolerate your distress, avoid destructive behavior, and/or not act impulsively.

Crisis I am faced with: _____

Crisis urges: _____

| | Pros | Cons |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Acting on crisis urges | Pros of acting on impulsive urges: | Cons of acting on impulsive urges: |
| Resisting crisis urges | Pros of resisting impulsive urges: | Cons of resisting impulsive urges: |

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1. **Consider short-term and long-term pros and cons.**
2. Before an overwhelming urge hits:
 - a. Write out your pros and cons, and carry them with you.
3. When an overwhelming urge hits:
 - a. Review your pros and cons.
 - b. Imagine the positive consequences of resisting the urge.
 - c. Imagine (and remember past) negative consequences of giving in to the urges.

Distress Tolerance Skills

Accepting Reality Skills

▣ Lesson 10: Accepting Reality & Radical Acceptance



Distress Tolerance Skills

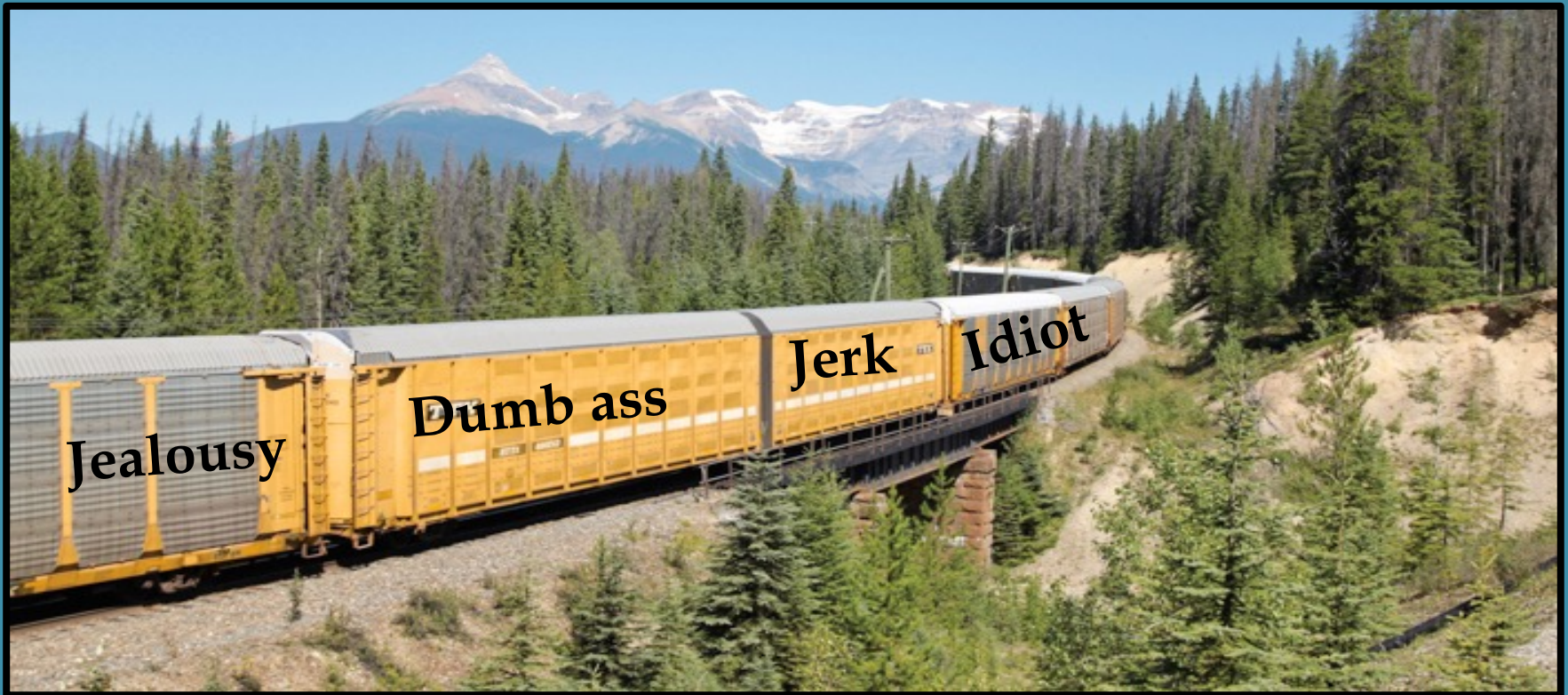
Accepting Reality Skills

- ▣ Lesson 11: Turning the Mind & Willingness



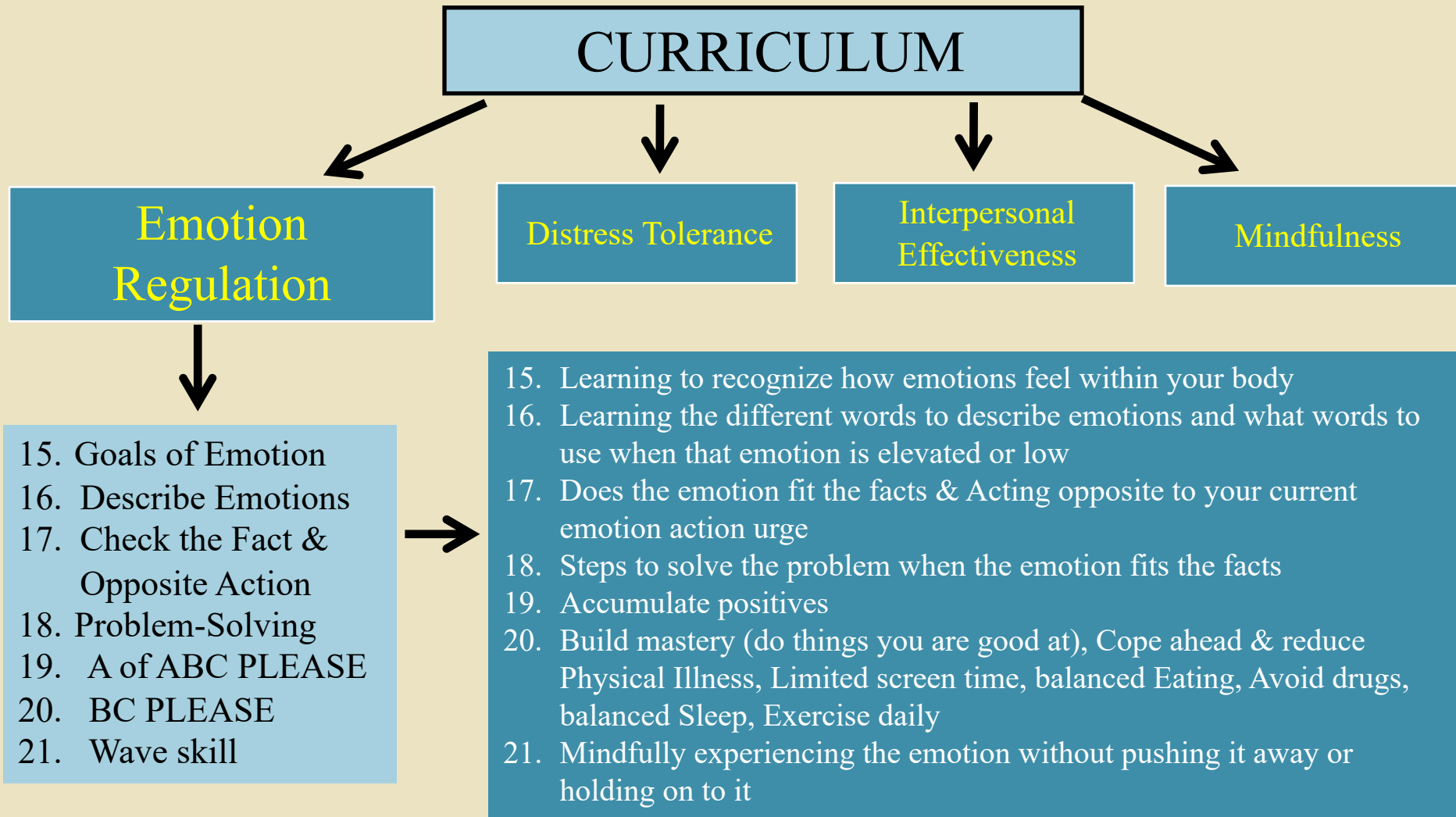
Distress Tolerance Skills

▣ Lesson 12: Mindfulness of Current Thoughts



DBT STEPS-A: Implementation and Training

Third module is Emotion Regulation



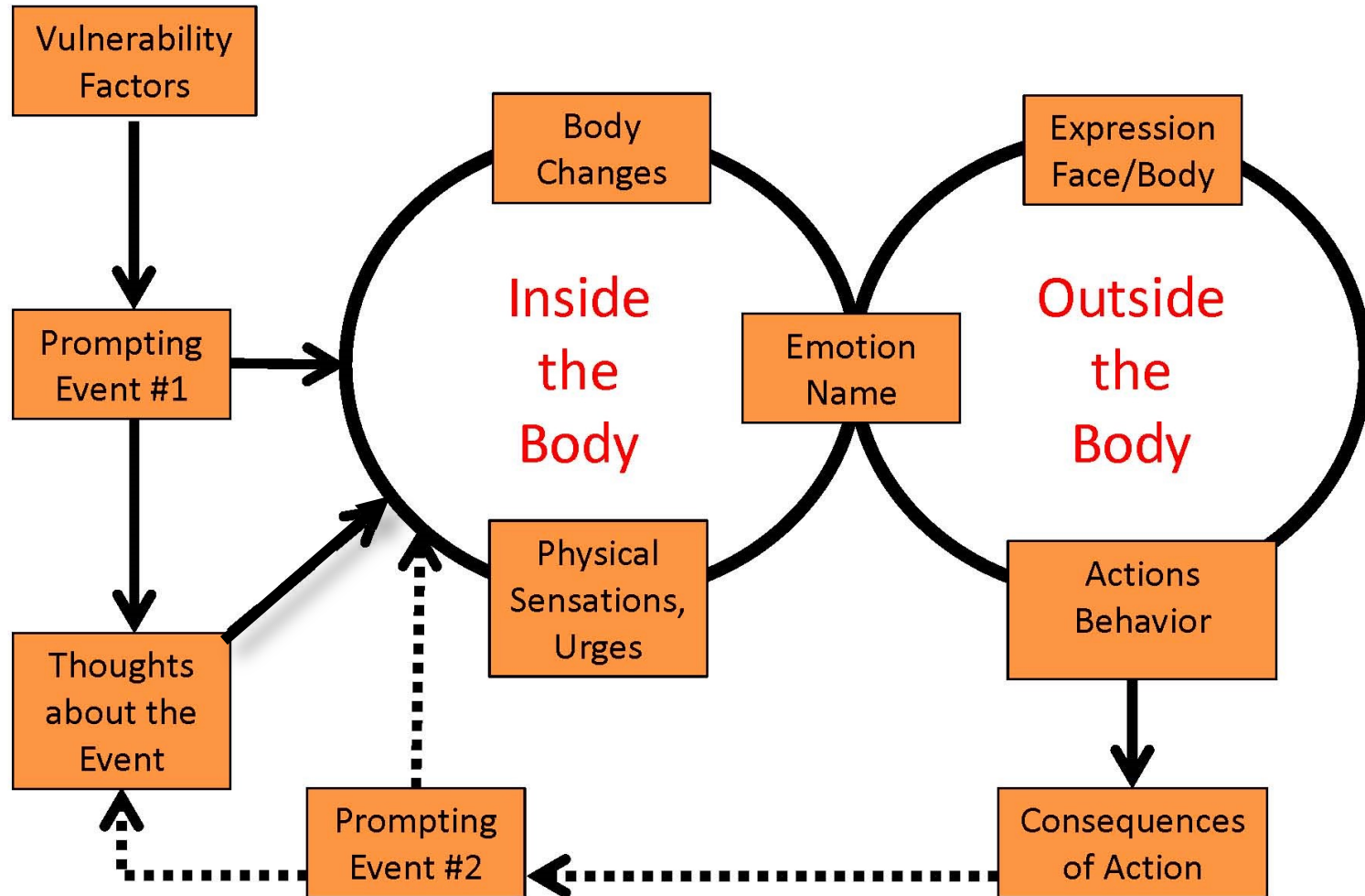
Emotion Regulation Skills

- ▣ Lesson 15: Goals of Emotion Regulation
 - ▣ Recognizing how emotions feel within our body
 - ▣ Why we have emotions

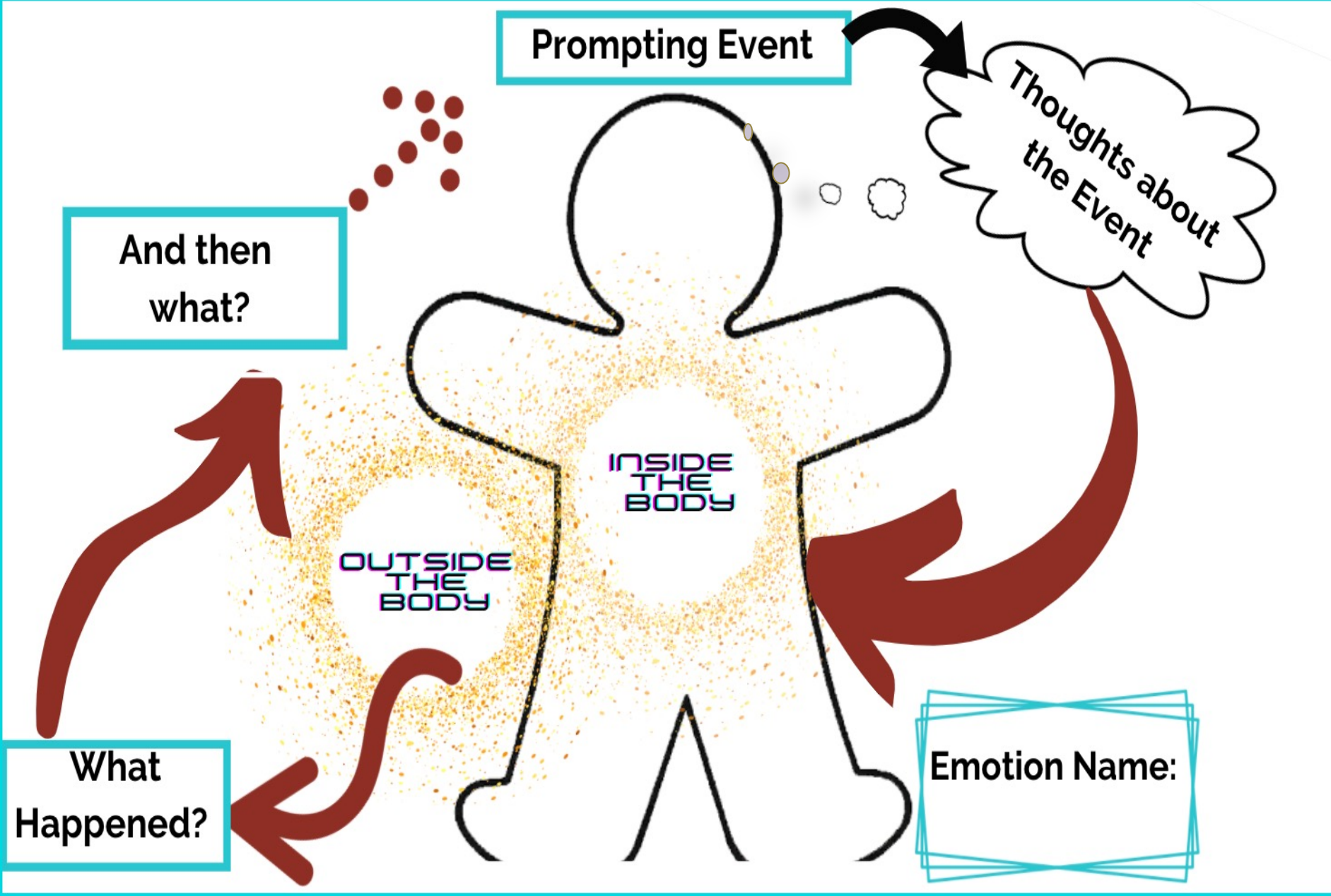


Handout #16.1
Emotion Regulation

Model of Emotions

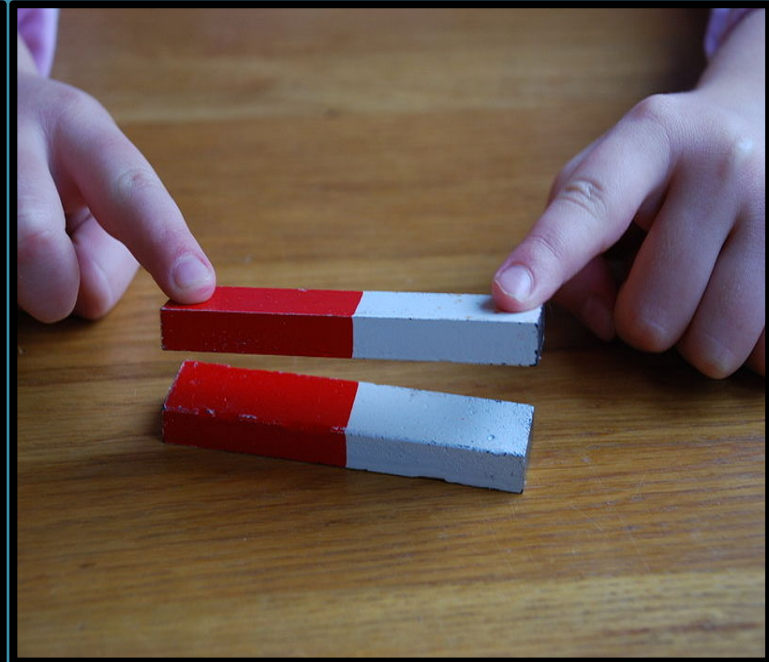


Model of Emotion: DBT STEPS-E



Emotion Regulation Skills

- ▣ Lesson 17: Check the facts & Opposite Action
 - Does the emotion fit the facts?



Emotion Regulation Skills

Opposite Action To Emotions

HANDOUT 17.4

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Emotion Regulation: Opposite Action to Change Emotions

Emotions come with specific action urges that push us to act in certain ways. Often we escape the pain of the emotion in harmful ways.

These are the common urges associated with a sample of emotions:

Fear → Escaping or avoiding

Anger → Attacking

Sadness → Withdrawing, becoming passive, isolating

Shame → Hiding, avoiding, withdrawing, saving face by attacking others

Guilt → Overpromising that you will not commit the offense again, disclaiming all responsibility, hiding, lowering head, begging forgiveness

Jealousy → Verbal accusations, attempts to control, acting suspicious

Love → Saying, “I love you,” making efforts to spend time with the person, doing what the other person wants and needs, giving affection

Emotion Regulation Skills

Opposite Action To Emotions (2nd page)

EMOTION → OPPOSITE ACTION

Fear/anxiety → **Approach**

- Approach events, places, tasks, activities, or people you are afraid of, over and over. Confront.
- Do things to increase a sense of control and mastery over fears.

Anger → **Gently avoid**

- Gently avoid the person you are angry with (rather than attacking).
- Take time out and breathe in and out deeply and slowly.
- Be kind rather than mean or attacking (Try to have sympathy or empathy for the other person).

Sadness → **Get active**

- Approach, don't avoid.
- Build mastery and increase pleasant activities.

Shame → **Face the music** (when your behavior violates your moral values, or something shameful has been revealed about you, and the shame fits the facts):

- Apologize and repair the harm when possible.
- Try to avoid making the same mistake in the future and accept consequences.
- Forgive yourself and let it go.

Go public (when your behavior *does not* violate your moral values, and the shame *does not* fit the facts):

- You continue to participate fully in social interactions, hold your head high, keep your voice steady, and make eye contact.

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Emotion Regulation Skills

▣ Lesson 19: A of ABC PLEASE

- *Accumulate positives daily*
- *Identify Wise Mind Values and goals in line with values*



▣ Lesson 20: BC PLEASE

Build Mastery



Cope Ahead



Together they help reduce our vulnerability to emotions

Decrease
vulnerability to
emotions by
taking care of
your body



Emotion Regulation Skills

WAVE SKILL

(Mindfulness of current emotion)





HANDOUT 21.1

Emotion Regulation: The Wave Skill— Mindfulness of Current Emotions

EXPERIENCE YOUR EMOTIONS

- When you have an emotion, observe it.
- Step back and just notice it.
- Get unstuck.
- Experience it as a **WAVE**, coming and going.
- Don't try to **GET RID** of it or **PUSH** it away.
- And don't try to **HOLD ON** to it.

PRACTICE MINDFULNESS OF EMOTIONAL BODY SENSATIONS

- Notice **WHERE** in your body you are feeling emotional sensations.
- Experience the **SENSATIONS** as fully as you can.

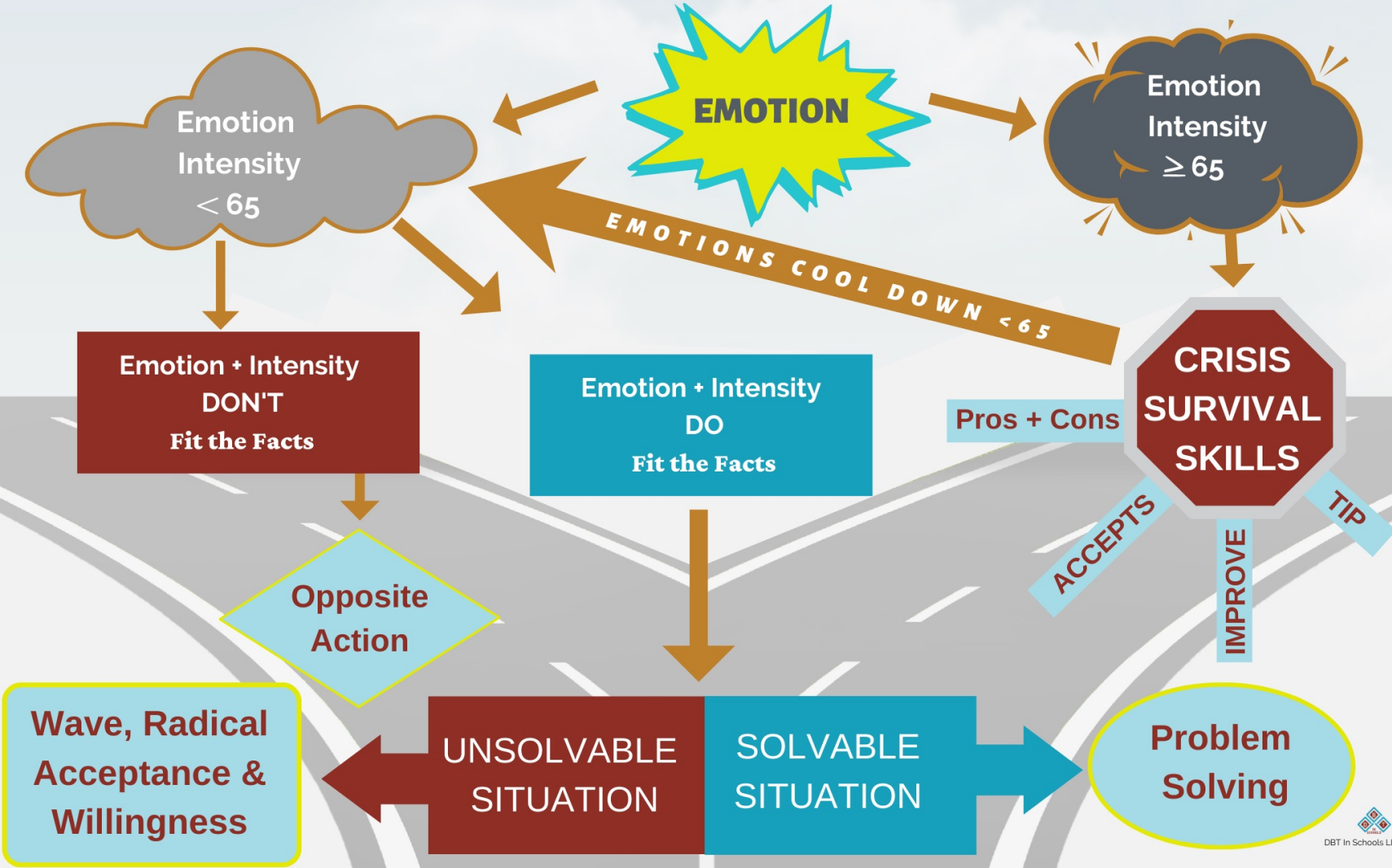
REMEMBER: YOU ARE NOT YOUR EMOTIONS

- You don't need to **ACT** on a feeling.
- Remember times when you have felt differently.

DON'T JUDGE YOUR EMOTIONS

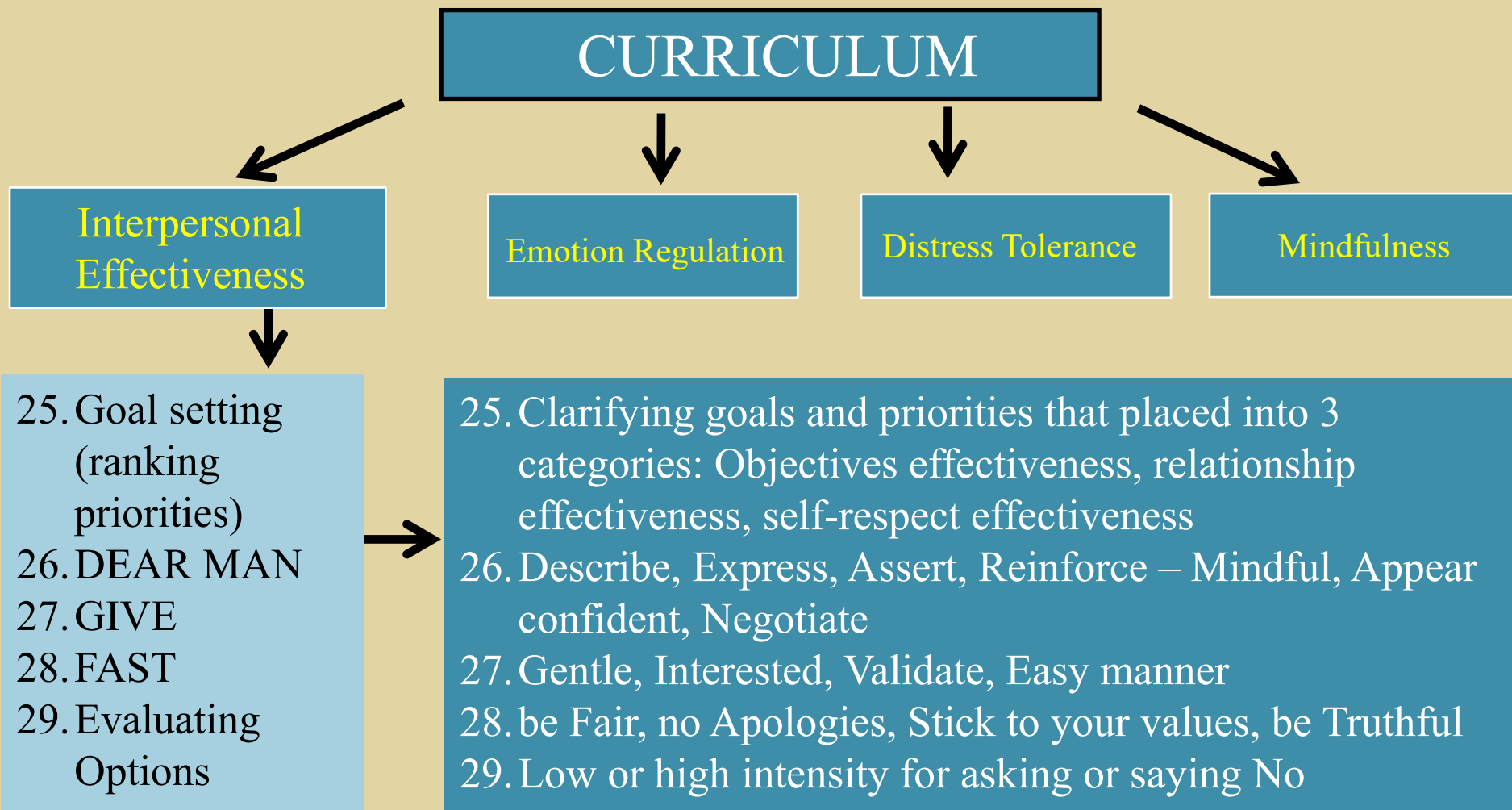
- Radically accept an emotion as part of you.
- Invite it home for dinner; name the emotion.
- Practice *willingness* to experience the emotion.

EMOTION RESPONSE ROAD MAP



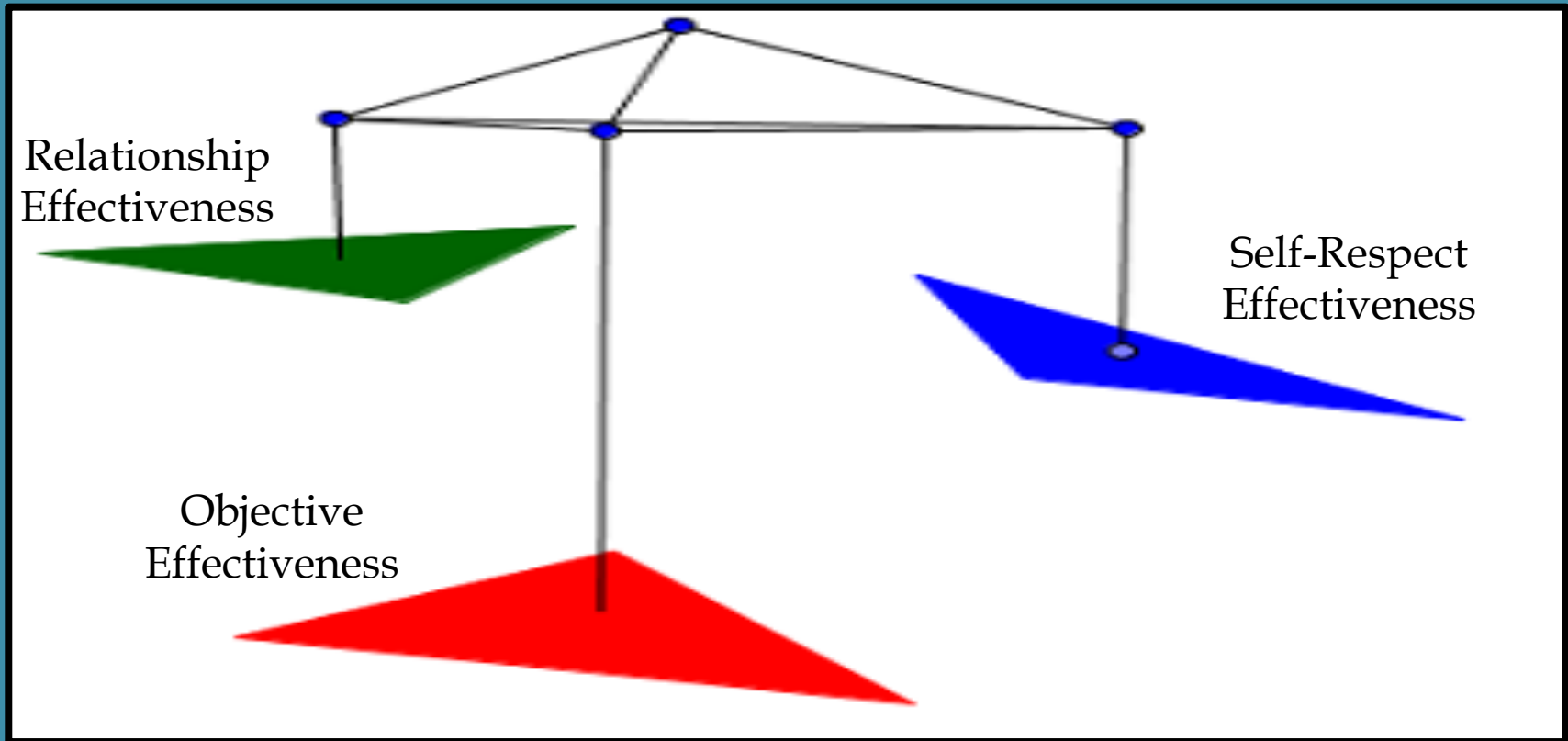
DBT STEPS-A: Implementation and Training

Fourth module is Interpersonal Effectiveness



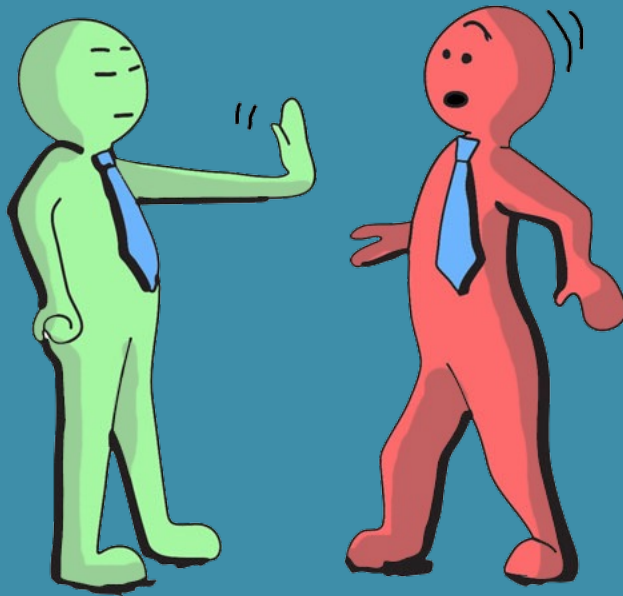
Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills

▣ Lesson 25: Goals and Priorities



Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills

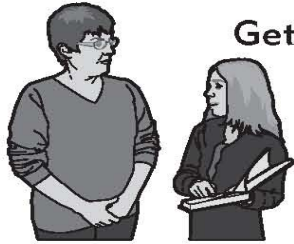
- ▣ Lesson 26: DEAR MAN (Objective Effectiveness)



Asking for what
you want
AND
Saying no to
what you don't
want

HANDOUT 26.1

Interpersonal Effectiveness: Getting Someone to Do What You Want



Remember **DEAR MAN**:

Describe

Express

Assert

Reinforce

(be) **M**indful

Appear confident

Negotiate

- Describe:** Describe the situation. Stick to the facts. For example, you might say, “My paper says I got a C– on the test.”
- Express:** Express your feelings by using “I” statements (“I feel . . .,” “I would like . . .,” “I think . . .”). Do not assume that the other person knows how you feel. Stay away from “you should.” For example, you might say, “I am frustrated because I studied for 4 days. I think some of my answers are correct.”
- Assert:** Ask for what you want or say “no” clearly. Remember that the other person cannot read your mind. For example, you might ask, “Would you please go through the problems with me so I can understand why my answers were not correct?”
- Reinforce:** Reward (reinforce) the person ahead of time by explaining the positive effects of getting what you want. Also, reward him or her afterward. For example, you might say, “I would be better able to understand the material and be able to participate more in class.”
- (be) **Mindful:** Keep your focus on what you want, avoiding distractions. Come back to your assertion over and over, like a “broken record.” Ignore attacks; keep making your point. For example, you might say, “I have been working hard in your class, and this test score doesn’t show my true abilities.”
- Appear confident:** Make (and maintain) eye contact. Use a confident tone of voice—do not whisper, mumble, or give up and say “whatever.”
- Negotiate:** Be willing to **give to get**. Ask for the other person’s input. Offer alternative solutions to the problem. Know when to “agree to disagree” and walk away. For example, you might say, “I understand you are really busy, and I really need to go over my exam with you. What do you suggest we do so I can get some feedback on my exam?”

DEAR MAN in action!!

| Letter | Definition |
|--------|--|
| D | Describe – Bernedoodles are hypoallergenic and do not shed – stick to the facts |
| E | Express – I want to be happy and a dog will do that. I can be responsible |
| A | Assert – Can we please get a puppy ASAP? And can it be a Bernedoodle? |
| R | Reinforce – I will not be on screens as much. I will get physical exercise everyday. Dad can run with the dog. I can cuddle with it. |
| M | be Mindful – stay focused on what you want |
| A | Appear confident – make eye contact, good tone |
| N | Negotiate – be willing to give to get |

Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills

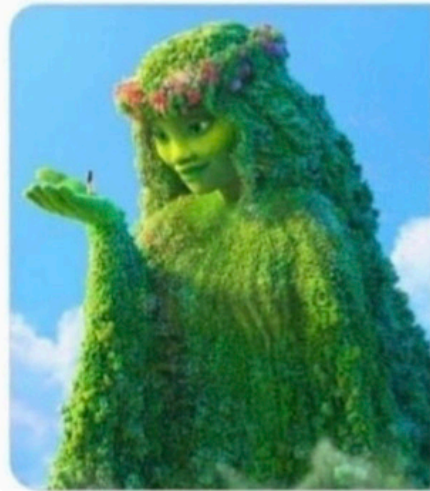
- ▣ Lesson 27: GIVE (Relationship Effectiveness)
 - be **G**entle
 - act **I**nterested
 - **V**alidate
 - **E**asy Manner



Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills

Be GENTLE with an EASY MANNER

my tone of voice
in my head



how it actually
comes out





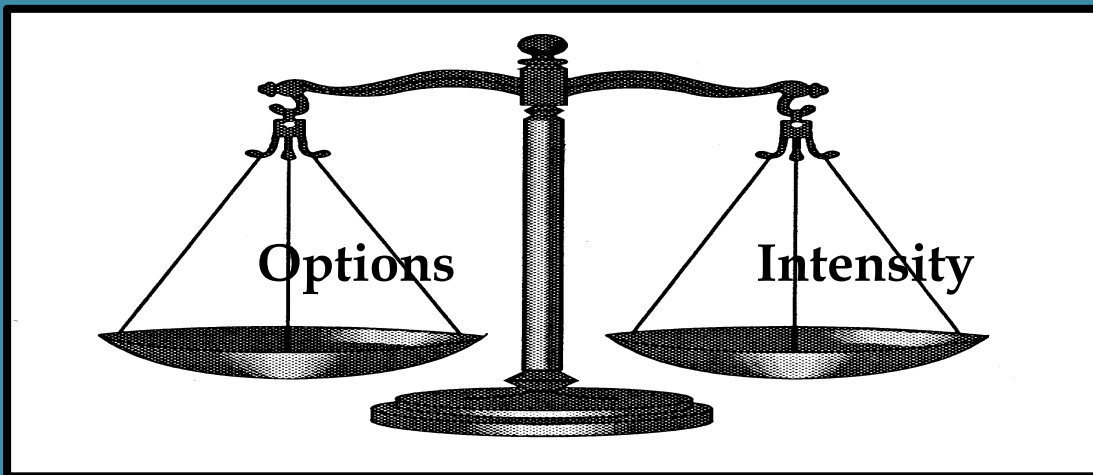
Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills

- ▣ Lesson 28: FAST (Self-Respect Effectiveness)
 - be **F**air
 - don't over **A**pologize
 - **S**tick to your values
 - be **T**ruthful

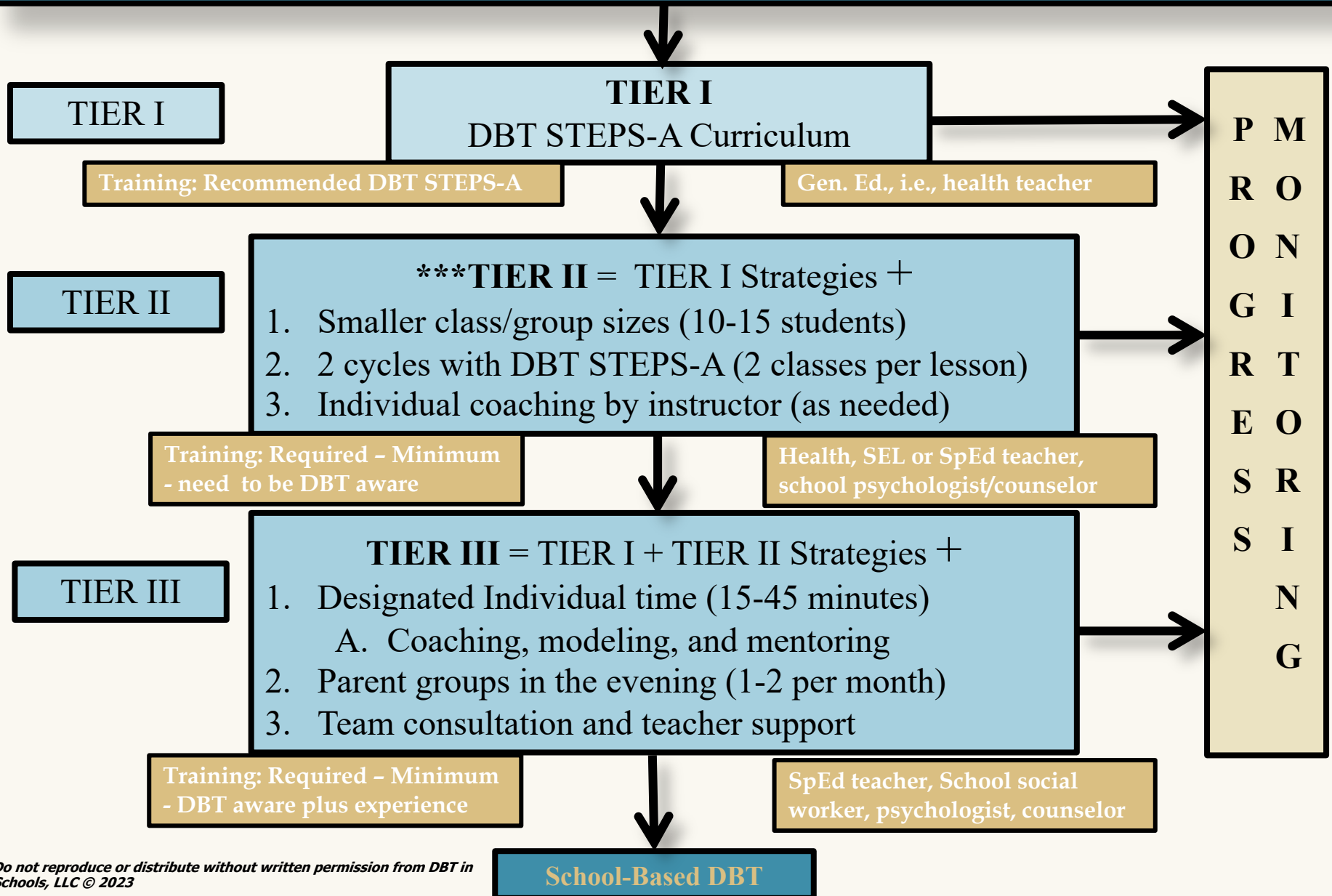
Stay True
Stay You

Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills

▣ Lesson 29: Evaluating Options & Determining Intensity



Tiers I-III within the Continuum of General Education



Problem Area Specific Lesson Sequences

DEPRESSION, SELF-HARM

1 Dialectics

2 Wise Mind

3 ACCEPTS

4 Self-Soothe & IMPROVE

5 TIP

6 ABC

7 PLEASE

8 Check the facts & Opposite action

9 Wave Skill

10 DEARMAN

Problem Area Specific Lesson Sequences

ANGER, AGGRESSION

1 Dialectics

2 Wise Mind

3 What & How Skills- emphasize nonjudgmental stance

4 ACCEPTS

5 Pros and Cons

6 TIP

7 Radical Acceptance

8 Check the Facts & Opposite Action

9 Wave Skill

10 FAST

Problem Area Specific Lesson Sequences

ANXIETY, STRESS

1 Dialectics

2 Wise Mind

3 Model of Emotions

4 ACCEPTS

5 Self-Soothe & IMPROVE

6 Radical Acceptance


7 Check the facts & Opposite action

8 ABC

9 Wave skill

10 GIVE

Problem Area Specific Lesson Sequences



SCHOOL REFUSAL

(limit setting, routine, & goal setting)

1 Dialectics

2 Wise Mind

3 What & How Skills - emphasize nonjudgmental stance

4 Model of Emotions

5 Pros and Cons

6 Radical Acceptance

7 Check the facts & Opposite action

8 BC PLEASE

9 Wave Skill

Bringing DBT Skills to Schools: Overview and Implementation Ideas



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