

Interpersonal Effectiveness DBT Skills

InsightTimer

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[Tools For DBT](#)



[Why Mindfulness Matters In DBT](#)

Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills in DBT are designed to help you communicate more clearly, build healthy relationships, and maintain your self-respect in social situations. By learning these skills, you can ask for what you need, say no when necessary, and handle conflicts with greater confidence and care while balancing your own needs with those of others.

THINK

The **THINK** skill helps you approach challenging interpersonal situations with empathy, perspective, and kindness. It's especially useful when you're feeling upset or misunderstood, and want to respond thoughtfully rather than react impulsively.

T

Think

Pause and reflect before responding. Consider your goals and the possible outcomes.

H

Have Empathy

Try to understand the other person's feelings, thoughts, and perspective.

I

Interpretations

Consider different explanations for the other person's behavior—don't jump to conclusions.

N

Notice

Pay attention to your own feelings and reactions, as well as nonverbal cues from others.

K

Kindness

Respond with kindness and respect, even if you disagree or feel hurt.

Self-Respect Effectiveness: FAST

FAST is a skill for standing up for yourself and keeping your self-respect, especially when it's hard. It reminds you to be honest, stick to your values, and treat yourself with dignity, even if the situation is challenging or uncomfortable.

F

Fair

Be fair to yourself and the other person. Respect both your needs and theirs in the interaction.

A

(No Apologies)

Don't over-apologize or apologize for having needs, opinions, or boundaries. Only apologize when truly necessary.

S

Stick to Values

Stay true to your values and beliefs; don't compromise your integrity to please others or avoid conflict.

T

Truthful

Be honest and authentic. Don't lie, exaggerate, or act helpless when you're not. Communicate sincerely.

Objective Effectiveness: DEAR MAN

DEAR MAN is a skill that helps you get your needs met and achieve your goals in conversations. It guides you to express yourself assertively and clearly, making it easier to ask for what you want or say no, while staying respectful and focused.

Describe

the problem factually and without judgment.

Express

your feelings about the problem. Emphasize “I feel” instead of “You make me feel” statements.

Assert

yourself by stating exactly what it is you want as simply and clearly as possible.

Reinforce

getting what you want by describing why the other person would benefit from helping you.

Mindful

attention to own biases, intense feelings, invalidating others/self & urges to engage in problematic actions.

Appear

confident by using eye contact skillfully, paying attention to body language, and tone of voice.

Negotiate

terms by being willing to make a compromise, having a plan B ready to offer as an alternative.

Tips

- Use “I” statements to avoid blame.
- Stay calm and respectful, even if the conversation is difficult.
- Practice in low-stakes situations first to build confidence