



INDIVIDUAL, COUPLE & FAMILY COUNSELING

What is Dialectical Behavioral (DBT) Therapy?

Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) is a cognitive-behavioral therapy approach that emphasizes the psychosocial aspects of treatment. DBT was developed in the late 1980's by Marsha M. Linehan as a well researched and successful treatment for Borderline Personality Disorder. Since its development, DBT has been found to be helpful in treating a wide variety of difficulties including; depression, anxiety, posttraumatic stress, mood swings and other problems with living and relationships.

DBT is unique with an emphasis on acceptance and change. Validation and understanding and learning new behaviors are key components to improved lives and relationships. Practicing and encouraging new life skills can produce healthier thinking and behavior.

DBT at Therapy Connections:

- Small group size – limiting the number of participants to 10 or less allows us to individualize and focus on each client/family needs
- Strong parent/guardian participation is a requirement to ensure that the skills taught are transferred to, and practiced at home and community
- Facilitators are trained using the Behavioral Tech model developed by Marsha Linehan
- Teen-friendly activities and practice opportunities (i.e. homework) are utilized to teach and practice the DBT skills each session
- Our group is for adolescent females, ages 13 – 18. An assessment interview/intake is completed prior to joining the group to ensure the client will benefit from the group and the DBT training.
- New preteen group is being planned for the future for ages 10 – 13.
- In addition to the four standard DBT modules – Mindfulness, Distress Tolerance, Emotional Regulation, Interpersonal Effectiveness – we have added a fifth module – The Middle Path (learning how to live in balance) to help clients put all the skills together into a comprehensive and integrated package of skills they can use in everyday life.
- Strengths Finder™ allows clients to identify and learn about their natural strengths and talents, which enables them to begin building a sense of self-esteem and self-efficacy, helping to overcome any felt sense of insufficiency or “less than”.

Testimonials:

Participant: “After practicing these skills for a while, I’ve learned I just start doing it and things can be better”

Parent: “DBT has been life-changing for our daughter and for our family. If I had learned these skills when I was younger, my life would have been different”.