Part 2: Using DBT Skills to Put Out, Manage, and Prevent Emotional Fires

Presented by: Ursula Whiteside, Ph.D.
Reference Materials

- DBT Skills Training Handouts & Worksheets. Marsha M. Linehan
- DBT Skills Training Manual. Marsha M. Linehan
- NowMattersNow.org website
Topics for Today

• Mindfulness and Walking the Middle Path (Mindfulness)

• Mindfulness of Current Emotion (Emotion Regulation)

• DEAR MAN and GIVE (Interpersonal Effectiveness)

• Bonus: Recommended Standard Care (Zero Suicide supported), On Fire Steps, NowMattersNow.org Emotional Fire Safety Plan, and supporting clinical documentation
DBT Group Skills Modules

- Mindfulness
- Emotion Regulation
- Interpersonal Effectiveness
- Distress Tolerance
Brief Review

Summarizing Session 1
Two Themes

1. Healthcare providers feel powerless to help
2. Suicidal people find simple things helpful
Language Matters
Choosing Compassionate & Accurate Language

Died of/by Suicide vs Committed Suicide
Suicide vs Successful Attempt
Suicide Attempt vs Unsuccessful Attempt
Describe Behavior vs Manipulative/Attention-Seeking
Describe Behavior vs Suicidal Gesture/Cry for Help
Diagnosed with vs they're Borderline/Schizophrenic
Working with vs Dealing with Suicidal Patients
Linehan's Stress Model

- On Fire
- In a Fire
- Fire Prevention

Stress Level

Time

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**Linehan's Stress Model**

- **Stressful Event**: Cold Water
- **Mindfulness of Current Emotion**
- **Opposite Action**
- **Mindfulness**

Tags: #Suicideprevention #KPIHP
Healthcare Context

DBT Skills and Safety Planning
DBT Skills for Safety Planning

Screening & Assessment

Safety Planning (DBT SKILLS)

Caring Contacts
Mindfulness

Skills for being aware, whether preventing a fire, or being on or in a fire emotionally
DBT Guiding Principle

Dialectics
(Page 150)
Two seemingly opposite things can both be true at the same time.
By holding both truth at the same time, we can come to a synthesis and move forward in a new way.
This is Walking the Middle Path
It is accepting and changing at the same time
Dialectics Benefits

Can help us stay away from extremes in our thinking and actions
Dialectics reminds us that:

- The universe is filled with opposites
- Everything and every person is connected in some way
- Change is the only constant
- Change goes both ways
Is both a world view and a way of resolving disagreements and searching for truth
How to Think and Act Dialectically

- There is more than one side to each story
- Awareness of connection to others and the universe
- Embracing change
- You affect others and they affect you – when you change, they change
Dialectically Balancing Opposites

“Yes!” and “No!”

True and Not True
The goal is that we will begin to ask ourselves:

**Am I in wise mind?**
EMOTION REGULATION

Skills for being “In a Fire” Emotionally
Mindfulness of Current Emotion

A way of solving a problem, at least temporarily, by feeling it in your body
Mindfulness of Current Emotion

OBSERVE YOUR EMOTION

- NOTE its presence
- Step BACK
- Get UNSTUCK from the emotion
EXPERIENCE YOUR EMOTION

- As a WAVE, coming and going
- Try not to BLOCK emotion
- Try not to SUPPRESS emotion
- Don’t try to GET RID of emotion or PUSH it away
- Don’t try to KEEP emotion around
- Don’t HOLD ON to it Don’t AMPLIFY it
REMEMBER YOU ARE NOT YOUR EMOTION

- Do not necessarily ACT on your emotion.
- Remember times when you have felt DIFFERENT
PRACTICE LOVING YOUR EMOTION

- Don’t JUDGE your emotion.
- Practice WILLINGNESS Radically ACCEPT your emotion
INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Skills for getting what you want from your relationships
Interpersonal Goals

What would you like?

Get others to do things you would like?
Get others to take you seriously?
Say no really well?
Strengthen current friendships?
Find and build new friendships?
End hopeless friendships?
Get balance in friendships?
WHAT IS YOUR OBJECTIVE?

Dear Man

GIVE
DEAR MAN Clarifying Goals

Getting what you want from someone

Saying no
Defending your rights
Getting someone to do something
Fixing a fight or disagreement
Getting taken seriously
GIVE Clarifying Goals

Keeping and improving friendships

Be liked and respected
Acting in the interest of the long-term
Keep improving friendships
INTERPERSONAL MYTHS

I don’t deserve to get what I want
They should know (I shouldn’t have to tell them)
Revenge/Yelling will feel so good, it will be worth it
If they say no, this will kill me
I do deserve to get what I want
It is pointless to try building relationships
Other people should support me
Getting what I want right away is most important
INTERPERSONAL OBSTACLES

- You don’t have the skills you need
- You forget your long-term goals
- Person isn’t open to conversation
- Your thoughts are getting in the way
- You don’t know what you want
- Your emotions get in the way
- Your thoughts are getting in the way
DEAR MAN

Asking for what you want and saying no in a way where you are most likely to get what you want.
DEAR MAN

DEAR is What you do

Describe
Express
Assert
Reinforce

MAN is How you do it

Mindfully
Appearing Confident
Negotiating
Which is D, E, A, and R?

Will you go to the store with me?

There isn’t any food in the house

If you did, I’d appreciate it

I’m really hungry

People often forget to Assert – we think others can read our minds!
GIVE

Skills for managing important relationships effectively.
Keeping or improving your relationship (while trying to get what we want in an interaction)

Acting in a way that makes other person feel good about saying yes to your request

Balancing short-term goals with what is good long-term for relationship
GIVE the GIVE!

(\textit{be}) \textbf{Gentle}
- be nice and respectful; no attacks, threats, judging, sneering

(\textit{act}) \textbf{Interested}
- listen and appear interested; don’t interrupt or talk over; make eye contact

\textbf{Validate}
- show you understand; see from their point of view

\textbf{Easy Manner}
- use a little humor, smile, be light hearted, drop attitude
Which is G, I, V, and E?

Making eye contact, avoiding playing on cell

Tell them how their feelings make sense to you

Avoid judging and attacking even if they are acting in emotion mind

Make light of the situation

The relationship is important in any interaction – but, some much more so than others
Safety Plan

Fire Prevention, Fire Exit Pathway, (and Stop Drop and Roll) in one package
Types of Safety Plans

Stanley & Brown Safety Plan
Craig Bryan’s Crisis Response Plan
NowMattersNow.org Safety Plan
(Emotional Fire Model or Enhanced Safety Planning)
NowMattersNow.org Emotional Fire Safety Plan

Direct advice for overwhelming urges to kill self or use opioids

- Shut it down —
  Sleep (no overdosing). Can't sleep? Cold shower or face in ice-water (30 seconds and repeat). This is a reset button, it slows everything down.

- No Important Decisions —
  Especially deciding to die. Do not panic. Ignore thoughts that you don't care if you die. Stop drugs and alcohol.

- Make Eye Contact —
  A difficult but powerful pain reliever. Look in their eyes and say "Can you help me get out of my head?" Try video chat. Keep trying until you find someone.

Things I Know How To Do for Suicidal Thoughts and Urges to Use (practice outside of crisis situations)

- Visit NowMattersNow.org (guided strategies)
- Paced Breathing (make exhale longer than inhale)
- Call/Text Crisis Line or A-Team Member (see below)
- "This makes sense: I'm stressed and/or in pain" "I can manage this pain for this moment"
- "I want to feel better, not suicide or use opioids" Notice thoughts, but don't get in bed with them
- Distraction:

The reason(s) I want to live or not use drugs

- Visible reminder (note to self or photo of loved one: phone background, gun case, med cabinet, car dashboard, wallet)

The #1 thing leading to suicidal thoughts or urges to use

Keeping Myself Safe (address if relevant, as best as possible, as part of collaborative conversation)

- Guns locked up w/out key or combo (NA)
- Guns stored separately from ammunition (NA)
- Guns stored outside of home (NA)
- A-Team supports these safety steps (NA)
- Confirm steps with another person

Remove opioids from home (NA)

Preferred suicide methods discussed

No one with or using opioids allowed in home

Remove or store prescription medications safely

Create an A-Team (people I can talk to about suicide, drug or alcohol or mental health struggles)

Can be healthcare provider, peer support, friend, family member or other

- Choose A-Team member(s)
- Message or call A-Team members, individually or as a group to let them know they are A-Team
- Let ther know ahead of time what would be helpful in crisis ("I believe in you"); remind you of this plan, just listen
- Think about how to ask for help effectively (be willing to take help, try to communicate before a crisis)

Watch Out For These

- Feeling really anxious or irritable
- Increased alcohol or drug use or relapse
- Being in frustrating and painful situations
- Stop taking medication without support
- Avoiding calls or messages
- Suicidal thoughts or images

Things I'd Be Willing to Try

- Regular sleep for a week (8 hours nightly)
- Validate yourself, "my emotions make sense"
- Talk to someone in recovery
- Make plans to get out of these situations
- Go to scheduled appointments or schedule one
- Message an A-Team member a caring message
Linehan's Stress Model

- **Stressful Event**
- **On Fire**
- **In a Fire**
- **Fire Prevention**

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Linehan's Stress Model

On Fire

Emergency Response
STOP, DROP, ROLL

Stress Level

Stressful Event

Time

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ON FIRE

Directions for Solutions

Shut it Down (1, 2)
Ice-water and sleep
No Important Decisions (3)
Do not kill yourself
Ignore thoughts- “you don’t care if you die”
(addresses “calm state”)
Make Eye Contact (2, and 1?, 3?)
Find someone

Ideas for Solutions

(1) Reduce Arousal
change physiology
(2) Redirect Attention
strong stimuli
(3) Direct What Not to Do
explicit instruction to not kill self
Over-Practice Instructions
increase likelihood of remembering
WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE AN OVERWHELMING URGE TO KILL YOURSELF.

SHUT IT DOWN
SLEEP (NO OVERDOSING) CAN’T SLEEP? TAKE A COLD SHOWER OR FACE IN ICE WATER (30 SECONDS). THIS IS A RESET BUTTON.

NO IMPORTANT DECISIONS
ESPECIALLY DECIDING TO DIE. DON’T PANIC. IGNORE THOUGHTS THAT YOU DON’T CARE IF YOU DIE. STOP DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

MAKE EYE CONTACT
A DIFFICULT BUT POWERFUL PAIN RELIEVER. LOOK IN THEIR EYE AND SAY: "CAN YOU HELP ME GET OUT OF MY HEAD?" TRY VIDEO CHAT. KEEP TRYING UNTIL YOU FIND SOMEONE.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: NOWMATTERSNOW.ORG