

DBT Coping Skills List

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) is a therapeutic approach that combines cognitive-behavioral techniques with mindfulness practices. It was originally developed to help individuals with borderline personality disorder, but its coping skills and strategies have proven effective for a wide range of emotional and behavioral challenges. DBT emphasizes the development of coping skills to manage distress, regulate emotions, and improve interpersonal relationships.

DBT Coping Skills

1. **Mindfulness:** Mindfulness involves being fully present in the moment, observing thoughts and feelings without judgment. It helps to reduce reactivity and increase awareness.
2. **Distress Tolerance:** These skills focus on tolerating distressing situations without making things worse. Examples include distraction techniques, self-soothing activities, and using the "ACCEPTS" acronym (Activities, Contributing, Comparisons, Emotions, Pushing away, Thoughts, Sensations) to manage distress.
3. **Emotion Regulation:** These skills help individuals manage and regulate their emotions effectively. They include identifying and labeling emotions, increasing positive emotional experiences, and reducing emotional vulnerability.
4. **Interpersonal Effectiveness:** These skills teach individuals how to communicate effectively and maintain healthy relationships. The DEAR MAN acronym (Describe, Express, Assert, Reinforce, Mindful, Appear confident, Negotiate) is often used to guide interpersonal interactions.
5. **Wise Mind:** This skill integrates rational thinking (logic) and emotional thinking (intuition) to make balanced decisions. It encourages finding a middle ground between impulsivity and over-analysis.
6. **Radical Acceptance:** Radical acceptance involves fully accepting reality as it is, even when it's difficult or painful. It doesn't mean liking or agreeing with the situation, but it prevents unnecessary suffering from resisting what cannot be changed.
7. **Self-Soothe:** Engaging in self-soothing activities like taking a warm bath, enjoying a favorite treat, listening to calming music, or using scents can help individuals comfort themselves during times of distress.
8. **IMPROVE the Moment:** This acronym stands for Imagery, Meaning, Prayer, Relaxation, One thing at a time, Vacation, and Encouragement. It offers strategies to improve the current moment and manage distress.
9. **ABC PLEASE:** This acronym stands for Accumulate positive emotions, Build mastery, Cope ahead of time, treat Physical illness, Balanced nutrition, Avoid mood-altering substances, get enough Sleep, and Exercise. It focuses on maintaining a healthy lifestyle to support emotional well-being.
10. **FAST Skills:** These skills are useful for maintaining self-respect and setting boundaries in relationships. FAST stands for Fair, Apologies, Stick to values, Truthful, and assertive.

11. **PLEASE Skills:** This acronym stands for Treat Physical illness, Balanced Eating, Avoid mood-altering substances, Balanced Sleep, and Exercise. It emphasizes taking care of your physical health to improve emotional well-being.

12. **Pros and Cons:** This skill involves making a list of pros and cons before making a decision. It encourages rational thinking and considering the potential outcomes of different choices.

Additional Notes: