

## DBT: Mindfulness

### Slide 1

Hello, and welcome to UHCL Counseling Center's online dialectical behavioral therapy skills group titled "All the Skills". Dialectical Behavioral Therapy is an empirically supported therapy. Dialectical behavioral therapy, or DBT, is influenced by the philosophical perspective of dialectics, which means two things can seem opposite. But both can be true and coexist at the same time. In DBT, the core is to balance acceptance and change, so there are sets of acceptance skills as well as change skills. These skills are further divided into four skill modules. These modules are as follows, mindfulness, emotional regulation, interpersonal effectiveness and distress tolerance. The purpose in teaching DBT skills is to help you live in the moment, develop healthy ways to cope with stress, manage your emotions and improve your relationship with others. The purpose of today's module mindfulness is to help you live more in the moment. For this module, please feel free to pause, rewind, fast forward as needed or to watch the video again as desired.

### Slide 2

We hope that in listening to today's module, you will walk away with the goal of being present, hopefully finding way to experience life as it's happening. We hope this will help you decrease suffering, not sweat the small stuff, and ultimately live life to its fullest by thinking about how we respond versus how we react.

### Slide 3

Let's begin with our state of mind, because our state of mind is important. We must understand what state of mind we can be in when we're experiencing the world, to better understand things. There are three states of mind. They are reasonable mind, emotional mind, and wise mind. We'll break down each state of mind in further pieces in the next couple of slides.

### Slide 4

Our reasonable mind is the rational thinking and planning and evaluating side of our mind. The reason the mind approaches things intellectually, thinks logically, plans behavior, and is really focused on paying attention to empirical facts or things that can be observed or measured. It focuses attention and it is not emotional in approaching problem solving. Here's some examples of when your reasonable line makes decisions, calling the bus station to find out about the bus schedule instead of just waking up and hopping over to find a bus. Measuring the ingredients to make a cake. Studying for a test. Looking up information on the Internet, or perhaps asking a salesperson the details about something you want to buy before purchasing it. Pause for a moment. Have you done any of these things before? What are some other examples of the ways you see your reasonable mind being used in everyday? How can your reasonable mind be helpful? And the reverse. Can you think of moments or times in which it's not helpful to be in a reasonable state of mind? To be in that logical side.

### Slide 5

On the opposite side, we have the emotional mind. Emotional mind is focused on emotions. Emotions are in control of thinking and behavior. Thinking and behavior controlled by emotions, logical thinking and planning may be difficult, in fact may become distorted or made larger and more important. In our emotional mind, thoughts and behaviors might be said to be hot, and the energy of the behavior tends to match the intensity of the feelings we're experiencing. Here are some examples of emotional mind. Having a fight with someone you disagree with. Going out to fly a kite just for the fun of it. Going on a trip on an impulse, without planning. Cuddling a puppy. Snapping at a salesperson because you don't have the item they want. Or putting inexpensive item on your credit card just because you like it. Considering the following questions. Have you done any of these things before? What do you do when you find yourself in an emotional state of mind? And what ways is it helpful or good to be in emotional mind? And the reverse. Are there times in which it might not be helpful to be in our emotional mind?

### Slide 6

Thus far we have discussed our emotional mind and our reasonable mind. Now let's talk about the third state of mind - Wise mind. Wise mind is the overlap of reasonable mind and emotional mind. When they come together, or overlap, these two states of being they produce something bigger than either of them. Or when they were separate. What is added to this mix is intuition, or feeling of knowing what's right. A felt sense, a sense that some people feel in their body. For example, the head, heart, stomach, or elsewhere. But something's just right, the right thing to do or the right way for things to be. You can experience intuition about what's right or appropriate, without thinking on it, without knowing it intellectually, just feeling it. Do you ever have this intuition or something just feels right, the right thing to do or say, or plan for? Consider it. Do you know the sense of knowing somewhere in your body, and if so, where?

### Slide 7

It's important to point out that everyone has wise mind. Some of us may not have found it yet, but it is there. It's important that you learn to find a place of calmness inside of you, to let go of the intense emotions so that you can sense the wisdom inside. Some of you will experience wise mind after crisis. It may feel like the calm after the storm. Sometimes you may suddenly see something in a new way that just all of a sudden makes sense to you. Sometimes you may feel the right choice in some dilemma, and the feeling comes from deep within. So, what do you need to achieve a wise mind? Other than observing the moment, describing them and then doing.

### Slide 8

We start by observing. By noticing the experience. Notice what's happening without focusing on exactly what you're experiencing. Not reacting to the experience, but just noticing it. Think of your mind as like a piece of Teflon. We want to let our thoughts come into our mind and then let them slip right out. In and out, but not sticking to our mind. We want to be alert, aware of and aware of every thought, feeling and action that comes to mind. Being able to watch our thoughts come and go like clouds in the sky. We want to notice feelings rising and falling. We might even lean in to our five senses during this time. Noticing those senses, what comes through them? What can you smell, see, hear, taste, or feel?

### Slide 9

Once we have observed the situation, we want to describe it. This is helpful for communication and self-control, and for not taking thoughts or emotions quite so literal. Try to put words on the experience, acknowledging when a thought or feeling comes. For example, you could say to yourself "I just began to feel sad", or "I noticed I had a thought that I couldn't succeed". Try and put your experiences to words. Describe to yourself what's happening during this. Put a name to the feeling, call it a thought. Call it just a thought. Whatever helps you not get caught in the content of your mind.

And lastly, we wanted participate to become one with our experience, to enter into it, to let ourselves get into that moment, to act intuitively. Doing what's needed in each situation instead of being willful or sitting on our hands. This is a good moment in participating to practice skills, i.e. changing harmful situations, changing harmful reactions, or maybe just accepting yourself in the situation, in that moment.

### Slide 10

How do we achieve wise mind? Well, the first way is nonjudgmentally. We don't want to evaluate, we want to take a non-judgmental stance for ourselves. Not focusing on what's good or bad, should or shouldn't. To do that, you'll have to unglue your opinion and move opinions from facts. We're not so focused on The Who, what, when, where. Instead, we're simply trying to accept each moment to see each event like a blanket spread out over a lawn. The sun and rain and leaves can fall on it whatever is there is there.

If you do find yourself judging, it's important not to judge the judging. When you do judge, don't judge that, this only continues the cycle. And leaning into the wise mind, we want to do things one-mindfully. Or in other words, we want to do things one thing in it at a time, right? Letting go of distractions. If a distraction does arise, that's fine, but try and bring yourself back to the one thing that you're focused on in that moment. If you find yourself doing multiple things, we can concentrate our mind. Step back and then do the one thing that's appropriate in that moment. Lastly, in achieving wise mind, we want to act effectively. We want to focus on what works. Playing by the rules. Or in other words, don't cut your nose off to spite your face or get yourself in trouble because of emotional reactions instead. Instead, to be in our wise mind we want to act skillfully. Be aware of what the situation needs and when to use skills as appropriate. Be aware of your objectives. And do what's necessary to achieve them, willing to let go of the things that get in the way of that. Things like vengeance, anger, or righteousness.

### Slide 11

Why don't we practice a brief mindfulness exercise now? Invite you to begin by sitting comfortably with your feet flat on the ground and your back, supported by the back of your chair. You could arrange your neck, head and shoulders so they're upright but not stiff. As you follow along with this exercise, you could do one of two things with your eyes. You can either close them, or if you prefer to, you can leave them open with your lids half closed, with your eyes directed at a point in front of you. There is no right way to do this, but this can be a useful start. When you feel comfortable, begin by allowing your eyes to gently close. In your mind's eye. I Invite you to turn your attention to your breathing. So, we observed the rise and fall of your breath in your chest and belly. Though you may be tempted, there's no need to try and control your breathing in any way. As best as you can simply allow your breath to breathe itself.

Next, I invite you to turn your attention to your body and your chair. Scan your body. Observing the places where you make contact with your chair or your seat. See if you can notice any sensations of touch or pressure there. As we do this exercise together, you might have noticed that your mind has drifted. That's completely normal. That's what minds are made to do. Our minds are prone to drifting off towards problem solving, predicting, worrying, planning, judging, and a variety of other activities. When you notice that your mind has done this, just gently bring yourself back to this moment and to the area of your body or to the environment in which your attention is being guided. Now I invite you to turn your attention to your feet inside your shoes. Notice if you can, the variety of sensations there. Touch, pressure, temperature. See if you can pick out each individual toe. If it helps, wiggle your toes a little bit. Next, turn your attention to the places where your skin makes contact with the air. Perhaps your face, your hands, wherever. Just notice the sensations there. See if you can turn your attention to the sounds around you, environment you can pick them out. Finally, I invite you to bring your attention back to your breathing. Watching the rising and falling in your chest and belly. As your breath flows in and flows out. This here, what you're noticing, is the present moment. And this exercise has simply been a practice in mindfulness, to pay attention to the here and now, without judgment, and to allow you to connect to your wise mind. Thank you for joining us in this module.