

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) Skills: Mindfulness

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What is Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) ?

- A skills based curriculum that helps students with social/emotional problem solving
- Initially developed as an intervention in a clinical setting but has evolved into a more general school-based program
- Used in schools to teach coping skills to improve emotional and behavioral regulation, subsequently helping educational functioning and developing critical life skills

Matching Problems with Skills

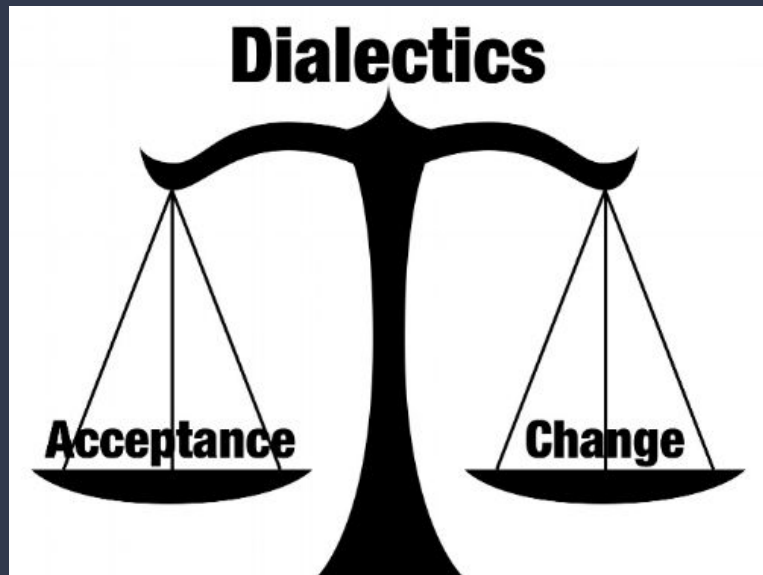
Problems

- I. *Confusion about yourself*
- II. Impulsivity
- III. Emotional instability
- IV. Interpersonal Problems
- I. Child and Family dilemmas

Skills

- I. *Mindfulness*
- II. Distress Tolerance
- III. Emotion Regulation
- IV. Interpersonal Effectiveness
- V. Walking the Middle Path

Dialectics in DBT



Mindfulness skills

- Dialectical means two seemingly opposite ideas can both be true at the same time

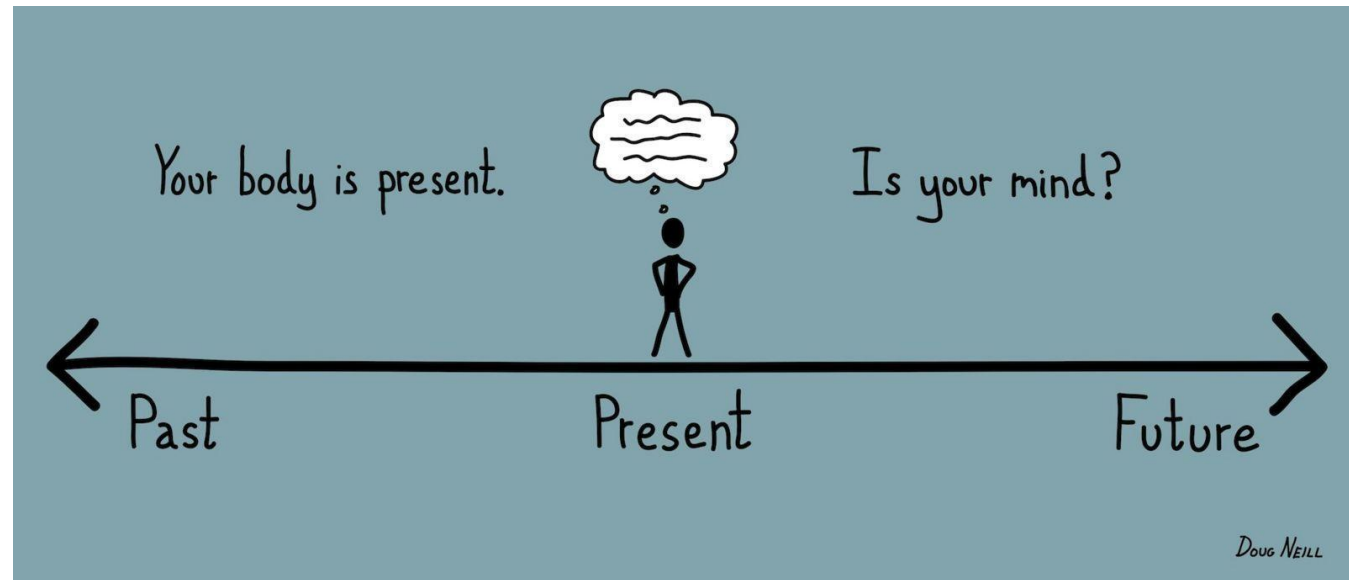
I am doing our best, and I need to do better.

- Acceptance Skills
 - Mindfulness
 - Distress Tolerance
- Change Skills
 - Emotion Regulation
 - Improving My Relationships

I notice my emotion, it is valid, and acting on my emotion is not helpful or effective.



Mind Full, or Mindful?



Defining Mindfulness

- Act of consciously focusing the mind in the present moment, without judgment or attachment to the moment
- Paying attention on purpose with awareness to the present moment
- A way of living – being fully awake with eyes wide open
- Slowing down & *single*-tasking
- **Different* than automatic, habitual, or rote behavior

“Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way; On purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally.”

Jon Kabat-Zinn

Mindfulness Practice

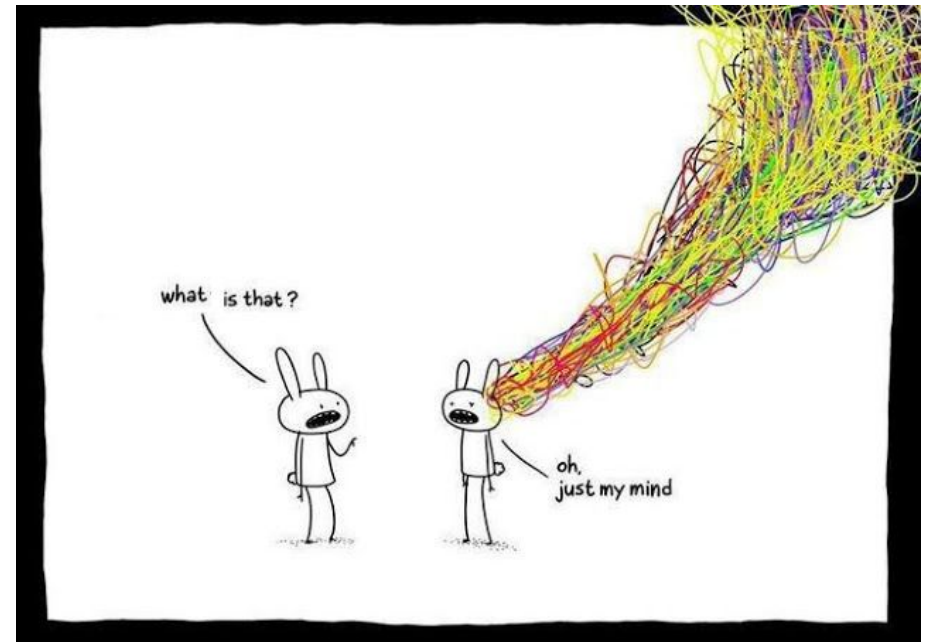
- The nature of the mind is to *wander* – mindfulness is training the mind to remain still
- Repeated effort of bringing the mind back to the present moment
- Training the mind is like training a muscle



"Can I call you back, Ed? I'm in the moment here."

Why bother?: What the research says about mindfulness

- ✓ Decreases anxiety
- ✓ Decreases depressive symptoms/feelings of sadness
- ✓ Increases attention
- ✓ Increases feelings of connectedness to self, others, and world
- ✓ Increases academic and work performance
- ✓ Enhance focus
- ✓ Decreases feelings of stress and being overwhelmed
- ✓ Boost the immune system
- ✓ Increases compassion for ourselves and others

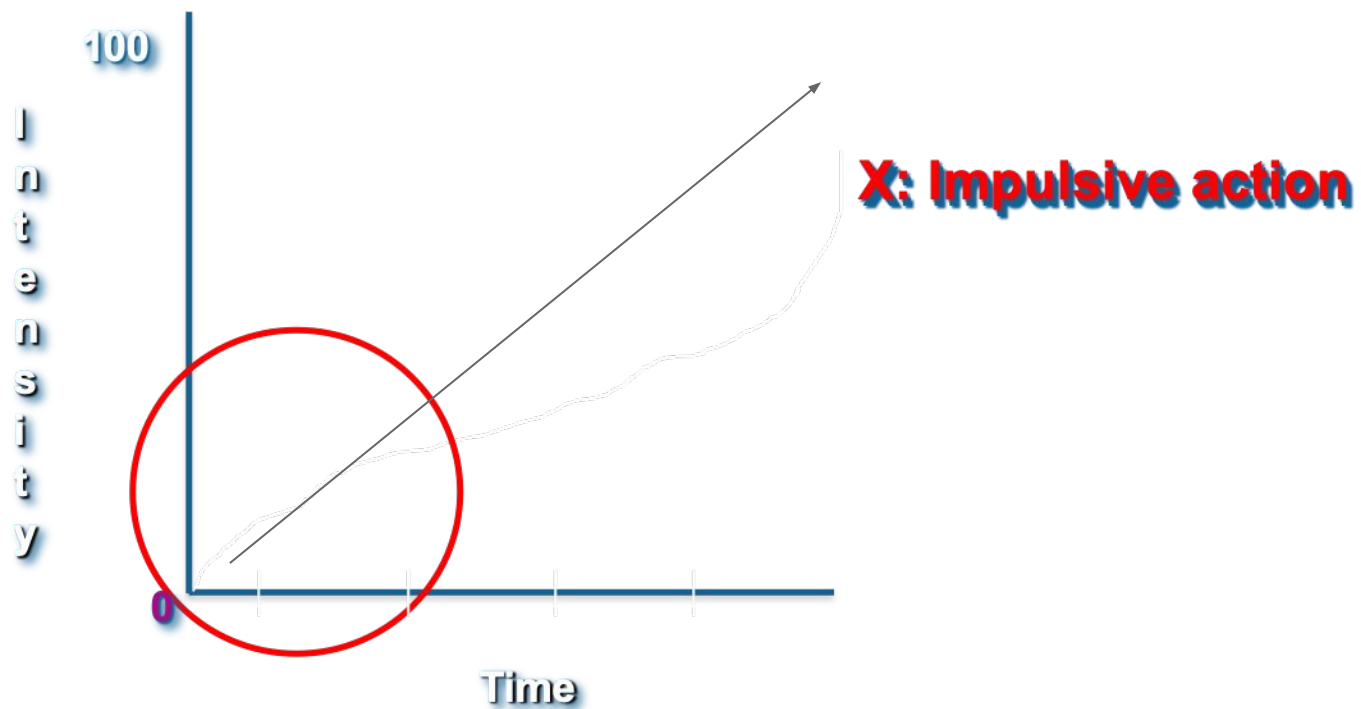


Mindfulness in School Settings

- Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction course for teachers decreased burnout, improved classroom organization, increased self-compassion, and decreased affective attentional biases (Flook, et al., 2013)
- GRE scores up by an equivalent of 16 percentage points (Mrazek et al., 2013)
- 6th graders showed increase academic performance and psychological health (Bennett & Dorjee, 2016)
- Still need more research on structured mindfulness programs in schools

Slowing Down with Mindfulness

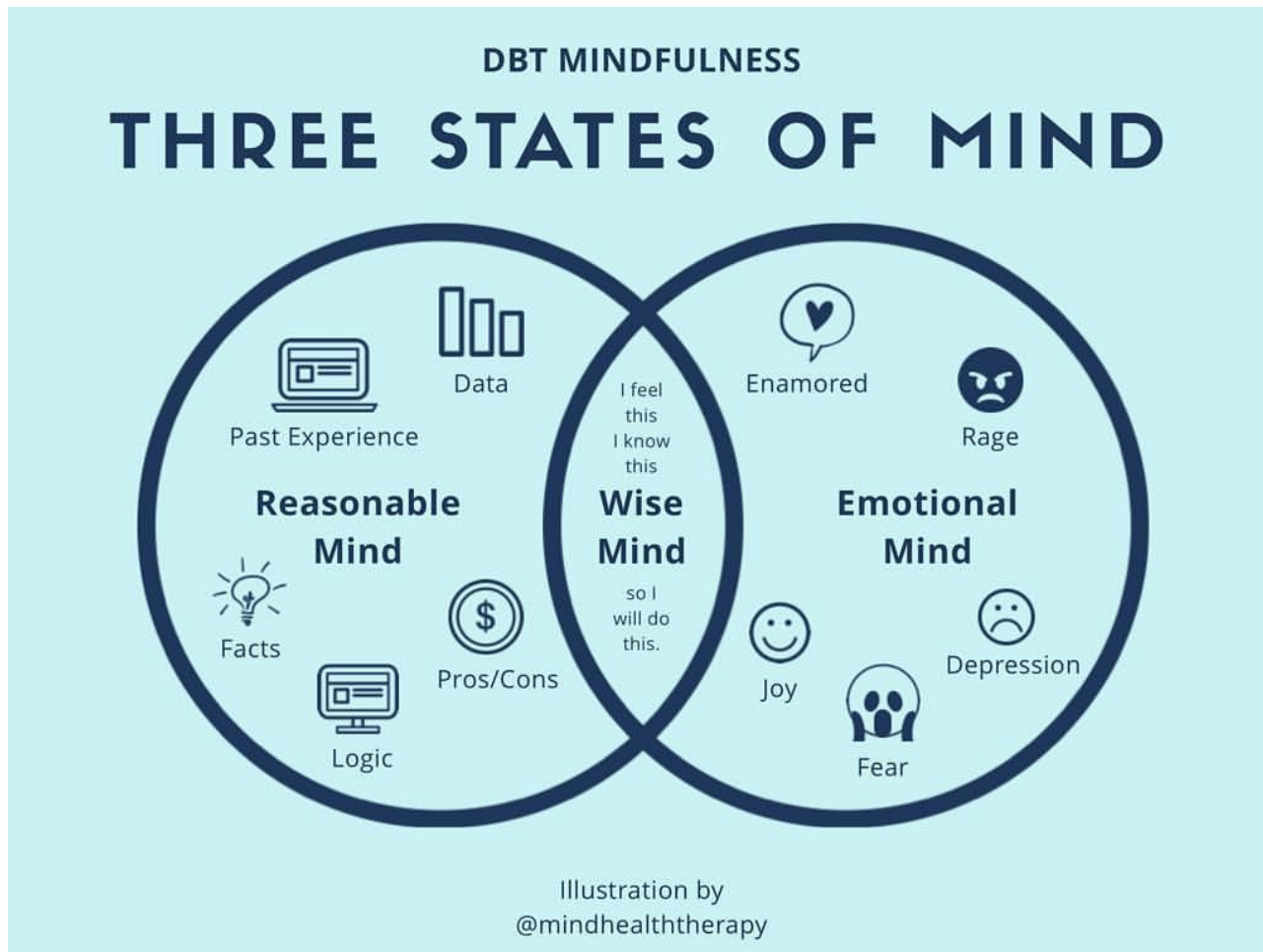
- Mindfulness is like a remote control – it allows us to slow down and notice our emotions, thoughts, and urges before acting on them



What can I do mindfully?

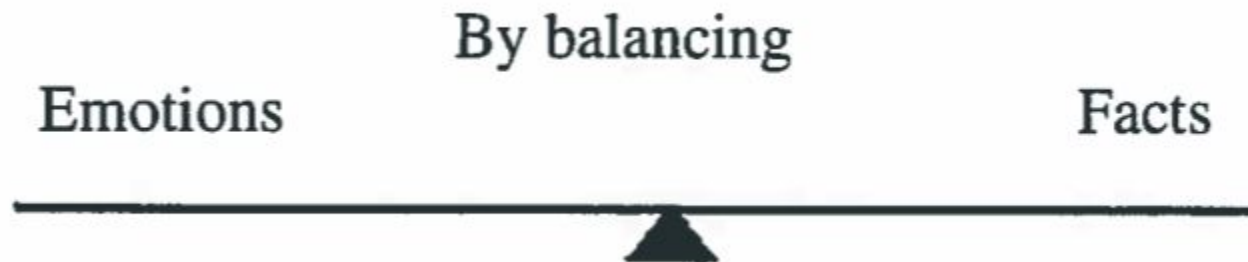
- Anything can be done mindfully
- Mindful activities are anchored by intention and reflection
- Intention: what do I want to pay attention to?
- Reflection: how did I do?
- Practice

Mindfulness Skills: 3 States of Mind



Mindfulness For Elementary Students

- What is Mindfulness?
 - Paying attention *on purpose*
 - Paying attention to the *right now*
 - Seeing things as *they really are*, not as “good” or “bad”
- Importance:
 - We can see what is REALLY happening around us
 - We stay more in control
 - Help us make WISE decisions



Noticing Emotion & Fact Mind Vulnerability

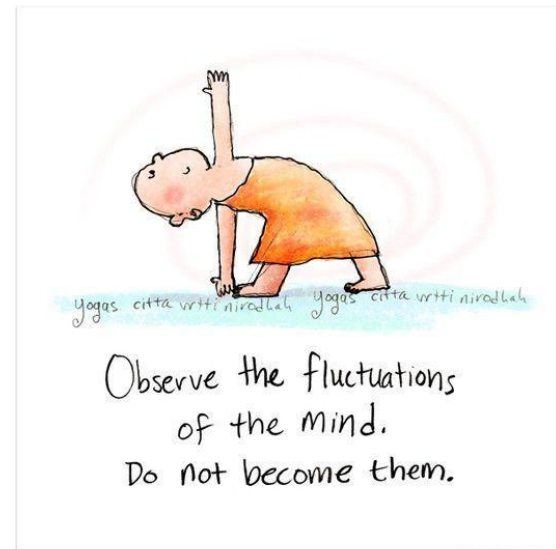
- What contributes to experiencing emotion mind?
- What contributes to experiencing fact mind?
- Where do I more often fall?
- What interferes with my goals and relationships?

Noticing Wise Mind

- What goals and values help to anchor me to wise mind?
- What are my goals and values as a parent? When am I in wise mind with my children?
- What helps me access wise mind?

Getting to Wise Mind

- “What Skills”
 - Observe
 - Describe
 - Participate
- “How Skills”
 - Non-judgmentally
 - One-mindfully
 - Getting to my goals



Practicing Mindfulness at Home

- Mindful eating
- Mindful breaks
- Shared pleasant activities
- Consider removing distractions, i.e., screens

Mindful Parenting in the Moment

- Make some time each day (5 or 10 min.)
- Spend time with your child doing something they enjoy (e.g., coloring, playing a game)
- Bring a sense of mindful awareness to your interactions
 - Bring a nonjudgemental & compassionate stance without trying to change anything about the play/activity
 - Bring full awareness and presence to the activity
 - If your child does something that triggers a negative or positive emotion or thought, try to pause inwardly and notice what you're experiencing
 - Give yourself permission to experience this without changing or fighting it

Thank you!

- Questions?
- To learn more about DBT or CBC, please visit cbc-psychology.com