

What is Dialectical Behavior Therapy? (DBT)

DBT works by teaching skills to help teens with the roller coaster of extreme emotions that they may experience. These emotions can lead to problems like self-harm, suicidal thoughts, depression, anxiety, drug use, challenging relationships and others if left untreated.

How does it work?

DBT skills will help teens understand their emotions, without judgment, through mindfulness. Teens will develop skills to manage these emotions and change behaviors to make their lives better. It will take willingness, work and commitment from the teen to be effective!

What should I expect during my stay?

During daily groups in the hospital DBT skills will be introduced. While teens are in the hospital they can expect to learn the following skills:

- **Mindfulness** - being present in the moment to gain awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations and surrounding environment
- **Emotion regulation** - learning how our emotions work and healthy ways to cope with them when they become challenging to prevent them from becoming extreme

- **Interpersonal effectiveness** – this is all about relationships:
 - asking for what you want
 - setting boundaries
 - fixing relationships
 - accepting relationships as they are
 - changing relationships
 - figuring out when to end relationships

- **Distress Tolerance** – recognizing when feelings happen that might lead to harmful or ineffective choices and making efforts to control these urges. In other words, learning how to make it through a challenging situation without making it worse.

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