

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) is a psychological treatment method that encourages individuals to accept uncomfortable thoughts, emotions, and behaviors instead of struggling with them. It combines traditional Cognitive Behavior Therapy (a goal-oriented treatment that helps patients change their unhelpful thinking and behavior) with two additional techniques:

- **Dialectics**, which relies on discussion or dialogue to explore and resolve issues
- **Mindfulness**, which encourages individuals to become more aware of and present in the moment, so that concerns about the future or thoughts about the past do not interfere as much with their ability to enjoy life.

Patients participating in DBT take part in both **individual** and **group** sessions:

- During individual sessions, the patient and therapist meet to discuss issues that have come up during the previous week and work on skills.
- During group sessions, several DBT patients meet to practice different life skills in a safe, controlled environment. These skills include recognizing and managing emotions, tolerating distress, being effective in relationships, and developing mindfulness. Individuals are usually instructed to practice these methods as homework between sessions.

For more information:

- University of Michigan Depression Center
- 1-800-475-MICH or 734-936-4400
- <http://www.depressioncenter.org/toolkit>

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