

DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOR THERAPY FOR PRIVATE PRACTICE

A Practical and Comprehensive Guide

By Thomas Marra, Ph.D.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW BOOK FOR THERAPISTS INTERESTED IN DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOR THERAPY

Evidence suggests that the treatment, originally for Borderline Personality Disorder, is also effective for less severe disorders

DBT For Private Practice is essential reading for therapists who want to successfully integrate Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) oriented skills training into the therapy process. DBT offers a systematic program of exposure that allows the client to both tolerate their emotions while engaging in techniques to decrease the intensity of suffering. DBT is a program of change that validates a person's feelings while offering techniques to change them.

This is the first professional book to teach the practical applications of Dialectical Behavior Therapy for major psychological disorders. Dr. Thomas Marra defines DBT and offers a theoretical comparison to other therapeutic schools of psychology. Marra also provides research on the applicability of DBT to various disorders, and offers a complete understanding, as well as application of this innovative mode of treatment.

DBT For Private Practice comes with a CD that provides a comprehensive treatment program with visual aids, encompassing twenty-one hours of patient psychoeducation. Exercises included on the CD teach the core DBT skills, and are demonstrated in the sessions.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Thomas Marra, Ph.D., has practical and theoretical experience in treating a wide patient population using the principles and strategies of DBT. He has been practicing clinical psychology for 25 years, first as a military psychologist in both inpatient and outpatient settings, then in civilian settings as administrator, trainer, and clinician.

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Praise for Dr. Marra's Book, *DEPRESSED & ANXIOUS*

"Marra's book [*Depressed & Anxious*] penetrates the jargon of dialectics, making this fundamental DBT concept accessible to his readers. His stylistic and prosaic voice makes this an eminently readable self-help manual even as he draws upon psychological research, clinical practice, and classic literature."

— **Scott E. Spradlin, MA**, author of *Don't Let Your Emotions Run Your Life: How Dialectical Behavior Therapy Can Put You in Control*

"At last, a comprehensive and straightforward workbook to introduce the power of DBT to clients—and even to professionals. This workbook will be an invaluable and efficient resource for the substantial portion of clients who can benefit from DBT but don't need the full protocol of intensive individual and group psychotherapy. Marra has performed a substantial service."

— **A. Thomas Horvath, Ph.D., ABPP**, president of Practical Recovery Services in San Diego, CA and author of *Sex, Drugs, Gambling, and Chocolate: A Workbook for Overcoming Addiction*

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EXCERPT
DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOR THERAPY FOR PRIVATE PRACTICE

How To Use This Book

This book is intended to teach mental-health clinicians a fairly new theoretical orientation to psychotherapy, Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT). DBT can effectively treat most (but not all) patients who present for treatment. It is an exciting new development in psychology, since the theory well explains human pain in a language consistent with how patients think and feel. It focuses on the emotions themselves and thus has wide applicability.

Clinicians have many demands placed upon their time. Reading a book from cover to cover is frequently not an option. Therefore, this introduction is intended to help the reader choose chapters to read based upon their interests. Chapter 1 defines Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) and offers a theoretical comparison of DBT to other therapeutic schools of psychology. If you have not read any materials regarding DBT, this chapter is essential. Those well acquainted with DBT may wish to skim or skip both chapters 1 and 2. Those mostly familiar with DBT in the treatment of borderline personality disorder may find chapter 2 interesting, since it reviews research on the applicability of DBT to other disorders.

Chapter 3 is highly theoretical in that it reviews neurological and psychological research demonstrating that emotion regulation is a core therapeutic target for most acute mental disorders. If you're not interested in the psychological and biological substrates that DBT is proposed to treat, you can skip this chapter. However, you should understand the critical role of arousal reduction in DBT psychotherapy, as well as how frequently emotional arousal is beyond the conscious control of the individuals who experience it.

For practitioners mostly interested in practice issues, you can begin with chapter 4, which reviews how patients look and feel and how DBT helps in the change process. Chapter 5 begins a practical explanation of what to do in DBT therapy, how to do it, and less about why. You should only begin here if you are thoroughly familiar with DBT.

Chapter 6 reviews the applicability of dialectics to many emotional disorders and is recommended in its entirety for most practitioners, even if you tend to treat only certain disorders in your practice. Do not simply skip to the subsections of the chapter that deal with your most frequent patient population treated, because DBT is designed for acute disorders that include comorbidity. The dialectics are frequently found across many different subsections, and in private practice comorbidity is the rule rather than the exception. The research that demonstrates that this is the case is reviewed in chapter 4.

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Chapter 7 is essential for professionals with or without previous DBT knowledge, since it reviews how DBT is different from standard cognitive-behavioral treatment approaches, explains how DBT can be conducted in private practice settings, and reviews how DBT is applicable to nonborderline pathologies. Linehan (1993a, 1993b) well reviews the specifics of treatment of borderline personality disorder using DBT, but chapter 7 in this book shows DBT operating in private practice settings, frequently without a treatment team available, and for treatment of disorders other than borderlines.

Finally, this book is written for professionals. Patients can be directed to a number of DBT treatment manuals published elsewhere. While this book provides theory and research to guide the DBT psychotherapy process for professionals, the treatment manuals are essential components for patients, increasing their understanding and application of new psychological coping skills so essential in DBT.

Using self-help manuals in the psychotherapy process can be counterproductive if the therapist doesn't understand the underlying theory and procedures with which the manual is designed to assist. To acquire this necessary understanding, this book is essential reading for therapists who want to successfully integrate DBT-oriented skills training into the therapy process with or without the benefit of patient treatment manuals.

While I've provided some guidelines for skimming the book, I believe that digesting the entire book from cover to cover will provide the reader with an adequate theoretical foundation to understand DBT, and thus to better understand most of the patients with whom you deal on a daily basis.

The Compact Disk (CD) that accompanies this book serves a number of purposes. First, the CD contains PowerPoint slides to enable the professional to lead psychosocial skills groups (mindfulness, emotion regulation, distress tolerance, meaning making, and strategic behavior skills). The slides are visual aids for the group leader to use to help focus the group on content to be mastered during each session.

The CD also contains PowerPoint Viewers for both the Macintosh and Windows platforms, so you need no special software in order to use these slides. Second, the CD contains forms and worksheets for patients to use. The therapist can print out these forms, photocopy them, and provide them to their patients in order to more strategically use DBT in the psychotherapy process. While digesting chapter 7, which deals with the psychoeducational component of treatment, it may be helpful for the reader to run the slide show on the topic (strategic behavior skills, meaning making skills, mindfulness, emotion regulation, and distress tolerance). The description of the skills in chapter 7 is

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presented, in outline form for presentation to patients, through the visual aid of PowerPoint.

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