

Transforming Connections

Building Emotional Resilience

Week 2 of 5

Questions between sessions:

 workshop@SILAskills.org

   @SilaSkills

Welcome back!

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group

NOTE:

1. The content of this workshop is directed *solely* to the skill development of the participants and is in *no way intended* to represent appropriate training to teach the skills to others/clients within or outside the organization.
2. SILA and SILA facilitators are not therapists. This workshop is in *no way intended* to supplement or replace any personal and/or professional therapy.
3. This workshop is *no way intended* to supplement or replace any organizational safety procedures and protocols. Participants are expected to follow and prioritize their organization's procedures and protocols.



Mindfulness Practice



Blank beginner's mind;
Never "I already know"
Always "more to learn"

Dailyzenhaiku.com



How have you been using the skills we learned?

Let's review



- DBT and how you can connect
- Relationship Mindfulness
 - Being present in the relationship with awareness, empathy, and without judgement.
 - What Skills: Observe, Describe, Participate
 - How Skills: Non-Judgmentally, One-mindfully, Effectively
- States of Mind -> Wise Mind, Emotion Mind, Rational Mind
- HALTS

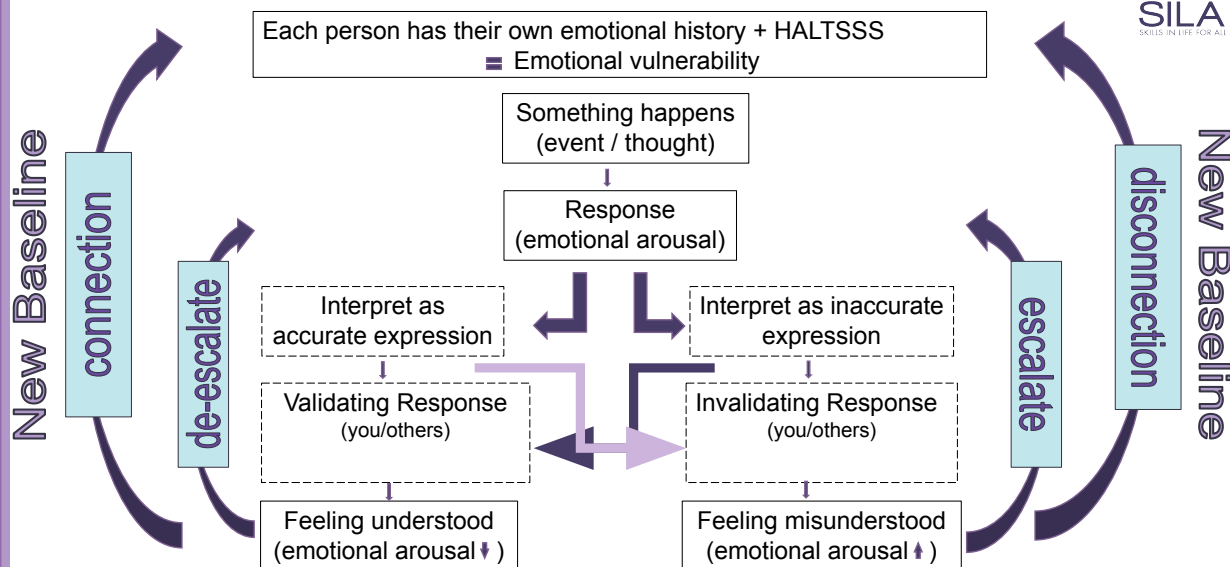
Let's review



Basic Assumptions

1. There is no one or any absolute truth
 2. Benign interpretation
 3. Everyone is doing the best they can in this moment
 4. Keep trying, trying differently
- AND “do you want to be right or effective?”

Transactional Model (escalation and de-escalation)



Let's review



- Importance of Empathy

- 6 levels of validation
 1. Being present
 2. Accurate Reflection
 3. Mind Reading
 4. Past History or biology
 5. Normalizing
 6. Radical Genuineness

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Let's review



- Validation *Cheerleading
 - * Cheerleading + VALIDATION = winning combination!



We feel validated when ...

what we get from the outside...

aligns with what we feel on the inside

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Share your practice

1. One in one: Do 1 thing mindfully for 1 min each day.
2. Practice basic assumptions: how did outcomes change?
3. During the week notice transactions - share 1 transaction which could have had a different outcome?
4. Notice empathy. Notice sympathy.
5. Notice when you felt validated AND when you didn't.
6. Notice judgements vs being judgmental.
7. Notice cues/habits, mental/physical, you have to help you be present with your client/co-worker/family.


What to expect - Week 2



Our superhero powers- our 3rd superhero power

 Mindfulness

 Basic Assumptions

 Validation - our 3rd superhero power

Our own mental health

Distress Tolerance

Emotion Regulation Skills for Self-Care and Mental Wellness

Validation

The recognition and articulation of a person's thoughts, feelings, emotions, and behaviours as valid and understandable

Empathize

Is possible when we:

- Are mindful, present, intentional in our words and actions
- Recognize and acknowledge our own emotions and, in particular, fear
- Get ourselves into Wise Mind

Invalidation

The rejection or dismissal of a person's thoughts, feelings, emotions, and behaviours as valid and understandable

Sympathize

Happens when we are:

- unaware, multi-tasking, not paying attention in both our words and actions
- Feeling discomfort in relation to the other person's emotional expression
- Not in Wise Mind



Sound Familiar?

Yes, BUT ...

Oh don't worry about it

It's not such a big deal

Cool off, you're way too sensitive!

You shouldn't feel this way

Calm down, it's not so bad

You'll do better next time

If you JUST...

At least ...

*I'm sorry...

*I know...



Invalidation happens when we....



Blame: *"If you would just.... you could..."*

Minimize: *"Don't worry, it's not a big deal"*

Judge: *"You are overreacting"*

Deny: *"You're not angry"*

Try to fix: *"I'll try calling the superintendent ..."*

Tell them how they should feel: *"You should be happy"*

Make it about us: *"I hated it when that happened to me."*

Non verbal: *roll eyes, huff, drum fingers, cut eye, check our watch, multi-task, tone, sarcasm!*

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How about these?



One-up the person.

"Oh, you think you have it bad..."

Give advice.

"What you really should do is..."

Make "life" statements.

"Well, life's not fair..."

Make "revisionist" statements.

"If you had only..."

Make it about you.

"How do you think that makes me feel?"

Make "character" statements.

"You're too sensitive..."

Rationalize behavior.

"I bet they were just..."

Use reason or the "facts."

"That's not what happened..."

Use "always" or "never".

"You always get yourself into these situations..."

Distract: *"Come on, let's go for a walk"*

Call names. *"Be an adult!"*

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Validating Statements



It's beyond frustrating [*state what is frustrating*] ... *to have to wait for such an important program.*

I noticed [*articulate what you noticed*]...*how hard you were working.*

It's so difficult to... [*then articulate what is difficult*]...*not have the things you want. I know how much you like ...*

It's so sad when... *we feel like our kids ignore us.*

It must be so frustrating to stop doing an activity you love doing.

I can see how important it is to you.

It makes sense you would be upset about....

It sounds like you feel that it's really unfair!

Remember: These statements are validating only if they resonate or land with the person!

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Don't know what to say....



Say nothingengage, be present

"Wow, I don't even know what to say" ...be genuine

"That sucks"

"Of course"

"What happened"

"Makes sense"

"Mmmm, tell me more..."

"That must have been so hard to share."

"I'm so glad you shared."

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Validation Tips

WILLING

HALTS

Be empathetic

Mindful of the other's emotions, desires, goals

Be in Wise Mind

Express understanding and acceptance

Replace "BUT" with "AND"

It's ok to get it wrong

3 validating statements in row will change conversation for the better or will stop from escalating

Match level of intensity minus 1

Why
Am
I
Talking

Look for the kernel of truth!

What gets in the way of validation



Not accepting what we hear

Trivializing the problem

Justifying ourselves

Quick to problem solve

Wanting to be right

Focusing on the secondary emotion

Thinking “just looking for attention”

“It’s not fair”

Thinking we are approving

Just don’t want to!

Can’t get past what they’ve done

No time - have to get through this call and onto the next one

It’s not the right skill

Judgement

They don’t *deserve* it

Not necessary

Worried we’ll get it wrong

Validation Practice



Validation 1: I don’t want to be here!

1. Well, you just don’t have a choice, do you?
2. You should have thought of that before you...
3. I can see you really don’t want to be here.

Validation 2: You can’t help me. No one can!

1. I am helping you.
2. Why do you feel that way?
3. It’s so frustrating when we feel like no one can help us.

Validation 3: You tell me I gotta leave and I have no place to go! F*&% you!

1. Don’t worry, I can connect you with [...] and they will help you find a place.
2. Ya, it really sucks. It’s maddening that there aren’t more places available.
3. You know the drill. Let’s go.

Validation Practice



Validation 4: I hate my life! I just want to die.

1. What? You have so much going for you!
2. You don't hate your life. You don't really want to die.
3. Silence – don't say anything.

Validation 5: You f'n b*&%#. You've got no f'n clue!

1. Don't swear at me and yes, as a matter of fact, I do have a clue.
2. Hey, you are right, I don't have a clue. Help me understand.
3. Just calm down! I can't help you if you are swearing at me.

Validation 6: [Person is refusing to engage at all. Sitting, looking down at their feet.]

1. I can see you are having a really hard time right now.
2. What's going on?
3. You are going to have to talk to me sooner or later. I have all the time in the world.

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Keep in mind:



When Validating:

Less is more
Address the emotion
Verbal and Non verbal
Be Mindful/present

Non Validating if:

Addressing the situation
Stating facts/explaining/justifying
It's about you

You



Client

AND ALWAYS:

Safety first
Follow your
organization's protocols

The purpose of validation is just to VALIDATE!! To CONNECT!

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Validation Case



Think of a situation where you found it extremely difficult to validate - in fact - maybe even impossible:

1. Describe the situation (provide context)
2. What was going on for you
3. What was going on for the other person



Self-validation - How

Use mindfulness skills to *perceive* and *label* your own feelings, thoughts and actions as *accurate*

Accept our own internal experience, thoughts, feelings without judgement - It's OK!

Respond to yourself as you would if another felt this way

Encourage and accept validation from others

Self-validation - Why

Helps reduce emotional and physical arousal. It's calming!

Reduces vulnerability to Emotion Mind

Moves you closer to Wise Mind

Positions us for more effective problem solving



Self-invalidation happens when we ...

- Don't know what we are feeling
- Ignore what we are feeling
- Judge our feelings
- Discount what we are feeling
- Have negative self-talk

Self-invalidation will ...

- Increase vulnerability to Emotion Mind
- Move you further away from Wise Mind
- Increase emotional reactivity
- Decrease possibility for effective problem solving

DBT Skills Modules

Acceptance

Mindfulness

Being aware of the present moment without judgement

States of Mind - WISE MIND

Mindfulness

- What Skills
- How Skills

Walking the Middle Path

Distress Tolerance

Managing a crisis without worsening the situation, accepting reality as it is

TIP(P)

Wise Mind ACCEPTS

Pros and Cons

Self-Soothing

IMPROVE the moment

Radical Acceptance

Willingness

Turning the Mind

Half-Smiling Willing Hands

Mindfulness of Current Thoughts

Change

Emotional Regulation

Understanding and reducing vulnerability to emotions, changing emotions

Identifying & Labelling Emotions

Check the Facts

Opposite to Emotion Action

Problem Solving

Accumulate Positives

Build Mastery

Cope Ahead

PLEASE

Mindfulness of Current Emotions

Interpersonal Effectiveness

Getting needs met, maintaining relationships, increasing self-respect in relationships

DEAR MAN GIVE FAST

Walking the Middle Path

Validation

Behaviour Change Strategies

Mindfulness → Distress Tolerance → Mindfulness → Emotion Regulation → Mindfulness → Interpersonal Effectiveness

Distress Tolerance Skills



- When the emotions are so intense they are unbearable or “out of control” at an 8, 9 or 10 out of 10
- When you cannot make things better right away and want to avoid making them worse by acting impulsively
- Need to be productive but are emotionally overwhelmed

Goal is surviving the crisis – short term relief

****NOT** for problem solving

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The STOP Skill



S

Stop



T

Take a step back



O

Observe



P

Proceed mindfully



S - STOP
T - TAKE A STEP BACK
O - OBSERVE
P - PROCEED

Linehan, M. M. (2015). DBT® skills training manual (2nd ed.). New York, NY, US: Guilford Press.

Psychotherapy
Academy

Watch this at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9lmu7iCxWWY>
By: Psychotherapy Academy (2018, November 14). *DBT Distress Tolerance Skills* [Video file].

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STOP practice

The TIP Skill



T

Tipping the temperature of your face with very cold water



I

Intense exercise of approximately 20 minutes



P

Paced breathing as well as paired muscle relaxation



Linehan, M. M. (2015). DBT® skills training manual (2nd ed.). New York, NY, US: Guilford Press.



Watch this at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Imu7jCxWWY>
By: Psychotherapy Academy (2018, November 14). *DBT Distress Tolerance Skills* [Video file].



Paired Muscle Relaxation practice

Half Smile Willing Hands

- Half smile and willing hands: both capitalize on the feedback loop between the body and mind



- Posture of openness when angry



- Soft smile when stressed

- The mind mimics what the body is saying

Linehan, M. M. (2015). DBT® skills training manual (2nd ed.). New York, NY, US: Guilford Press.



Half Smile Willing Hands practice

Have you ever found yourself ...

Thinking or saying:

“I can’t take it anymore.”

“This is unbelievable”

“It shouldn’t be this way.”

“It’s not fair”

Feeling:

Bitter, resentful

Extreme suffering

Attached to a painful event in the present or past

Reality vs Radical Acceptance



Reality

- Accepting the situation
- Solution is available

Radical

- Accepting the situation when there is no solution to the problem and it's causing suffering
- 100% acceptance of reality as it is. Full and complete

With acceptance...

There is freedom and the possibility for change.

Our suffering is reduced. Pain is inevitable. Suffering is optional

**Acceptance doesn't mean approval, condoning or giving up.
Acceptance is ongoing - falling in and out of acceptance.**

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Radical Acceptance

...Saying yes to life, just as it is

When we start practicing radical acceptance, we start by picking something relatively "small"

1. Think of something "small" you need to radically accept in your life
2. Describe the emotion(s) the situation invokes
3. What will it take to radically accept the situation
4. Imagine radically accepting the situation
5. Describe your new emotion(s)



Week 2 Practice Exercises

From week 1 continue to, perhaps :

- 1 in 1: do 1 thing mindfully for 1 min each day.
- Practice basic assumptions: how did outcomes change?
- Notice transactions and your thoughts.
- Notice empathy. Notice sympathy.
- Notice when you felt validated AND when you didn't.
- Notice judgements vs being judgmental.
- Notice cues/habits, mental/physical, you have to help you be present with your client/co-worker/family.

Week 2 Practice Exercises

1. Pick one missed opportunity for validation. Share what you could have done differently.
2. How did validation opportunities change?
3. Practice Distress Tolerance Skills - STOP, TIP, Half Smile, Willing Hands, Radical Acceptance. Notice your level of distress before and after your skills practice.

Thoughts/Questions

Questions between sessions:

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www.SILAskills.org

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