

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



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

Dailyzenhaiku.com

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What's been going on?

Let's review



- 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



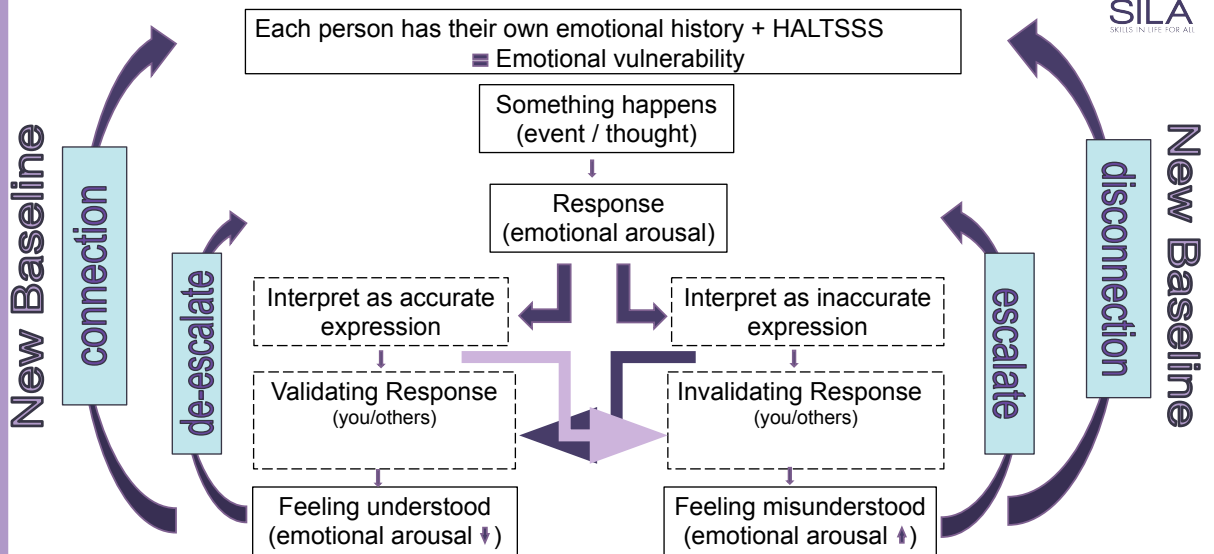
Basic Assumptions

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?”

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Transactional Model (escalation and de-escalation)



Adapted from NEABPD, Family Connections™, 2002, 2012 National Education Alliance for Borderline Personality Disorder

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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 patient/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



SILA Skills
SKILLS IN LIFE FOR ALL

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....



SILA Skills
SKILLS IN LIFE FOR ALL

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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Being misunderstood

is the worst feeling

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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!

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What gets in the way of validation



Not accepting what we hear

Just don't want to!

Trivializing the problem

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

Justifying ourselves

It's not the right skill

Quick to problem solve

Judgement

Wanting to be right

Focusing on the secondary emotion

They don't *deserve* it

Thinking "just looking for attention"

Not necessary

"It's not fair"

Worried we'll get it wrong

Thinking we are approving

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Validation Practice



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

1. Well, you don't really have a choice?
2. Don't you want to make your daughter happy?
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: I'm in so much pain. I just can't do what you are asking me to.

1. Just try anyway. Even just a little.
2. I can see how much pain you are in.
3. [Everyone is in pain, that's why they are here. Ignore and carry on with your instructions]

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Validation Practice



Validation 4: I prepared this file of my complete medical history for you to read.

1. Thanks, I'll read it later
2. That wasn't necessary, I just need to know what happened since your injury.
3. Thank you this will be so helpful. I will make a copy so you can keep the original.

Validation 5: I've waited for so long for this surgery. Now my knee is so much worse.

1. Our healthcare system is so bad. You can write a complaint to I just work here.
2. It is so frustrating. You are in so much pain and had to wait for 3 mos for surgery.
3. You are here now, so let's not waste any more time.

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. If you don't want to pay attention, I will have to end our appointment. There are lots of people who want help.

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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



Patient

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



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=9Jmu7iCxWWY>
By: Psychotherapy Academy (2018, November 14). DBT Distress Tolerance Skills [Video file].

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STOP Exercise



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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=9lmu7iCxWWY>
By: Psychotherapy Academy (2018, November 14). *DBT Distress Tolerance Skills* [Video file].

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Paired Muscle Relaxation



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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.



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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Half Smile Willing Hands



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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

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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:

- 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 patient/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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