

10 WAYS TO SUPPORT YOUR TEEN'S SUCCESS IN DBT TREATMENT



DBT OF SOUTH JERSEY

1. Understand that Behavior is Transactional.

What you do impacts your environment and what's going on in your environment impacts you. Understand your role in your teens' emotional escalation. Parents need to have skills and need to do work alongside the teens.

2. Know your Role.

Your teens' needs will change. Do your best to assess what role is needed at that time. Trust your teens treatment team and know when to pivot. Consider what the therapist needs to know vs. sharing each detail.

3. Recognize Your Own Judgements & Expectations.

Mindfulness. When parenting, ask yourself - whose value is this, and why is it important to me/us now? Be open-minded to change happening vs. expecting this to continue.

4. Learn to Regulate Your Own Emotions.

Get in your own window of tolerance. See clearly before moving forward and trying model behavior. Use two step validation. Help your teen with find the emotion they are actually feeling vs. what is being expressed. Speak to that.

5. Tolerate Your Distress as a CareGiver.

Notice urges to reach out to the therapist. Practice tolerating a slow rate of change. Avoid interfering with treatment. Parents need to allow natural change.

6. Avoid Fragilizing & Empower Your Teen.

Don't do it for them. Doing it for them removes their ability to build in their personal successes.

7. Give Treatment Time to Work.

DBT Therapists have a higher level of distress tolerance when it comes to risk behaviors because it's required to do this work. We want teens to eventually be able to manage their distress in their normal environment.

8. Reinforce the Positives and Notice Small Signs of Progress.

Notice what progress looks like for your teen and reinforce it in a way that is important to the teen. Create opportunities for your teen to succeed.

9. Learn Behavioral Strategies.

Learn what works and what doesn't. Recognize the transactional interactions of reinforcement. Read resources on behaviorism. What's bringing them (and you) closer to goals vs. further away?

10. Stay Hopeful.

This isn't an all or nothing thing. It's a process. When your teen engages in target behavior, it doesn't mean they're back at square one. We expect this to happen. Stay engaged. Trust the Team.