MUST-HAVE SKILLS
FOR FAMILIES
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WHAT IS DBT?

• DBT is about acceptance and change
  • Acceptance actually creates the possibility of change
SKILL #1
SUSPEND JUDGMENT
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• Behavior is NOT the problem
  • Rather it often is the solution to chronic dysregulation

Benign...benign...benign...Benign...benign...

• Interpret things in the most benign way possible
• Observe and describe - stay with facts
• Be mindful of interactions – try to see both sides

Problems with anger
Chaotic relationships
Unstable sense of self
Impulsive behaviors
Dangerous decisions
And more...
SKILL # 2

HEALTHY SELFISHNESS
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• Avoid burning out
  • You are needed!
  • Be supportive

• Observe your limits
  • It’s OK to say no – as long as it’s for you
  • No accusations or punishments
  • Oxygen mask

• Choose your battles
  • Helps you be predictable and safe

NO to:
Violent or insulting behaviors
Actions that push your limits
Decisions you would regret
SKILL # 3
VALIDATION
VALIDATION

• Do not invalidate:
  • By being critical or judgmental
  • By minimizing legitimacy of feelings
  • By escalating conflict
  • By being controlling or insisting on being right

• Validate:
  • Feelings or emotions
  • Legitimacy in desires
  • Opinions or thoughts
  • Task difficulty
  • Efforts made towards goals regardless of outcome

Only validate the things that are valid.
There are always valid parts. Validation doesn’t mean you agree.
THE CONTEXT:
RADICAL ACCEPTANCE
RADICAL ACCEPTANCE

- When nothing can be done:
  - Pain + Non-Acceptance = increased suffering
- Acceptance gives you more control, not less.
  - Practice acceptance every day
  - Start small
- You can stop the spiral!
STAY IN TOUCH

- You need support – this is hard
- National Education Alliance – Borderline Personality Disorder:
  - Join a group
  - Visit the website and watch the videos
  - Get involved
THANK YOU

AND BEST WISHES FOR RENEWED CLOSENESS
IN YOUR FAMILY