Dialectics: Acceptance & Change
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Dialectics: Basic Idea

Truths Stand Side by Side

TRUTH 1: "I want to live"

TRUTH 2: "I want to die"

Dialogue creates new positions
“The test of a first-rate intelligence is to hold two opposing ideas in the mind at the same time and still retain the ability to function.

One should, for example, be able to see that things are hopeless and yet be determined to make them otherwise.”

F. Scott Fitzgerald
perspective

purpose
perspective

purpose
Basics of Dialectical Philosophy in DBT

• Holistic, connected and in relationship
• Complex, oppositional, and in polarity
• Change is continual
• Change is transactional
• Identity is relational and in continuous change
When Stuck, Dialectical Thinking & Strategies Change Relationship

Validation  Problem Solving

Never tried a cheese grater...

Huh?
When Polarized...

• Actively describe and validate what is valid about each position (going for the ‘head nod’)
• Incorporate all (as many as possible) valid points into solution
• List solutions (bonus points if ALL nod head)
whiff of not enough mental anguish

when what we touch, see, hear, contact

habits of: aversion/craving fix it so feel better

gives rise to pain
give rise to suffering
“I can’t, you don’t understand, I’m the kind of person who always....

when what we touch, see, hear, contact

Outside skin | Inside skin

gives rise to pain

habits of:
aversion/craving
fix it so feel better

give rise to suffering
For reference
Definitions of Dialectics

- thesis, antithesis, synthesis
- truth is partial, truths stand side-by-side
- hold both sides of every polarity, believe you do not have absolute truth, search in earnest for what is missing in your own and others’ ways of construing and responding to the world
- balance, movement, integration
Overarching Dialectic: Balance Acceptance & Change

• Balance goals
  – Mindfulness AND Emotion regulation
  – Distract & control attention AND experience with attention & letting go of control

• Balance strategies
  – Validation & problem-solving
  – Reciprocal & irreverent communication styles
  – Environmental intervention & consultation to the patient
Dialectical Strategies

Entering the paradox
Use of metaphor
Devil’s advocate
Extending
Activating “Wise Mind”
Making lemonade out of lemons
Allowing natural change
Dialectical assessment