



When Might DBTICI Be Helpful for Your Client?

Insight is important. Sometimes clients also need help turning insight into behavior change.

DBT and DBT-informed therapy can complement CBT or trauma treatment by adding structured skills, behavioral analysis, between-session practice, and strategies for managing intense emotions.

Consider DBTICI When...

- **The client understands the pattern—but keeps repeating it.**
They can identify distorted thoughts, triggers, or trauma responses, but insight is not consistently translating into different behavior.
- **Emotions regularly overwhelm coping skills.**
Sessions repeatedly return to crises, intense affect, impulsive behavior, shutdown, or difficulty using strategies when they matter most.
- **Therapy is becoming crisis management.**
A large amount of treatment time is spent stabilizing the week rather than moving forward on the primary treatment goals.
- **Avoidance is blocking progress.**
The client wants change but struggles with follow-through, exposure, homework, appointments, or other committed action.
- **Interpersonal patterns keep derailing treatment or daily life.**
Conflict, reassurance seeking, boundary problems, invalidating environments, or difficulty asking for needs interfere with progress.
- **The client needs more structure between sessions.**
They may benefit from concrete skills practice, diary-card style tracking, behavior chain analysis, coaching, or a clearer treatment hierarchy.

DBT is behavioral therapy. A referral may be useful when your client understands the cognitive model but needs additional support with:

- Emotion regulation under high arousal
- Distress tolerance when changing the situation is not immediately possible
- Behavior chain analysis to identify what maintains a problem
- Commitment and follow-through when motivation fluctuates
- Interpersonal effectiveness and boundary-setting
- Generalizing skills outside the therapy hour

DBT or DBT-informed therapy can be useful before, alongside, or after trauma-focused work when dysregulation or behavioral instability is interfering with treatment.

- The client needs stronger stabilization and coping skills before trauma processing
- Trauma work repeatedly leads to crises, avoidance, impulsivity, or significant functional disruption
- The client needs help tolerating emotions without escaping, shutting down, or engaging in harmful behaviors
- Relationship patterns or invalidating environments are making recovery harder
- You want the client to build behavioral skills while you remain focused on trauma treatment

Parent Coaching

Consider when changing patterns around the client may help treatment progress. Parent coaching can stand alone or complement the child/teen's existing therapy.

- Parents are walking on eggshells, avoiding limits, or struggling to validate while maintaining expectations.
- Accommodation, reassurance, rescuing, or over-functioning may be maintaining anxiety or avoidance.
- Recurring family conflict, inconsistent responses, or caregiver disagreement is interfering with progress.
- You want to remain the client's therapist while DBTICI works directly with caregivers on the home environment.

A DBT Referral Does Not Always Mean Transferring Care

Not every client needs comprehensive DBT. DBTICI also provides DBT-informed individual therapy for clients who would benefit from a more active, skills-based and behavioral approach. When clinically appropriate, we are happy to coordinate with an established therapist rather than automatically replacing that treatment relationship.

NOT SURE WHETHER YOUR CLIENT IS A FIT? WE'RE HAPPY TO CONSULT.

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An Evidence-Based Approach to Meaningful, Lasting Change