

# Calming The Emotional Storm: Distress Tolerance Skills

Over 75% of mental illnesses described in the DSM are related to emotion dysregulation – the inability to manage emotions effectively. Given that Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) was initially created to treat Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD), of which emotion dysregulation is a primary problem, it only makes sense that DBT would be effective in treating other disorders, and research in recent years is supporting this.

This seminar will provide an overview of the DBT Distress Tolerance skills. Participants will learn about these skills, including the Reality Acceptance Skills and the Crisis Survival Skills, and how to help clients with a variety of diagnoses and problems use these skills appropriately and in healthy ways.

## Target Audience

Psychologists                      Social Workers                      Counselors  
Therapists                          Psychiatrists                          Nurses

Course level: Intermediate

## Learning Objectives

At the end of this seminar, participants will:

1. Describe reality acceptance skills to help clients reduce the likelihood of crises arising over time, and to help improve emotion regulation
2. Describe Crisis Survival skills to help clients not act on urges that will make the situation worse.
3. Identify the concept of observing one's own limits as a therapist; and the importance of this to help prevent burn-out and feelings of ineffectiveness from arising
4. Demonstrate the use of Behavior Tracking Sheet as a tool to help maintain structure for clients who are overwhelmed and overwhelmed with the problem-behaviors they're engaging in
5. Define Behavioral Analysis

## Seminar Schedule

The webinar outline is attached. See the Live Webinar page for the start and end times.

## Outline

What is distress tolerance?  
Radical acceptance  
Turning the mind  
Radical Acceptance steps, techniques, and problems  
Willingness versus willfulness  
Crisis survival skills  
Problem behaviors  
Distracting skills  
Self-soothing with the senses  
IMPROVE the moment  
Pros and cons exercise  
Urge management  
Reducing therapist burnout  
The Behavior Analysis

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### Continuing Education Credit

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## The Presenter

Sheri is a Social Worker who has been working with clients with severe mental health problems since 2000. With extensive experience in a hospital as well as community setting, Sheri now sees clients in private practice, and provides consultation and training internationally to other clinicians. Sheri has had extensive training in dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) and mindfulness and has been providing DBT-informed therapy to individuals and groups since 2004. In 2010 Sheri was the winner of the R.O. Jones award for her research on using DBT with bipolar disorder, presented at the Canadian Psychiatric Association Conference.

Sheri is the author of numerous books that focus on helping readers learn DBT skills and apply them to a variety of mental health problems, including *The DBT Workbook for Emotional Relief*; the best-selling *Don't Let Your Emotions Run Your Life for Teens*; and her newest book, coming in 2025, *The DBT Workbook for C-PTSD*. Sheri trained in Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) in 2018 and is an EMDRIA-approved Consultant; she is a member of the International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation (ISSTD), and is a consultant for the ISSTD's EMDR training program.

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This seminar has been reviewed and approved by Keith Hannan, Ph.D., Laura Davie, LICSW, Tina Jenkins, Psy.D., and Loreen Yearick, MSN, RN. This approval expires on March 1, 2028.

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