Interpersonal Effectiveness

DBT skills

Objective Effectiveness: DEAR MAN

Objective effectiveness refers to your ability to get what you want out of social situations. Before making a request, dealing with conflict, or starting a difficult social interaction, ask yourself: "What is my objective in this interaction?" Once you have a clear understanding of your desired outcome, use the acronym **DEAR MAN** to guide the conversation:

D	**Describe** Clearly and concisely describe the *facts* of the situation. No opinions or interpretations! *"I will be getting home late and won't have time to cook dinner."*
E	**Express** State your feelings clearly to let others know how a situation affects you. Don't expect others to read your mind. Try using the phrase: *"I feel ___ because ___."* *"I feel exhausted because of my long day."*
A	**Assert** Be direct. Say what you need clearly and concisely. *"Since I have to work late tonight, could you cook dinner?"*
R	**Reinforce** Explain why it would be helpful to agree to your request. Express thanks if they consider it. *"Thank you! I'm looking forward to having dinner with you."*
M	**(Be) mindful** Stay focused on the objective of the interaction and avoid being reactive or defensive. If necessary, calmly repeat your request.
A	**Appear confident** Use body language to project confidence, even if you don't feel it. *Stand up straight, make appropriate eye contact, and avoid stammering or fidgeting.*
N	**Negotiate** Know the limits of what you're willing to accept, but be willing to compromise within them. *"I'll wash the dishes if you cook dinner."*

© 2024 Therapist Aid LLC

Interpersonal Effectiveness
DBT skills

Relationship Effectiveness: GIVE

Relationship effectiveness refers to improving a relationship or maintaining a good relationship. The acronym **GIVE** teaches skills for growing strong relationships:

G	**(Be) gentle** Always be kind and respectful. Don't attack, threaten, or express judgment during your interactions. People tend to respond better to gentleness than harshness.
I	**(Show) interest** Listen to the other person without interrupting. Instead of mind-reading, ask follow-up questions. Make it your goal to understand the other person, even when you disagree.
V	**Validate** Outwardly acknowledge the other person's thoughts and feelings. You can do this with words (e.g., "This has been really difficult…") or actions (e.g., helping the person).
E	**(Use an) easy manner** Laugh, smile, and be lighthearted. No one wants to be pushed around or bullied—being relaxed and likable is more likely to help you achieve your goals.

Self-Respect Effectiveness: FAST

Self-respect effectiveness refers to your ability to stay true to your values during social interactions. The acronym **FAST** teaches skills for protecting your self-respect:

F	**(Be) fair** Consider each person's perspective and be fair. Don't take advantage of others, and say "no" if you believe others are taking advantage of you.
A	**(No) apologies** Don't over-apologize. You never need to apologize for making a request or for disagreeing. Save apologies for when you've made a mistake.
S	**Stick to your values** Develop an understanding of your values (the things that matter most to you and your morals). Know your red lines, and be willing to stand up for them.
T	**(Be) truthful** Avoid dishonesty such as exaggeration, manipulation, and outright lying. There might be a time and place for "white lies," but even these should be used carefully.

© 2024 Therapist Aid LLC