

Healthy Dating Relationship Workshop

Handouts & Worksheets

Organized by:

Jessica Caccavallo, MSW, LSW

Northwest Center against Sexual Assault

Content is a collaboration from

Marsha M. Linehan *DBT Skills Training Handouts & Worksheets 2nd edition*, 2015 –and loveisrespect.org

Table of contents

- A. ***Finding and getting people to like you.*** If you're still unsure of how to meet a potential dating partner, or even new friends read both pages of **Handout A**.
- B. ***Challenging myths in the way of obtaining objectives.*** For better communication, challenge your thinking habits regarding expectations. Sometimes we expect people to "just know" or we "assume" we are "not worthy." No one is a mind reader. To have your needs met in a relationship and develop healthy communication- you need to talk it out! Work through both pages of **Handout B**.
- C. ***Setting Boundaries & Limits.*** In addition to challenging the way we think, we also need to be able to understand and establish healthy boundaries within a dating relationship. Check out **handout C**.
- D. ***Figuring out how strongly to ask or say NO.*** Part of setting limits and communicating in a healthy way is when we feel empowered to say NO. If you're stuck in a situation and not sure how strongly or seriously you may need to ask or say no, work through both of **handout D**.
- E. ***Self-Soothing & Improving the moment.*** Being broken up with or breaking up with someone can be tough. Try exploring some distress tolerance skills by reading over both pages of **handout E**. You may find these skills useful in other parts of your life as well!
- F. ***The relationship Spectrum.*** Relationships can fall on a spectrum, and sometimes it can slide between healthy to unhealthy. Sometimes this can be manageable. However, if a relationship stays in unhealthy too long and then falls into abusive, you will want to get help right away. Also, you should also notice if your relationship often spends more time in the unhealthy than the healthy, that may be a sign that it's time to pull the plug! Check out **handout F**.
- G. ***Possible warning signs of a dating relationship.*** Review **handout G** if you are concerned that your dating relationship is in the unhealthy/abusive part of the spectrum. IF YOU'RE NOT SURE, go over this check list and ensure you really are in a healthy relationship.

INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS HANDOUT 11 (p. 1 of 2)

(Interpersonal Effectiveness Worksheet 8; p. 183)

Finding and Getting People to Like You**REMEMBER: ALL HUMAN BEINGS ARE LOVABLE.****But finding friends may take effort on your part.****LOOK FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE CLOSE BY YOU.****Familiarity often leads to liking and sometimes love.**

To find people you might like and who might like you, it is important to make sure that you are frequently around and visible to a group of people. Many people find friends who are classmates or members of groups they join, or who work at or go to the same places.

LOOK FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE SIMILAR TO YOU.**We often make friends with people who share our interests and attitudes.**

Though always agreeing with someone will not make you more attractive to them, a lot of people are attracted to those who share the same important interests and attitudes, such as politics, lifestyle, morals.

WORK ON YOUR CONVERSATION SKILLS.**Ask and respond to questions;** respond with a little more info than requested.**Make small talk;** don't underestimate the value of chit-chat.**Self-disclose skillfully;** keep your self-disclosure close to that of the other person.**Don't interrupt;** don't start talking just fractionally before or after someone else.**Learn things to talk about:** Watch others; read; increase your activities and experiences.**EXPRESS LIKING (SELECTIVELY).****We often like the people we think like us.**

Express genuine liking for the other person. But don't try to suck up to the other person or grovel. Find things to compliment that are not super-obvious. Don't praise too much too often, and never use compliments to obtain favors.

(continued on next page)

Adapted from Linehan, M. M., & Egan, K. J. (1985). *Asserting yourself*. New York: Facts on File. Copyright 1985 by Facts on File Publications. Adapted by permission of the authors.

From *DBT Skills Training Handouts and Worksheets, Second Edition*, by Marsha M. Linehan. Copyright 2015 by Marsha M. Linehan. Permission to photocopy or download and print this handout is granted to purchasers of this book for personal use or for use with clients.

JOIN AN ONGOING GROUP CONVERSATION.

If we wait for people to approach us, we may never have friends.

Sometimes we must make the first move in finding friends. This often requires us to know how to tell if a group is open or closed, and then, when it is open, how to approach and join in the ongoing group.

FIGURE OUT IF A GROUP IS OPEN OR CLOSED.

In open groups new members are welcome.

In closed groups new members may not be welcome.

Open Groups

- Everyone is standing somewhat apart.
- Members occasionally glance around the room.
- There are gaps in the conversation.
- Members are talking about a topic of general interest.

Closed Groups

- Everyone is standing close together.
- Members attend exclusively to each other.
- There is a very animated conversation with few gaps.
- Members seem to be pairing off.

FIGURE OUT HOW TO JOIN AN OPEN GROUP CONVERSATION.

Ways of Joining an Open Group

Potential Outcomes

Move gradually closer to the group.

It may not be clear from the slowness of your approach that you want to join them; it might even look as though you were creeping up and trying to eavesdrop!

Offer to refill members' glasses/serve them food.

That could be overdoing things a bit. What would you do if they refused more food/drinks? Would it be clear enough that you wanted to join the group?

Stand beside them and chip in on their conversation.

That might seem rude. They haven't invited you to join them, and anyway, what exactly are you going to say when you chip in?

Go up and introduce yourself.

Isn't that overly formal? Having introduced yourself, then what do you say? Will they introduce themselves to you? Wouldn't you interrupt the conversation?

Wait for a break in the conversation, stand beside a friendly-looking member of the group and say something like "Mind if I join you?"

This makes your intention clear and doesn't seem rude or interrupt the conversation; group members can then choose whether to introduce themselves or not.

INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS WORKSHEET 2 (p. 1 of 2)

(Interpersonal Effectiveness Handout 2a; p. 119)

Challenging Myths in the Way of Obtaining Objectives

Challenging Myths in the Way of Objectives Effectiveness

Due Date: _____ Name: _____ Week Starting: _____

For each myth, write down a challenge that makes sense to you.

1. I don't deserve to get what I want or need.

Challenge: _____

2. If I make a request, this will show that I'm a very weak person.

Challenge: _____

3. I have to know whether a person is going to say yes before I make a request.

Challenge: _____

4. If I ask for something or say no, I can't stand it if someone gets upset with me.

Challenge: _____

5. If they say no, it will kill me.

Challenge: _____

6. Making requests is a really pushy (bad, self-centered, selfish, etc.) thing to do.

Challenge: _____

7. Saying no to a request is always a selfish thing to do.

Challenge: _____

8. I should be willing to sacrifice my own needs for others.

Challenge: _____

9. I must be really inadequate if I can't fix this myself.

Challenge: _____

10. Obviously, the problem is just in my head. If I would just think differently, I wouldn't have to bother everybody else.

Challenge: _____

11. If I don't have what I want or need, it doesn't make any difference; I don't care, really.

Challenge: _____

12. Skillfulness is a sign of weakness.

Challenge: _____

Other myth: _____

Challenge: _____

Other myth: _____

Challenge: _____

(continued on next page)

INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS WORKSHEET 2 (p. 2 of 2)

Challenging Myths in the Way of Relationship and Self-Respect Effectiveness

For each myth, write down a challenge that makes sense to you.

13. I shouldn't have to ask (say no); they should know what I want (and do it).

Challenge: _____

14. They should have known that their behavior would hurt my feelings; I shouldn't have to tell them.

Challenge: _____

15. I shouldn't have to negotiate or work at getting what I want.

Challenge: _____

16. Other people should be willing to do more for my needs.

Challenge: _____

17. Other people should like, approve of, and support me.

Challenge: _____

18. They don't deserve my being skillful or treating them well.

Challenge: _____

19. Getting what I want when I want it is most important.

Challenge: _____

20. I shouldn't be fair, kind, courteous, or respectful if others are not so toward me.

Challenge: _____

21. Revenge will feel so good; it will be worth any negative consequences.

Challenge: _____

22. Only wimps have values.

Challenge: _____

23. Everybody lies.

Challenge: _____

24. Getting what I want or need is more important than how I get it; the ends really do justify the means.

Challenge: _____

Other myth: _____

Challenge: _____

Other myth: _____

Challenge: _____

Setting Boundaries & Limits

C

Emotional Boundaries

The L Word: Saying “I love you” can happen for different people at different times in a relationship. If your partner says it and you don’t feel that way yet, don’t feel bad — you may just not be ready yet. Let your partner know how it made you feel when they said it and tell them your own goals for the relationship.

Time Apart: As great as it is to want to spend a lot of time with your partner, remember that it’s important to have some time away from each other, too. Both you and your partner should be free to hang out with friends (of any gender) or family without having to get permission. It’s also healthy to spend time by yourself doing things that you enjoy or that help you relax. You should be able to tell your partner when you need to do things on your own instead of feeling trapped into spending all of your time together.

Physical Boundaries

Take Your Time: Don’t rush it if you’re not ready. Getting physical with your partner doesn’t have to happen all at once if you’re not ready. In a healthy relationship, both partners know how far each other wants to go and they communicate with each other if something changes. There isn’t a rulebook that says you have to go so far by a certain age or at any given time in a relationship, so take things at your own pace.

Sex Isn’t Currency: You don’t owe your partner anything. Just because your partner takes you out to dinner, buys you a gift or says “I love you” doesn’t mean you owe them anything in response. It isn’t fair for your partner to claim that you don’t care about them because you won’t “go all the way.” Even if you’ve done it before, you are never required to do it just because your partner is pressuring you. Remember, no means no.

Digital Boundaries

It can be hard to know where the line between healthy and unhealthy is once a relationship goes online. What are the rules for Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Tumblr, Snapchat? What should your digital relationship look like?

Before you talk to your partner about your online relationship, check in with yourself to see what makes you feel comfortable. Start by considering your digital boundaries:

Is it okay to tag or check in?

Do we post our relationship status?

Is it okay to friend or follow my friends?

When is it okay to text me and what is the expectation for when we return it?

Is it okay to use each other’s devices?

Is it okay to post, tweet or comment about our relationship?

Setting Boundaries & Limits

Once you know how you feel, you can talk to your partner and create a digital dating agreement between the two of you. Together, you can decide what feels healthy and what doesn't for each of you. There may be some negotiating and compromising as you figure out an agreement that works for both of you. But if your partner asks you to do something that just doesn't feel right, or they try to control you in some way, that's when you get to say that this isn't healthy for you.

This digital dating agreement can be changed as you continue with your relationship. Just because you felt comfortable with something at the beginning of a relationship doesn't mean that you have to stick with that forever. You can communicate with your partner if things change. The reverse is also true: there may be something that you're not ok with at the beginning, but with time and trust, you become comfortable with it. Both you and your partner should feel free to openly talk about your changing needs and wants.

As you think about your digital dating agreement with your partner, consider the following:

Passwords are Private: Even if you trust your partner, sharing passwords for your phone and website accounts isn't always the best idea. Just like you should be able to spend time by yourself, you are entitled to your own digital privacy. Giving your partner access to your Facebook or Twitter allows them to post anything they want without getting your permission first. They can also see everyone that you talk to, which may cause unwarranted jealousy, especially if there isn't anything going on. Just to be safe, your password(s) should be something that only you know so you always have control of your information.

Photos and Sexting: Similarly, to your physical boundaries, it's important to have digital boundaries about what you're comfortable sending via text message. Once you've hit send on a photo or text, you lose control over who sees it. If your partner sexts you and demands that you sext back, you should be able to tell them you aren't comfortable doing that, and they shouldn't get angry or threaten you.

Boundaries are all about respect. You and your partner should know what is too far in all aspects of your relationship so that both of you feel safe.

INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS WORKSHEET 6 (p. 1 of 2)

(Interpersonal Effectiveness Handout 8; p. 131-133)

The Dime Game: Figuring Out How Strongly to Ask or Say No

Due Date: _____ Name: _____ Week Starting: _____

To figure out how strongly to ask for something or how strongly to say no, read the instructions below. Circle the dimes you put in the bank, and then add them up. Then go back over the list and see if some items are much more important than others. Check Wise Mind before acting, if some items are much more important than others.

Decide how strongly to ask for something.		Decide how strongly to say no.	
Put a dime in the bank for each of the questions that get a yes answer. The more money you have, the stronger you ask. If you have a dollar, then ask very strongly. If you don't have any money in the bank, then don't ask; don't even hint.		Put a dime in the bank for each of the questions that get a no answer. The more money you have, the stronger you say no. If you have a dollar, then say no very strongly. If you don't have any money in the bank, then do it without even being asked.	
10¢	Is this person able to give or do what I want?	Capability	Can I give the person what is wanted?
10¢	Is getting my objective more important than my relationship with this person?	Priorities	Is my relationship more important than saying no?
10¢	Will asking help me feel competent and self-respecting?	Self-respect	Will saying no make me feel bad about myself?
10¢	Is the person required by law or moral code to do or give me what I want?	Rights	Am I required by law or moral code to give or do what is wanted, or does saying no violate this person's rights?
10¢	Am I responsible for telling the person what to do?	Authority	Is the other person responsible for telling me what to do?
10¢	Is what I want appropriate for this relationship? (Is it right to ask for what I want?)	Relationship	Is what the person is requesting of me appropriate to my relationship with this person?
10¢	Is asking important to a long-term goal?	Goals	In the long term, will I regret saying no?
10¢	Do I give as much as I get with this person?	Give and take	Do I owe this person a favor? (Does the person do a lot for me?)
10¢	Do I know what I want and have the facts I need to support my request?	Homework	Do I know what I am saying no to? (Is the other person clear about what is being asked for?)
10¢	Is this a good time to ask? (Is the person in the right mood?)	Timing	Should I wait a while before saying no?
\$	Total value of asking (Adjusted ± _____ for Wise Mind)		Total value of saying no (Adjusted ± _____ for Wise Mind)
			\$

(continued on next page)

From DBT Skills Training Handouts and Worksheets, Second Edition, by Marsha M. Linehan. Copyright 2015 by Marsha M. Linehan. Permission to photocopy or download and print this worksheet is granted to purchasers of this book for personal use or for use with clients.

INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS WORKSHEET 6 (p. 2 of 2)

ASKING		SAYING NO	
Don't ask; don't hint.	0-10¢	Do it without being asked.	
Hint indirectly; take no.	20¢	Don't complain; do it cheerfully.	
Hint openly; take no.	30¢	Do it, even if you're not cheerful about it.	
Ask tentatively; take no.	40¢	Do it, but show that you'd rather not.	
Ask gracefully, but take no.	50¢	Say you'd rather not, but do it gracefully.	
Ask confidently; take no.	60¢	Say no firmly, but reconsider.	
Ask confidently; resist no.	70¢	Say no confidently; resist saying yes.	
Ask firmly; resist no.	80¢	Say no firmly; resist saying yes.	
Ask firmly; insist; negotiate; keep trying.	90¢	Say no firmly; resist; negotiate.	
Don't take no for an answer.	\$1.00	Don't do it.	

DISTRESS TOLERANCE HANDOUT 8

(Distress Tolerance Worksheet 6–6b; pp. 382–384)



7

Self-Soothing

A way to remember these skills is to think of soothing each of your **FIVE SENSES**.

With Vision:

- ☐ Look at the stars at night.
- ☐ Look at pictures you like in a book.
- ☐ Buy one beautiful flower.
- ☐ Make one space in a room pleasing to look at.
- ☐ Light a candle and watch the flame.
- ☐ Set a pretty place at the table using your best things.
- ☐ Go people-watching or window-shopping.
- ☐ Go to a museum or poster shop with beautiful art.
- ☐ Sit in the lobby of a beautiful old hotel.
- ☐ Look at nature around you.
- ☐ Walk in a pretty part of town.
- ☐ Watch a sunrise or a sunset.
- ☐ Go to a dance performance, or watch it on TV.
- ☐ Be mindful of each sight that passes in front of you.
- ☐ Take a walk in a park or a scenic hike.
- ☐ Browse through stores looking at things.
- ☐ Other: _____

With Hearing:

- ☐ Listen to soothing or invigorating music.
- ☐ Pay attention to sounds of nature (waves, birds, rainfall, leaves rustling).
- ☐ Pay attention to the sounds of the city (traffic, horns, city music).
- ☐ Sing to your favorite songs.
- ☐ Hum a soothing tune.
- ☐ Learn to play an instrument.
- ☐ Burn a CD or make an iPod mix with music that will get you through tough times. Turn it on.
- ☐ Be mindful of any sounds that come your way, letting them go in one ear and out the other.
- ☐ Turn on the radio.
- ☐ Other: _____

With Smell:

- ☐ Use your favorite soap, shampoo, aftershave, cologne, or lotions, or try them on in the store.
- ☐ Burn incense or light a scented candle.
- ☐ Open a package of coffee and inhale the aroma.
- ☐ Put lemon oil on your furniture.
- ☐ Put potpourri or eucalyptus oil in a bowl in your room.
- ☐ Sit in a new car and breathe the aroma.
- ☐ Boil cinnamon. Make cookies, bread, or popcorn.
- ☐ Smell the roses.
- ☐ Walk in a wooded area and mindfully breathe in the fresh smells of nature.
- ☐ Open the window and smell the air.
- ☐ Other: _____

With Taste:

- ☐ Eat some of your favorite foods.
- ☐ Drink your favorite soothing drink, such as herbal tea, hot chocolate, a latté, or a smoothie.
- ☐ Treat yourself to a dessert.
- ☐ Eat macaroni and cheese or another favorite childhood food.
- ☐ Sample flavors in an ice cream store.
- ☐ Suck on a piece of peppermint candy.
- ☐ Chew your favorite gum.
- ☐ Get a little bit of a special food you don't usually spend the money on, such as fresh-squeezed orange juice or your favorite candy.
- ☐ Really taste the food you eat. Eat one thing mindfully.
- ☐ Other: _____

With Touch:

- ☐ Take a long hot bath or shower.
- ☐ Pet your dog or cat.
- ☐ Have a massage. Soak your feet.
- ☐ Put creamy lotion on your whole body.
- ☐ Put a cold compress on your forehead.
- ☐ Sink into a comfortable chair in your home.
- ☐ Put on a blouse or shirt that has a pleasant feel.
- ☐ Take a drive with the car windows rolled down.
- ☐ Run your hand along smooth wood or leather.
- ☐ Hug someone.
- ☐ Put clean sheets on the bed.
- ☐ Wrap up in a blanket.
- ☐ Notice touch that is soothing.
- ☐ Other: _____

From *DBT Skills Training Handouts and Worksheets, Second Edition*, by Marsha M. Linehan. Copyright 2015 by Marsha M. Linehan. Permission to photocopy or download and print this handout is granted to purchasers of this book for personal use or for use with clients.

DISTRESS TOLERANCE HANDOUT 9

(Distress Tolerance Worksheets 7, 7a, 7b; pp. 386–388)



Improving the Moment

A way to remember these skills is the word **IMPROVE**.

With Imagery:

- ☐ Imagine very relaxing scenes.
- ☐ Imagine a secret room within yourself. Furnish it the way you like. Close and lock the door on anything that can hurt you.
- ☐ Imagine everything going well.
- ☐ Make up a calming fantasy world.
- ☐ Imagine hurtful emotions draining out of you like water out of a pipe.
- ☐ Remember a happy time and imagine yourself in it again; play out the time in your mind again.
- ☐ Other: _____

With Meaning:

- ☐ Find purpose or meaning in a painful situation.
- ☐ Focus on whatever positive aspects of a painful situation you can find.
- ☐ Repeat these positive aspects in your mind.
- ☐ Remember, listen to, or read about spiritual values.
- ☐ Other: _____

With Prayer:

- ☐ Open your heart to a supreme being, God, or your own Wise Mind.
- ☐ Ask for strength to bear the pain.
- ☐ Turn things over to God or a higher being.
- ☐ Other: _____

With Relaxing actions:

- ☐ Take a hot bath or sit in a hot tub.
- ☐ Drink hot milk.
- ☐ Massage your neck and scalp.
- ☐ Practice yoga or other stretching.
- ☐ Breathe deeply.
- ☐ Change your facial expression.
- ☐ Other: _____

With One thing in the moment:

- ☐ Focus your entire attention on just what you are doing.
- ☐ Keep yourself in the moment.
- ☐ Put your mind in the present.
- ☐ Focus your entire attention on the physical
- ☐ Listen to a sensory awareness recording (or use Distress Tolerance Handout 9a)
- ☐ Other: _____

With a brief Vacation:

- ☐ Give yourself a brief vacation.
- ☐ Get in bed; pull the covers up over your head.
- ☐ Go to the beach or the woods for the day.
- ☐ Get a magazine and read it with chocolates.
- ☐ Turn off your phone for a day.
- ☐ Take a blanket to the park and sit on it for a whole afternoon.
- ☐ Take a 1-hour breather from hard work.
- ☐ Take a brief vacation from responsibility.
- ☐ Other: _____

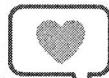
With self-Encouragement and rethinking the situation:

- ☐ Cheerlead yourself: "You go, girl!" "You da man!"
- ☐ "I will make it out of this."
- ☐ "I'm doing the best I can."
- ☐ Repeat over and over: "I can stand it."
- ☐ "This too shall pass."
- ☐ "I will be OK."
- ☐ "It won't last forever."
- ☐ Other: _____

List (and then practice) rethoughts that are particularly important in your crisis situations (e.g., "The fact that he did not pick me up doesn't mean he doesn't love me"):

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

From *DBT Skills Training Handouts and Worksheets, Second Edition*, by Marsha M. Linehan. Copyright 2015 by Marsha M. Linehan. Permission to photocopy or download and print this handout is granted to purchasers of this book for personal use or for use with clients.



love is respect.org

F

THE RELATIONSHIP SPECTRUM

All relationships exist on a spectrum from healthy to abusive with unhealthy somewhere in the middle

Healthy relationships are based on equality and respect.

RESPECT
GOOD COMMUNICATION
TRUST
HONESTY
EQUALITY

You make decisions together and can openly discuss whatever you're dealing with, like relationship problems and sexual choices. You enjoy spending time together but can be happy apart.

Unhealthy relationships are based on attempts to control the other person.

BREAKS IN COMMUNICATION
PRESSURE
DISHONESTY
STRUGGLES FOR CONTROL
INCONSIDERATE BEHAVIOR

One person tries to make most of the decisions. He or she may pressure their partner about sex or refuse to see how their actions can hurt. In an unhealthy relationship, you feel like you should only spend time with your partner.

Abusive relationships are based on an imbalance of power and control.

ACCUSATIONS
BLAME SHIFTING
ISOLATION PRESSURE
MANIPULATION

One person is making all of the decisions — about sexual choices, friend groups, boundaries, even what's true and what's not. You spend all of your time together and feel like you can't talk to other people, especially about what's really happening in your relationship.



Possible Warning Signs in Dating Relationships

If you are in an intimate relationship with someone, is it as healthy as you deserve? Put a check next to any of the responses below that apply to this relationship.

Note: It is important to remember that sometimes there are *no* signs that an intimate relationship may become abusive.

Does the person I am with:

- ☐ Get extremely jealous or possessive?
- ☐ Accuse me of flirting or cheating?
- ☐ Constantly check up on me or make me check in?
- ☐ Tell me how to dress or how much makeup to wear?
- ☐ Try to control what I do and whom I see?
- ☐ Try to keep me from seeing or talking to my family and friends?
- ☐ Have big mood swings—getting angry and yelling at me one minute, and being sweet and apologetic the next?
- ☐ Make me feel nervous or as if I'm walking on eggshells?
- ☐ Put me down or criticize me?
- ☐ Make me feel that I can't do anything right?
- ☐ Make me feel that no one else would want me?
- ☐ Threaten to hurt me?
- ☐ Threaten to hurt my friends or family?
- ☐ Threaten to commit suicide?
- ☐ Threaten to hurt him- or herself because of me?
- ☐ Threaten to hurt my pet(s)?
- ☐ Threaten to destroy my things?
- ☐ Hurt me physically? (includes yelling, grabbing, pushing shoving, shaking, punching, slapping, holding me down, etc.)
- ☐ Break or throw things when we argue?
- ☐ Pressure or force me into having sex or going further sexually than I want to?

If you checked any of these responses, you may be in an abusive relationship. There are resources out there. Loveisrespect.org or Break the Cycle can help. For more information, visit www.loveisrespect.org or www.breakthecycle.org.

Adapted from Break the Cycle, Inc. 2005. 1.888.988.TEEN or www.breakthecycle.org