

# Dialectical Behavior Therapy - DBT

- Marsha Linehan, Ph.D. - University of Washington.
- [www.behavioraltech.org](http://www.behavioraltech.org) (lots of resources, videos, etc.)
- Comprehensive treatment for Borderline Personality disorder, also validated for eating disorders, substance abuse
- Synthesis of mindfulness / acceptance skills and cognitive-behavioral change strategies
- “Synthesizing radical acceptance with skillful means”

# DBT Mindfulness

- “...entering fully into the present moment at the level of direct and immediate experience”
- “...has to do with the quality of both awareness and participation that a person brings to everyday living”
- “To observe correctly is to intuit the accurate nature of reality... to open oneself to the activity of exploration and inquiry”
- “nature of reality” = Roots in Zen and Dialectics- Reality is an ever-changing interplay of parts and wholes, contrasting forces in dynamic relationship.

# DBT

- ❖ A non-judgmental approach for teaching patients how to cope with a complex disorder
  - ❖ Teach new skills to replace problematic behavior
  - ❖ Dialectical balance between acceptance and change strategies

# Best Outcomes of Any Treatment Approach for...

- Reducing suicidal behaviors
- Reducing substance abuse
- Improving social functioning
- Reducing anger

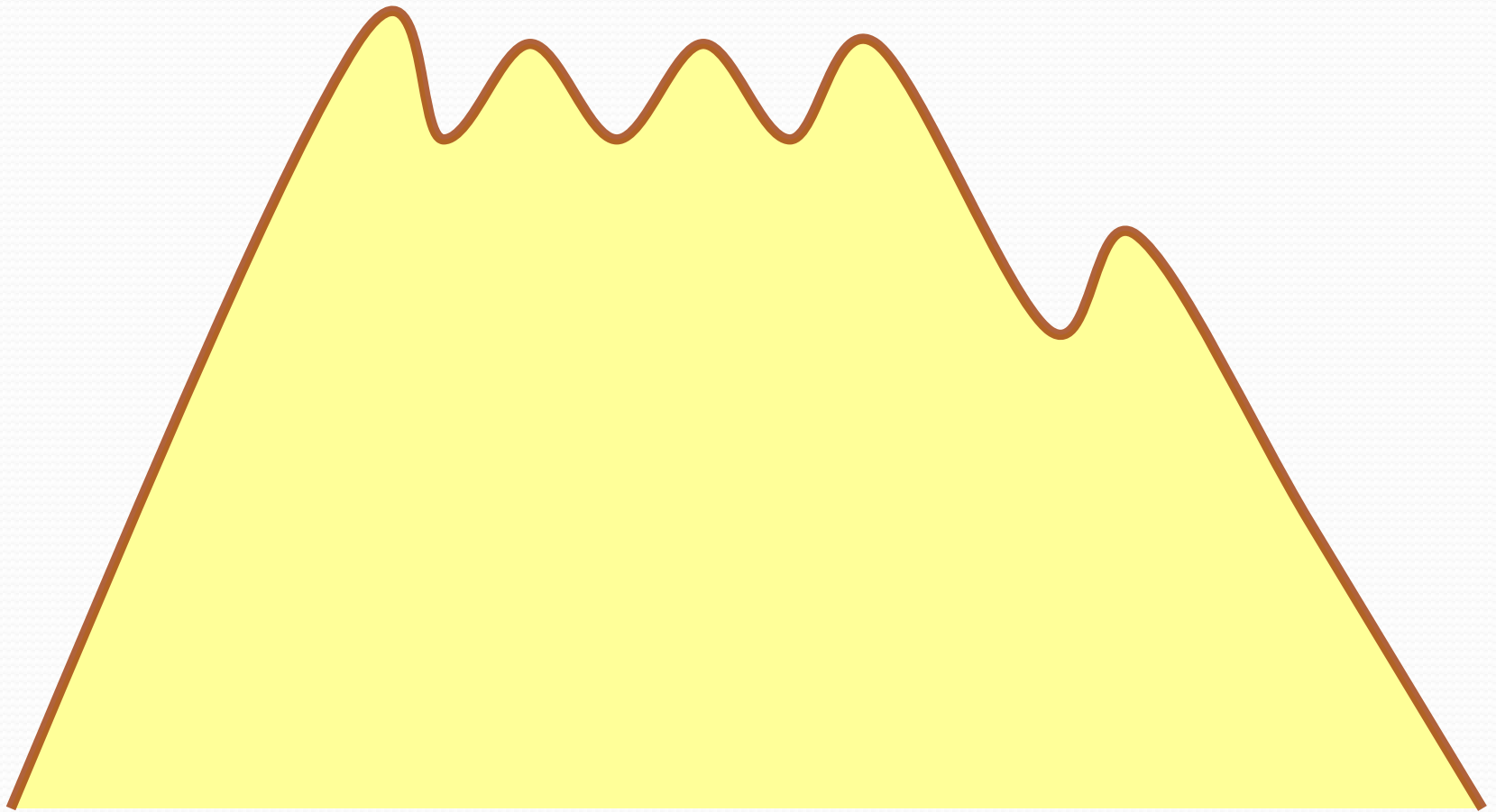
# BPD as Pervasive Disorder of the Emotion Regulation System

- Emotional vulnerability
- High sensitivity
- Immediate reactions
  - Distortion as result of increased emotions
- Slow return to baseline

# Fast Arousal/Slow Return to Baseline



# Continued Sensitivity to Next Event



# Psychological Results of an Invalidating Environment

- Punishes emotional displays and intermittently reinforces emotional escalation
- Rejects communication of private experiences
- Invalidates perceptions of reality



# Such an Environment Teaches an Individual to...

- Actively self-invalidate
- Learned helplessness
- Heightened arousal/passive approach
- Oscillate between emotional inhibition and extreme emotional styles

# Such an Environment Teaches an Individual to...

- Hard to maintain a consistent sense of self
- Form unrealistic goals and expectations
- End up confused as to emotions
- Emotion phobic

# Individual has difficulty...

- Accurately expressing emotions
- Communicating pain effectively
- Tolerating distress
- Solving difficult problems in living
- Little expectation for adaptive emotion regulation

# Dialectics

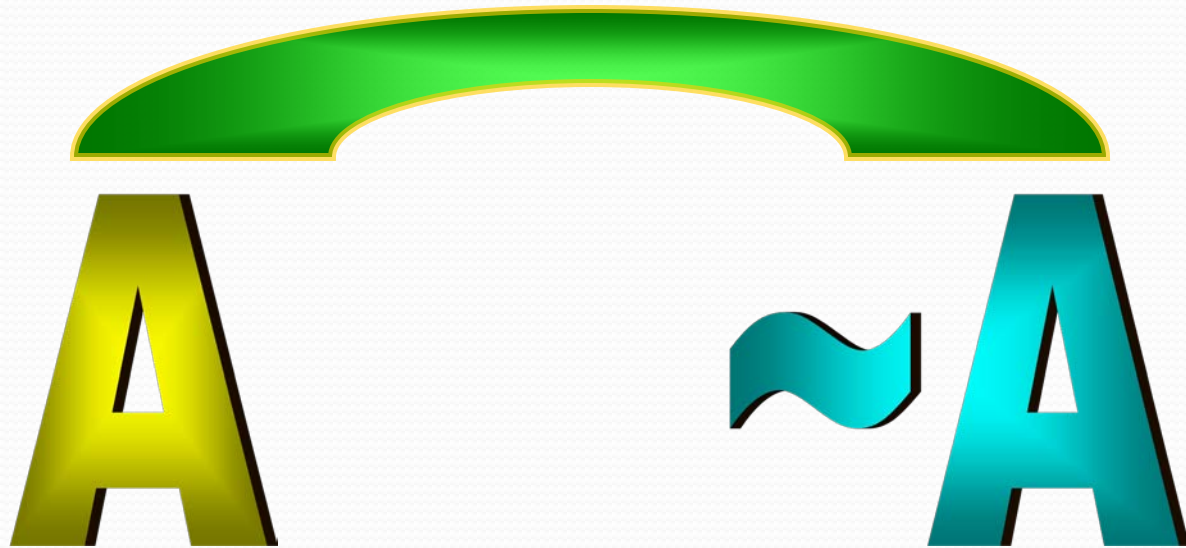
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# Dialectics

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# Dialectics



# Dialectics



# DBT Dialectics

- Acceptance versus change
  - Eastern mindfulness and western behaviorism
- Validation versus problem solving
  - “How come” and “how to”



# Dialectics as Development

- Split off aspects of self get integrated at a higher level
  - Love and hate same person
  - I can be good and bad
  - I can do some things well and other things poorly

# Skills Taught

- Mindfulness skills
- Distress tolerance skills
- Emotion regulation skills
- Interpersonal effectiveness skills

# DBT Assumptions About Patients

- They are fundamentally “fine” the way they are AND their lives are unbearable
- They may not have caused all their problems, but they need to solve them anyway
- They are doing the best they can and they need to do better

# Core Mindfulness

- Acceptance Strategy
- Reality in this moment is perfect as it is
- Ability to tolerate a complex life:  
accept all of one's thoughts, feelings,  
behaviors

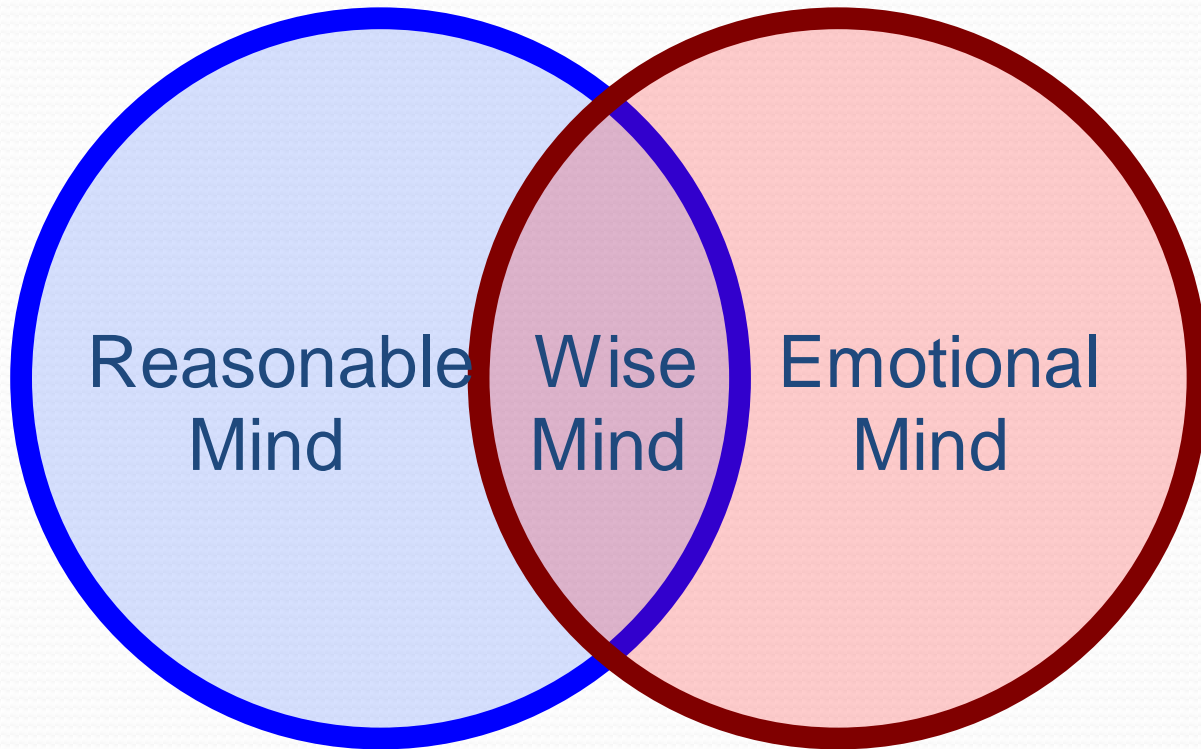
# Why Mindfulness?

- Waking up from moment to moment
- First step in effective problem solving
- Curious, non-judgmental way
- Expanded sense of self
- Decrease suffering

# A few key DBT skills

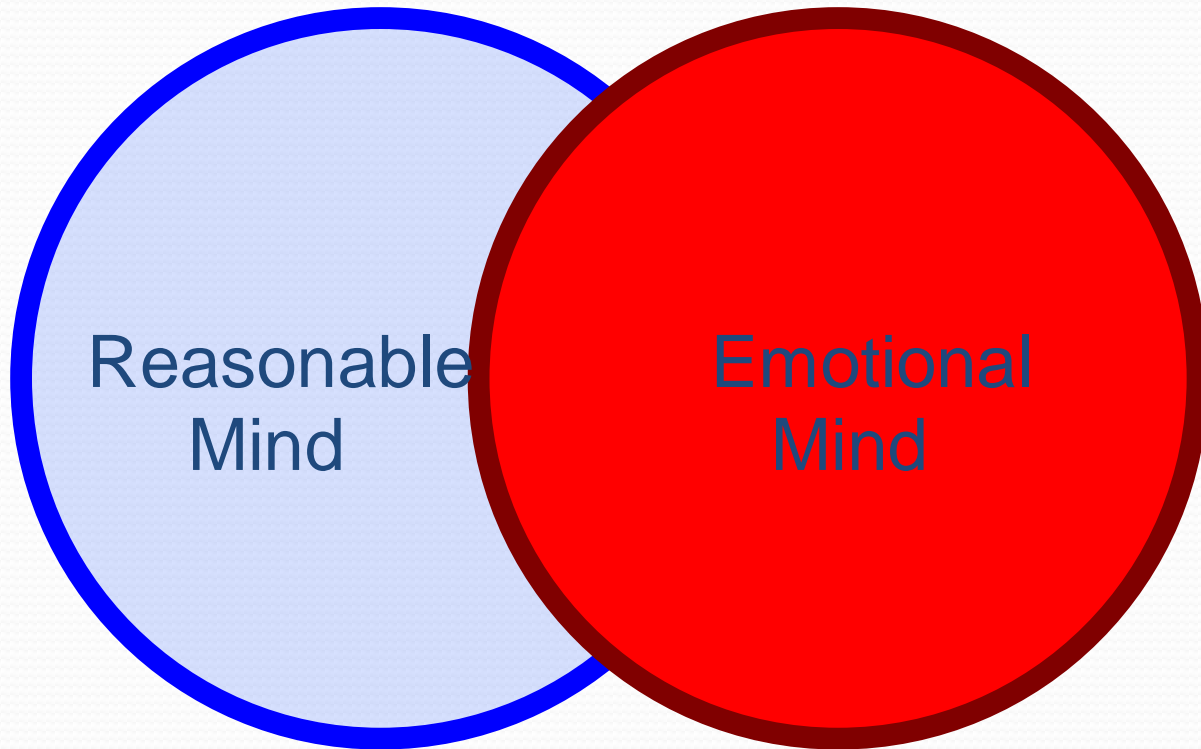
- **Wise Mind** (emotion mind to wise mind shift)
- **Non-judgmentally** (decrease suffering in the moment)
- **“Please Master”**- distress tolerance checklist for reducing negative emotions
- **Agenda Setting**

# States of Mind



States of Mind

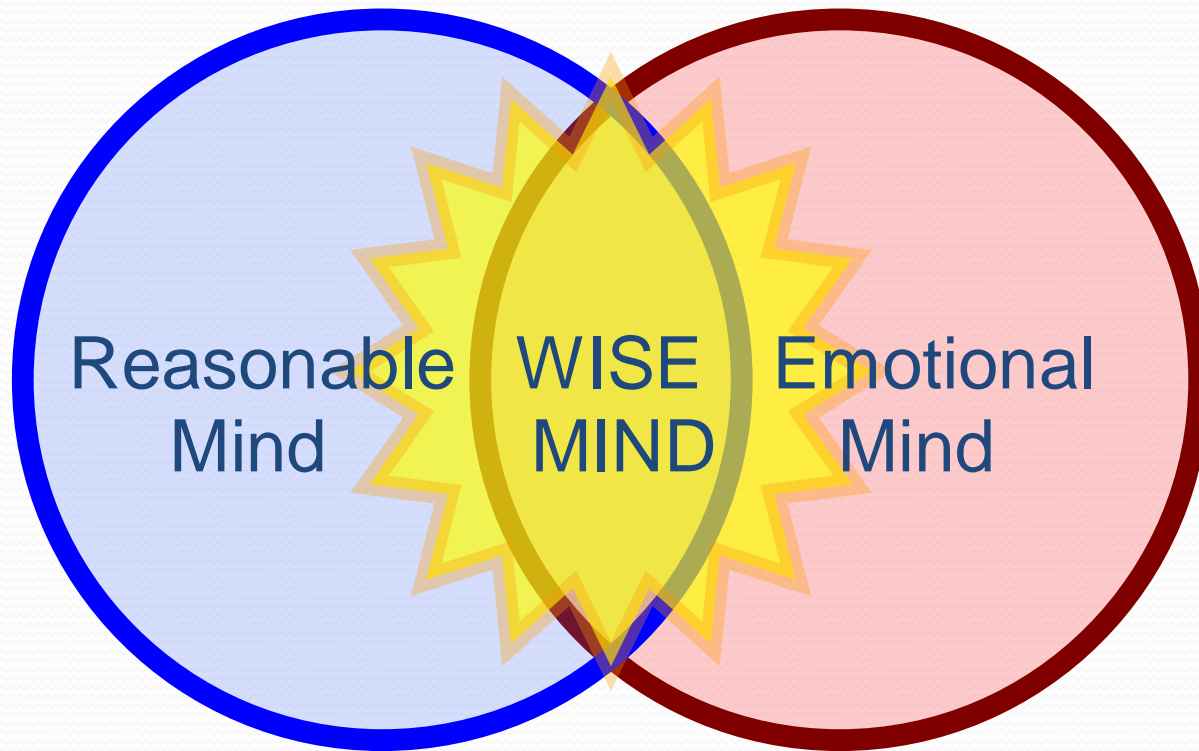
# States of Mind



States of Mind



# Wise Mind

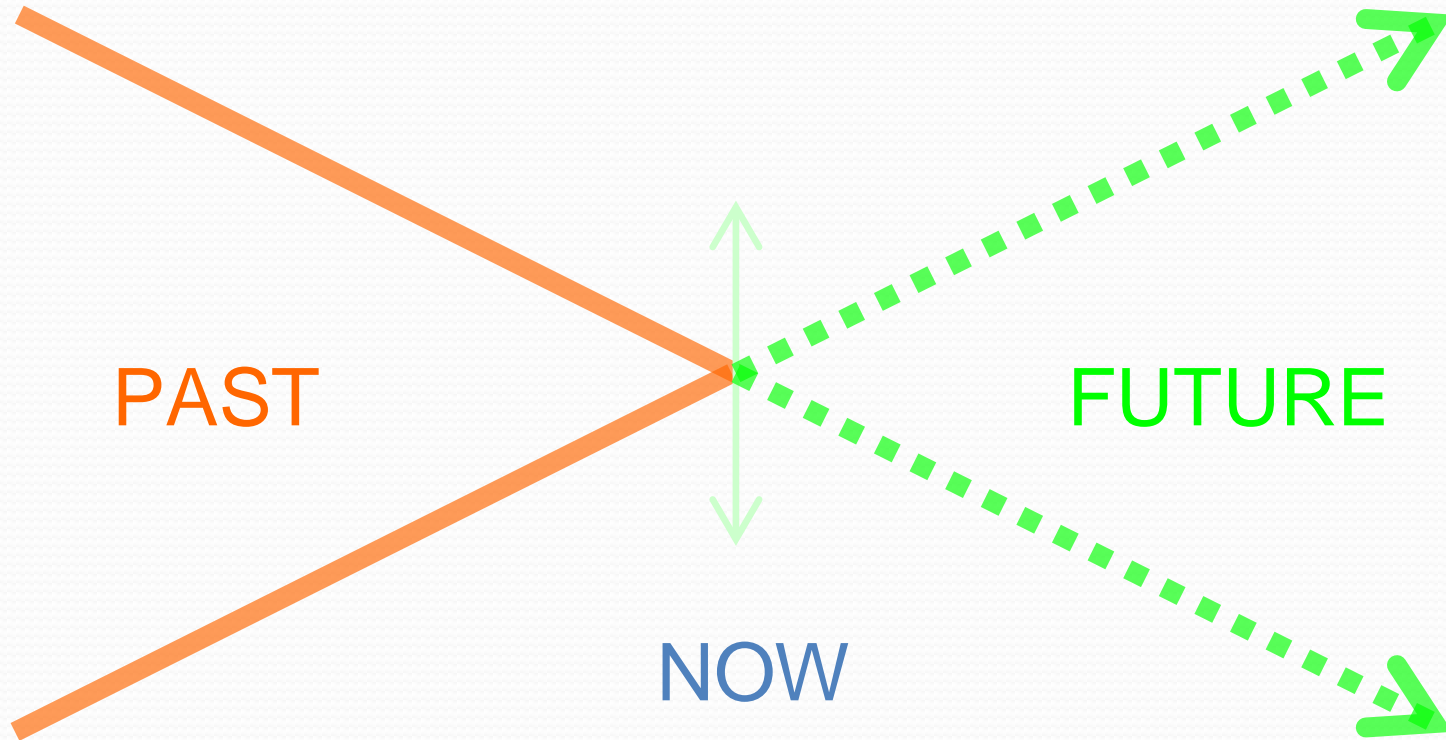


States of Mind

# Wise Mind

- Going in and going down
- Long term best interest and...
- Emotional buy-in
- Validates Emotion Mind
- Your Wise Mind - no one else's
- Adds larger perspective

# Non-judgmentally



# Non-judgmentally

- This moment has to be the way it is
- We can change the future, but not the present (or the past)
- Struggling with the NOW only increases our suffering

# Non-judgmentally

## Pain

Acceptance  
Of what is,  
As it is  
Because it is

## Suffering

Shoulda  
Woulda  
Coulda  
Aversion  
Denial  
Grasping

# Non-judgmentally

- Acceptance is not compliance
- It is what it is, now what am I going to do about it?
- Pain in life is inevitable, suffering is optional!

# Reducing Vulnerability to Negative Emotions (Please Master)

**Treat physical illness:** Take care of your body. See a doctor when necessary. Take prescribed medication.

**Balance eating:** Don't eat too much or too little. Stay away from foods that make you feel overly emotional. Remember three meals and two snacks per day.

**Avoid mood-altering drugs:** Stay off drugs (except for prescriptions), including alcohol. Consider reducing caffeine.

**Balance Sleep:** Try to get the amount of sleep that helps you feel good. Keep to a sleep program if you are having difficulty sleeping.

**Get Exercise:** Do some sort of movement routine every day. Build up to 20 minutes of vigorous exercise if possible.

**Build Mastery:** Try to do one thing a day to make yourself feel competent and in control

# Agenda Setting - invest in the beginning (4 Habits)

- Is this a problem?
- Is this a problem *for you?* (or someone else?)
- Is this something that you would like to work on?
- What are you willing to do to work on it?



# DBT

- Do you think you could incorporate any of these concepts or skills into your everyday practice?
- Questions?