

DBT Phone Coaching

Orientation Sheet

Rationale for phone coaching: Not all therapy can be done within the context of individual and group sessions. Sometimes, it is necessary for you to call for individual coaching, especially in crisis situations when your urges to engage in harmful behaviors are very high.

General Information:

After-hours phone coaching is an integral part of DBT and is targeted towards helping clients generalize skills outside of the therapy office.

- Coaching is offered to clients while receiving comprehensive DBT (e.g: actively engaged in both individual therapy and skills training).
- Phone coaching involves a brief (5-15 minutes) conversation by phone or text focused on helping you use a particular skill in a particular situation.
 - Phone coaching is not about delving deeply into a problem or discussing/doing therapy.
 - Phone coaching is not crisis intervention, but a means for obtaining suggestions on how to use skills in times of distress.
 - Different coaches may come up with different ideas, but the aim is to help the player (client ACT SKILLFULLY)
 - **If you are calling/texting for coaching, the expectation is:**
 - **That you have tried multiple skills prior to calling.**
 - **That you are willing to receive coaching.**
 - **That you have not ALREADY self-injured (e.g. cutting, overdose)**

Reasons a client might call:

1. In keeping with DBT commitments you should call for help to prevent suicidal or self-harm actions when skills are not working. This helps teach how to ask for help **before** a crisis actually occurs. The idea is to call before a full-blown crisis occurs and to learn to call earlier and earlier when you need help.
2. If you are having trouble coping/integrating the use of skills into daily life situations or use with your primary treatment targets.
3. If you feel a repair is needed in the therapeutic relationship. For instance, you might want to check out something that was said in session, or apologize. We want to address anything that gets in the way of our relationship that can't wait until next session.

What to expect from phone coaching calls:

1. Calls are brief—generally five to fifteen minutes
2. After a brief description of the current situation, therapist will discuss skills that have been tried and review other skills that might help or other ideas that you have.
3. Phone coaching calls are not meant for analyzing a crisis, generating solutions to a crisis, or for solving a crisis. They are to assist you in getting through the crisis without using ineffective behaviors so that analyzing and solving can be done in the next therapy session.
4. To assist in generalizing skills, you may call for a brief check-in when there is no crisis situation.
5. Your individual therapist will discuss what hours they are available during the evenings and weekends, how long you can expect to wait for a call back, and procedures for times when they are unable to return your call.

In an Emergency

- In keeping with our contract, if it is a life-threatening emergency, I expect you to call 911. If it is a non-life-threatening emergency, you are able to call the **Mobile Crisis Team (Banyan Health Systems) at (305) 774-3616** or go to your nearest emergency room.
- Also, not being able to reach your therapist is not a reason to engage in suicide, self-injury or one of your target behaviors. Please call the **Mobile Crisis Team (Banyan Health Systems) at (305) 774-3616** for support if you cannot wait for me to return your call.

24- Hour rule:

You are expected to call for coaching **before** you engage in self-harming behaviors. Calling after engaging in these behaviors is not appropriate. The therapist can only be helpful before you use these behaviors because, in essence, afterwards you have already taken care of your distress by engaging in the self-harm behaviors.

DBT Phone Coaching

Orientation Sheet

- **Following self-harming behaviors, you are not allowed to call for phone coaching, or to contact your individual therapist in other ways, for a 24-hour period. You can and should attend scheduled appointments, even during these 24 hours.**
- If you do call during the 24-hour period following self-harming behaviors, you will be instructed to contact other resources and the call will end. During this time, you can still call the Mobile Crisis Team (Banyan Health Services) (305)774-3161 or 911 for support.

Privacy Concerns

- The manner in which you contact your therapist may vary, but outside of the office contact involves managing your privacy in a different way, as the use of cell phones, email, voicemail, texts are not secure forms of communication and that confidentiality cannot be ensured when using these methods of communication.
- Your therapist is not able to completely assure any information that you leave in their personal (non-office) voicemail box, text message, or email can be completely protected, as there is no full-proof way to secure these communications.
- Your therapist is committed to protecting your personal information to the best of their ability, but wants you to understand the limits of their power to do so.

Therapy Interfering Behaviors for Phone Coaching

For the therapist?	For the client?
Not responding to a phone call in a timely fashion, not being available	Not being willing to take suggestions - “yes, butting”
Not sticking to the priorities or to problem-solving	Not tolerating when a therapist cannot answer call or spend as much time on the call as a client wants- not accepting therapist’s limits and needs.
Being angry or frustrated that a client has called	Calling before trying to use skills.
Not keeping track of what has worked in the past or a plan made in session	Calling when a crisis is full blown, after a crisis has occurred, after self-injury, or in an emergency
Not providing enough validation	Through other behaviors not engaging in the process of problem-solving.

Therapist Limits for Phone Coaching

may be available for coaching calls on Week days between the hours of 10:00a.m. and 10:00 p.m. *** Exceptions to this may be made by mutual agreement and in advance. In those cases both parties will agree on the exceptional nature of this arrangement. Example, travel to a different timezone.

- Please contact me by calling/texting # 305-724-4251 or the number provided by your indiv therapist _____
- My preference the way you reach me for coaching is Text and specify coaching request
- I will try my best to return your call in the following amount of time: Coaching within 5 hours all other calls within 24 hours
- My personal limits for contacting me via texting or email are: Discussing suicide or other life threatening behavior without the intention to use skills and failure to try using skills

*** “Real Life Limits” – due to unforeseen circumstances I may not always be available/ be able to be reached, may not have cell phone service, may not receive a text/voicemail/ missed call, etc. In these circumstances, this is not a reason to engage in suicidal, self-injury or target behaviors – instead, please continue to use skills and contact the Mobile Crisis Unit (Banyan Health Systems) at (305)774-3161, 911, or national lifeline at 1-800-273-8255. You may also wish to text the crisis text line at 741-741.

DBT Phone Coaching

Orientation Sheet

I commit that I will practice these skills while waiting for you to return a call for coaching.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Informed Consent and Commitment

I understand and agree to the guidelines written above for phone coaching and the limits of my therapist. I agree to call 911 as needed in life-threatening emergencies, and to call Mobile Crisis at (305)774-3161 in non-life threatening emergencies. I agree to commit to not engaging in suicidal behavior or self-injury and to use phone coaching to help me meet this goal appropriately. I agree to call my therapist before engaging self-harming behaviors, and I understand that if I engage in self-harming behaviors, I will not be able to call my therapist for coaching for 24 hours and instead will be able to call Mobile Crisis at (305)774-3161 or 911. I am aware of the limitations of privacy that occur while using phone coaching, have discussed any concerns I have with my therapist, and agree to use phone coaching to help me achieve my treatment and life goals. I understand that my therapist may, for any unforeseen circumstance, may not receive my request for coaching, and in an emergency I must attempt to Mobile Crisis. I understand that my therapist is not an Emergency Service Provider. I understand that I may revoke this authorization at any time, but not retroactive to the release of information made in good faith. Further, that revoking this consent will have implications for the extent of my treatment in the DBT program.

Patient Signature _____

Therapist Signature _____