

*Lesson 4-7 (Handouts & Worksheets)*

# FAST



# INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

The three commonly known DBT “Interpersonal Effectiveness” acronyms are each directed at decreasing interpersonal conflict, but each is directed at a specific effectiveness goal.

**D-E-A-R M-A-N** is most useful to obtain the goal of Objectiveness Effectiveness, the most encompassing of the three. It focuses on clarifying what is wanted from an interaction as well as the skills needed to achieve this goal.

In simple language, **“How to get someone to do what you want”**.

**G-I-V-E** is aimed more at Relationship Effectiveness as the main goal. It emphasizes how to skillfully interact with the other person in a way that the relationship is preserved, perhaps even improved. In simple language, **“How to keep a good relationship”**.

**F-A-S-T** is directed at Self Respect Effectiveness. If your highest goal is to maintain or increase your Self-Respect, the skills in FAST are aimed at helping you to achieve that. This is concerned with maintaining your values and beliefs so that you can still feel good about yourself after the interaction. In simple language, **“How to keep your self-respect”**.

**This lesson will focus on F-A-S-T which is directed at the Self-Respect Effectiveness Goal:**

- **F - Fair** (*be Fair*)
- **A - Apologies** (*few Apologies*)
- **S – Stick to Your Values**
- **T - Truthful** (*be Truthful*)

FAST Skills could be viewed as a balancing beam between the DEARMAN and GIVE Skills. Balancing between what you want and need with what the other person wants and needs (i.e. the middle path) is sometimes the best path to self-respect.

When you use DEARMAN Skills you can improve your self-respect by increasing your sense of mastery, knowing that you are getting your needs and wants met effectively. Yet if you always get your wants and needs met, at the cost of the wants and need of another, this leads to damaged self-esteem. Feeling selfish and having high self-respect are not compatible.

When you use AID GIVEN Skills you can increase your self-respect by giving things you want for the welfare of another person. If you only use GIVE Skills to satisfy someone who expects you to be the one always giving, therefore pushes you, this will also damage your self-esteem.

If you over-use only one or the other your self-respect will erode over time.

The more we practice Self-Respect Effectiveness Skills the more confident we will feel about our actions and the outcomes of those actions. Using the four steps of FAST can allow you to maintain your dignity to come out of a situation feeling good about yourself, regardless of how you feel about the outcome.

## (be) FAIR

Be fair to yourself and to the other person. Try to be unbiased and fair in how you perceive situations and make compromises. Make sure you are looking at the situation from not only your position, but also from the other person's point of view.

Fairness is a non-polarized way of being. It tends to balance toward the middle. It seeks to find a balance between extreme or polarized points of view. All-or-nothing thinking tends to be unbalanced and go to one side or the other.

Fairness includes both your thoughts and your actions. It requires that you use "Nonjudgmental" Skills, focusing on facts (what, when, who) rather than personal opinions of the facts (why). Judgement creates biases and prejudices which get in the way of the facts.

Fairness is impartial in the way it deals with the facts of reality. You are more likely to be respected and respect yourself if you remain true to the reality of the situation rather than give in to your bias, preconceived ideas, favoritism, or deceptions.

The interpersonal effectiveness skill "Self-Respect Effectiveness" focuses on being able to ask for what you need or want while holding to your values and beliefs. The objective is to save or build your self-respect by not sacrificing your values (selling out) to get your needs met.

Fairness involves give and take in your attempts to meet your objectives. Be sure that negotiations benefit all the parties involved. This could mean compromising in this specific situation, or exchange of favors for long term mutual benefit. If you are consistently taking advantage of another it is hard to like yourself in the long run. If you do all the giving, you will end up feeling used and devalued which in turn can cause you to have trouble valuing yourself and liking yourself.

If you determine to remain fair in your interpersonal interactions and are dealing with a fair person, problem solving should be relatively easy. If the other person is also fair, you can trust that they are not going to take advantage of you. We should be able to anticipate that people will treat us fairly, honestly, and be governed by the Golden Rule. We should also take care that we are also governed by the Golden Rule.

**Neither party should be expected to sacrifice their values or moral standards for the other person.**

# (few) APOLOGIES

Keep your apologies few. This is somewhat automatic if we use apologize only when appropriate.

Apologize when an apology is warranted. Being able to honestly, sincerely apologize for any mistakes or wrong doings can be an incredibly powerful healing tool and relationship maintenance skill. Yet apologies should only be made when an action worthy of an apology has occurred.

Do not apologize repeated for the same occurrence. If you have behaved ineffectively or unskillfully in a way that has hurt another, sincerely apologize once. If you have said you were sorry, it is up to the other person to forgive or not, but if you can't undo it you need to forgive yourself and go on. Repeating the same apology will only keep that mistake fresh in your mind and damage your self-respect.

DON'T APOLIGIZE FOR:
Being Alive
Having Needs and Wants
Making a Request to Fill Your Needs
What You Believe
Your Thoughts
Your Feelings
Having an Opinion
Disagreeing
Your Values
Being You

Being respectful is a two-way street- you respect yourself by taking responsibility for your wants and needs, and you respect the other persons wants and needs and their responsibility for taking care of themselves.

Over-apologetic behavior diminishes your self-respect because it can reinforce self-invalidation and old self-judgements.

Apologizing implies that you are in the wrong or have made a mistake. When you apologize when you do not believe you are in the wrong, it will decrease your sense of effectiveness and worth as a person. Unwarranted and inappropriate apologies reduce your sense of self-confidence over time.

Those who apologize when no apology is warranted (too often) appear insecure and are at higher risk for not being or feeling heard.

**Do not say I'm sorry if you have done nothing  
for which you need to apologize.**

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# POLITENESS

## SORRY VS. THANK YOU

Politeness is a universal pattern of behavior use to insure others that we are aware of them as valuable individuals. We use these behaviors to show that we mean them no harm, that we are thoughtful of their needs, and to show empathy for those around us. Politeness has become ingrained behaviors in most cultures, in varying degrees.

Saying “Sorry” can be grouped into the same politeness category as saying, “Thank You” and definitely has a place in our everyday lives, but may not always be the most effective means to apologize. While “Sorry” may be the best choice in the case of accidentally bumping into another, expressing sympathy for another, or to express genuine regret for a mistake; this phrase can be overused to the point that it becomes an automatic response with little or no real meaning.

In many situations, saying “Thank You” is a much better way to apologize, which may not only fulfil your need to say sorry, but also allow the other person to feel better about their part in the interaction. When you say, “thank you”, you are identifying the other person while letting them know that you recognize their contribution. Expressing thanks instead of an apology can cultivate a sense of positivity between the two of you because you are appreciating their sacrifice rather than apologizing for your faults. By exchanging thanks for sorry, you avoid diminishing your self-image and altering the way the other person thinks of you, while praising the other person for their actions.

Sorry	Thank You
Puts the focus on our shortcomings	Puts focus on another’s contribution
<i>Saying we’re sorry, exposes (and brings into clearer focus) our weaknesses. Without intending to do so, we are lowering our self-worth and harming our self- confidence.</i>	<i>Saying “Thank You” takes the focus away from ourselves and places an edifying focus on the other person. “Thank you” is used to express gratitude and appreciation for others.</i>
“I’m so sorry, I’m always late”	“Thank you for your patience”
Accentuates your ineffective time management skill	Acknowledges the gratitude you have for the person who waited for you
“Sorry for going on and on”	“Thank you for listening”
Expresses your low self-value by assuming they didn’t want to listen to you.	Emphasizes gratitude for their time and interest
“Sorry for taking up all your time”	“Thank you for spending time with me”
Reveals your belief that you’re not important or worthy enough to take up someone’s time	Emphasizes gratitude for their time and friendship

When you recognize and acknowledge the other person’s feelings, you are praising the act they did because of you, while allowing them to see you in a more positive light. We all do things to the detriment of others at times, but the next time you find yourself in a situation that needs an apology, remember the power of “thank you” over saying “I’m sorry”.

# STICK TO YOUR VALUES

Stand up for what you believe in.

Keep your focus on what you believe; don't give up your values for things less important. Be clear about what is important to you, then stand your ground. Remind yourself that your values, views, and opinions are important. If someone disagrees with them, this does nothing to reduce their importance in your life. You have a right to them, and you are in control of your own actions. Don't let others pressure you to sacrifice your values causing you to do something you will regret later.

If you are not sure of what is most important to you or what you believe in, this would be a good time to examine yourself in order to prioritize your values. If you have been following our lessons, you have already completed the "Prioritizing Values Worksheet". This might be a good time to refresh memory on your list of values. If you do not have these worksheets, you can access them by following this link: <https://www.middlepathdbtboutique.com/#!/Prioritizing-Values-Worksheets-and-Handouts-DBT-Peer-Guided-Lessons/p/115462458/category=30055484> Be honest about what you value. If you say you value family, yet you avoid them at all costs, your actions are speaking louder than your words. Your actions are showing that you are not valuing family. You may want to make a list of your current values, and what you hope your values will be in the future.

Your values are the principles by which you live or the beliefs that direct your behavior. Many values are based upon your moral beliefs (your accepted moral codes that define what you believe to be "right" and "wrong"). These values help to determine your correct course of action. Your values are ideals that guide your thinking and behavior.

Acting with integrity is when your actions are in harmony with your values. Integrity is the integrated internal feeling you get when your actions are in agreement with your values. Acting with integrity may not always feel right at first glance, but if you think it through your wise mind knows this is the proper course of action.

You might find yourself being tempted to compromise your integrity to get what you want. Don't sell out your values or integrity just to get what you want or keep the other person liking you. Be true to yourself. If something is conflicting with your morals or values, be sure to stick to them. Don't let anyone encourage you to act against your values. Acting in accordance with your value will reward you with increased self-esteem and self-confidence. People who have a healthy self-respect feel proud of and satisfied with their moral choices.

Sticking to your values is the hardest thing you will ever have to do. It requires that you continually practice and master all the skills. It requires you to use assertiveness skills while using self-control. It requires you to effectively process your emotions while remaining strong against adversity. This is a skill that requires practice.

***You can do it because, basically, it means being yourself.  
Being yourself is living the life you value.***

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## (be) TRUTHFUL

Being truthful requires that you are honest when communicating with another person. It requires that you are truthful not only to the other person, but also to yourself; as you tell the truth about yourself, about others, and about events.

**Truthfulness means that you tell it like it is. If you are distorting, exaggerating, or minimizing reality, you are not being truthful.**

Acting like you are helpless when you are not, is dishonest. Playing helpless or refusing to even try is the opposite of building mastery. If you have never tried and just assume you can't, that is not true honesty. If you tell others and yourself that you can't do it: you can't. Asking for help when help is really needed is skillful, while asking for help because you are afraid or don't want to try is untruthful.

Making excuses to avoid taking responsibility for your actions is not being truthful. Take responsibility for your actions, excuses won't erase or alter that action. Excuses benefit the person making them, rarely changing how others feel about the facts. Be honest without excuses.

Exaggerating or minimizing facts in order to manipulate is not being honest. When you distort the situation by saying something is more (or less) serious or important than the reality, you are not being honest.

One instance of dishonesty (or a little white lie) may not cause an issue in how you feel about yourself, but if dishonesty is a pattern for you, it will erode your self-respect over time. There may be a time where being completely honest with another can actually reduce relationship effectiveness. If the full truth will only hurt someone else, it may be helpful to withhold the hurtful part if possible and effective in the situation. Mindfully weigh the short-term with any long-term problems this might cause. Only make this exception if it possible without causing you to feel guilty for not being "totally" honest. Avoid even this stray from full truthfulness if at all possible, but if you believe a "little white lie" is called for, remember to do it mindfully.

Being truthful requires also that you be honest about yourself; to yourself. Are you able to own your talents and successes? Without bragging, are you able to accept that you are good at something or did a good job? This is required to be truthful.

Are you able to admit to yourself and others that you have cracks and faults? It can be hard to admit those to ourselves, and downright scary to admit those to others. Concern that others will think less of you if your flaws show is natural to protect yourself but think about how you react to others who show the cracks life has left them with. Who is it easier to share yourself with, the person who presents their self as perfect, or the person who admits that they are not?

*"Part of Telling the Truth is to allow yourself to be honest in creating the life you want to live, acknowledging when you've made mistakes or changed your mind. It's also about letting your cracks/faults be visible and create the repair as part of your being. The imperfections can add to your beauty." Karyn Hall, PhD*

***Truthfulness means that you tell it like it is.***

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Self-respect means just that, you respect yourself. If you respect yourself, you are likely to act in ways that affirm and reinforce self-respect. It is appropriate to insist that others treat you fairly, without apology, with integrity, and truthfully.

Self-respect includes the assumption that friendship, love, and happiness are natural, because of who you are and what you do. Self-respect carries with it the belief that you are a good person, are worthwhile, and that you deserve the respect of others.

Self-respect and self-esteem are intertwined. That which you respect is what you consider worthy of esteem and that which you esteem is what you respect. To increase self-respect, you must have confidence in your own value. If you value yourself, you will treat yourself with the same care you would anything else you value.

If you do not have self-respect, you are more likely to act in ways that lower your sense of your own value even further. When you do not respect yourself, you open yourself up for others to treat you unfairly, irresponsibly, and dishonestly.

If you want to increase and expand your self-respect, you are required to act in ways that will make it rise. Increased self-respect begins with your personal belief that you are a person of value which you then convey through compatible actions. This means you will treat others with fairness, without apologies, responsibly, with integrity, and truthfully.

### **To have and maintain self-respect:**

Don't apologize for anything that you wouldn't expect others to apologize for.

Insist that others treat you with respect, kindness, and patience in keeping with your own values.

Expect people to be honest with you, as you are honest with them.

**Nobody can take away your self-respect;  
YOU must give it up to lose it.**



# FAST WORKSHEET

1) An interpersonal interaction situation I anticipate; in which maintaining my Self-Respect is my main Objective? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2) Who do I expect to be involved? \_\_\_\_\_

3) What steps can I plan in advance to ensure that I am fair to them? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4) What can I do to make sure that I keep things fair to me? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5) Have I done something that warrants an apology? \_\_\_\_\_

6) Is this a situation that I could replace "I'm Sorry" with "Thank You"? \_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_no

7) Do I expect someone to expect me to sacrifice my values? \_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_no

8) What can I do to help me hold fast to my morals and values? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9) Am I willing to gracefully accept the other's need to hold to their values? \_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_no

10) I am willing and determined to be honest:

\_\_\_\_\_ With Them      \_\_\_\_\_ With Myself  
\_\_\_\_\_ About Others      \_\_\_\_\_ About Myself      \_\_\_\_\_ About the Situation  
\_\_\_\_\_ About My Flaws or Cracks      \_\_\_\_\_ About My Strengths, Talents, or Accomplishments  
\_\_\_\_\_ About My Actions (Accept Responsibility)      \_\_\_\_\_ Other

11) Which of these do I think will be the hardest to be truthful about? \_\_\_\_\_

12) What I plan to do if I am tempted to lie: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

13) Which of these skills do I find that I need to really work on? Lack of practice of which of these skills have caused my self-respect to erode? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How I plan to use FAST Skills to build and safeguard my self-respect: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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