



DBT Center of Orange County's Response to Coronavirus

We are living in unprecedented times. It is easy to become dysregulated, listening to the news, engaging in social distancing, and so much more as we do our best to navigate through the COVID-19 crisis. The meaning of 'dialectics' has never been so profound for me. Surges of fear, sadness, and anger overwhelm me throughout the day. I am fearful yet know I must create Hope! I am sad yet know I must create Joy! I am angry yet know I must create Peace! I am learning the art of **really** sitting with strong emotions – allowing them to come and go while acknowledging that 'It is What It Is!' Dialectical Behavior Therapy teaches us that two opposing forces can both be true; that opposing ideologies can survive and thrive in symbiosis, and that this concept is vital if we are to reduce our suffering. Here are some ideas I have been using to help self-regulation and maintain equanimity.

1. Hope: Daily Affirmations such as "This too shall pass!"

2. Joy: Neighbors taking care of neighbors. Whether it is reaching out in song, cooking meals and doing that pharmacy or grocery run for others. The other day I hosted a virtual 'dinner party' with beloved family and friends. Other than some technical issues, it brought laughter and a sense of camaraderie. I also make sure that the first thing I do when I open my eyes is list 3 things I am grateful for.

3. Peace: I have increased my daily Meditation Practice and embrace a strong Kundalini practice.

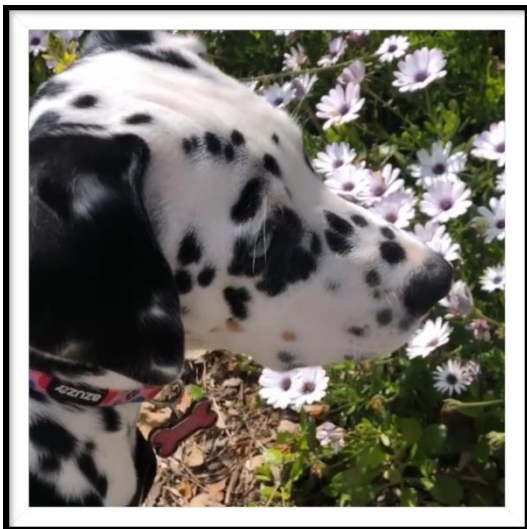
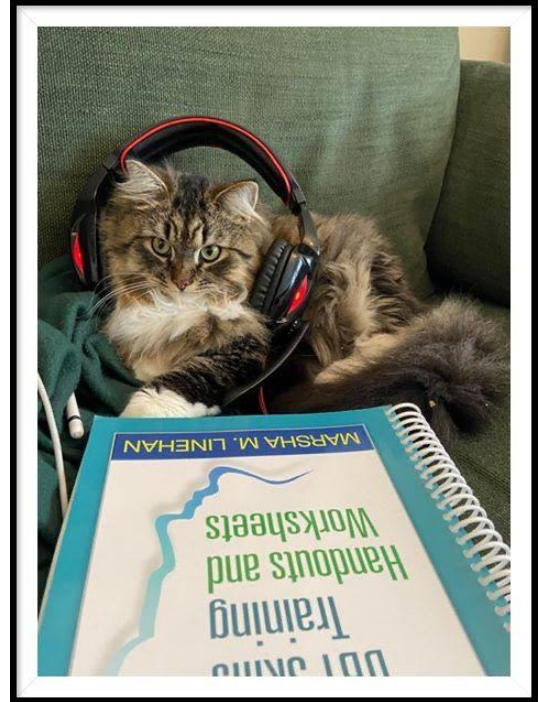
There are App ideas for mindfulness practices listed in the Resource section of our website dbtccenteroc.com. I urge you to keep yourself safe and well and know that we are all in this together!

Dr. Michele Lob PsyD., MFT, CEDS
Executive Director

How DBTOC Staff Are Coping with DBT Skills during COVID-19 Pandemic

"I've been spending a lot of time finding new positives to accumulate. There's a new Animal Crossing game out, and I'm learning a lot about virtual versions of board games! They double as a great distract and an opportunity to connect with friends I can't see right now. My husband and I are both spending lots of time with our kitties and working through our TV backlog. Distract (specifically with activities and pushing away), radical acceptance, IMPROVE (by encouragement and cheerleading) and STOP are probably the other skills I'm using the most!"

- Kati McCormick, DBT Program Clinician and Skills Facilitator



"Practicing gratitude is even more important in order to build a life worth living in the midst of a pandemic. I do this by going on 'gratitude hunts' with my pup. She loves showing me her excitement over new flowers and fresh smells. She notices much more than I do. It teaches me to be grateful for things I would otherwise overlook on a daily basis and to utilize my observe skills."

- Catherine Mann, Patient Services Representative

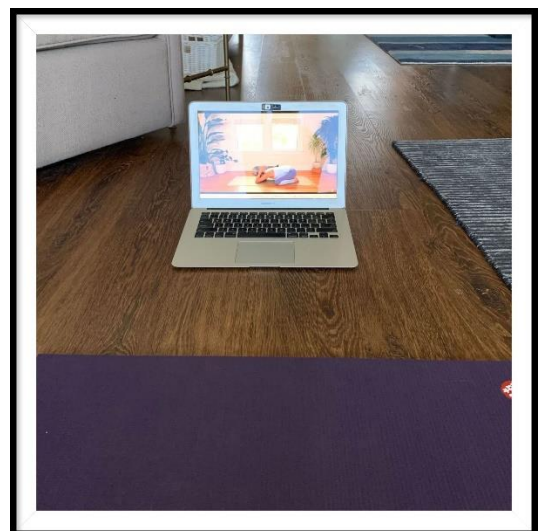


Susan Pace, Director of Operations
stays amused by the antics of her pets Turbo and Emma.

**Kathy Purdy, DBT Program
Clinician and Skills Facilitator**
continues to use skills to manage
through this difficult time.

"I really love Yoga with Adriene on
YouTube. This is a picture of my
view from my yoga mat ... Super
easy to follow her on my laptop but

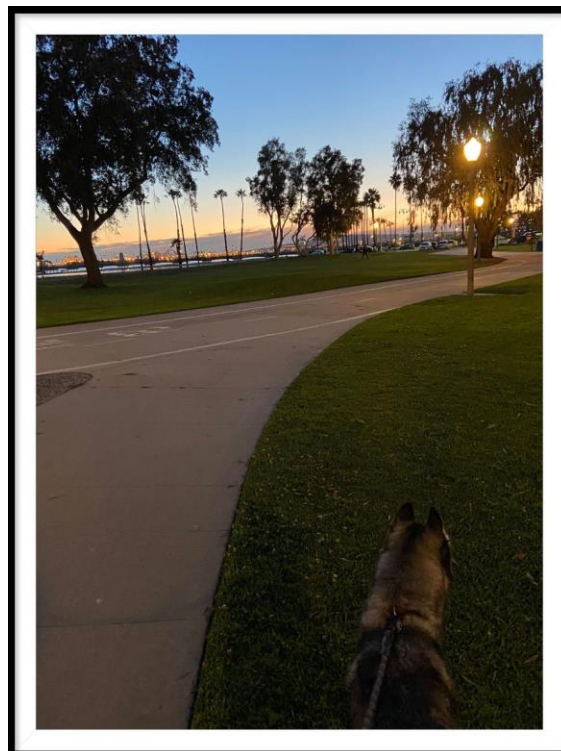
I've used my phone before as
well. She recently did a "Home"
series that builds a yoga practice in
30 days. It's fabulous and full of
guidance for a mindful practice!"





"I've been taking long mindful walks with my dog, Frank, and when I feel anxiety rising or pent-up stress in my body I will go to my stairwell and do the five flights of stairs 2 or 3 times. It's a great way to practice the TIP skill and works like a charm."

- Kathy Purdy, DBT Program Clinician and Skills Facilitator



"I've been starting each day by sending out daily gratitudes to my friends and family, and trying to stick to routine as best I can. I have been trying to be very mindful of my PLEASE skills, and not let my self-care slip. The online workouts and yoga classes have been amazing, and I'm finding that I'm trying out classes I haven't done before. I've also been going on a lot more walks, and exploring my neighborhood, with my boyfriend and our dog, Jack. Luckily, Jack always has more energy for another walk, and the cold air is a great TIPP skill.

Self-soothe has been really helpful, and of course mindful snuggles with my cat, Zander. I think the most important part though has been connection with others. I've been using Zoom and FaceTime to talk with my friends and family that I can't see right now. Even though we are all physically separated, we are still finding a way to be together."

- Dr. Sarah Lyndon, Clinical Director

**Nora Josephson,
Clinical Operations Director**

loves to break up her day with pleasant events including walks with the family or at-home yoga sessions.

She also uses the self-soothe skill with luxurious bubble baths and lighting candles. Another extremely helpful skill is self-compassion. It is important to show ourselves understanding, allow for human mistakes and be kind to ourselves during these challenging and unpredictable times.



"I'm using a lot of Turning the Mind toward Willingness and Radical Acceptance as well as Opposite Action. For instance, today I was experiencing a lot of willfulness around just about everything I needed to do (taxes, meditation practice, etc). I definitely used Observe and Describe to notice my willful attitude and then proceeded to Turn my Mind toward willingness, engage opposite action, and move toward those things I had an urge to avoid. I got more done on my taxes and had an excellent meditation session."

-Keren Clark, Clinical Supervisor



Nicole Messuri, DBT Program Clinician and Skills Facilitator has been utilizing her DBT skills every chance she gets! Here are a few of her favorites:

- 1. ABC PLEASE Skills-** Accumulating positives by talking and staying connected to friends and family; Building mastery with workouts and tennis; Coping Ahead- preparing myself mentally for a long haul with this; Balancing exercise-daily workouts indoors and/or outdoors; Balanced eating- eating super healthy and including superfoods and vitamins (dark leafy greens/greens powder apple cider vinegar, garlic, probiotics, lemon), Balanced sleep-getting 8 hours of sleep, going to bed around the same time and waking up around the same time daily.
- 2. Distress Tolerance:** Self-Soothe- hot tea, lighting candles, walks, comfy clothes, music and nature sounds, Distract- with movies and Netflix and spending time with those that are close to me; Improve- comparisons (remembering those that are less fortunate or ill or on the front lines of the virus)
- 3. Checking the Facts** by watching and reading trustful sources of news.
- 4. Radical Acceptance** - "It is what it is."
- 5. Effectiveness** - order food or necessary items from Uber Eats and Amazon; use Facetime to stay connected with others and telehealth sessions for work
- 6. Mindfulness of Current Emotion** - paying attention to my own emotions then self-validating and using self-compassion.

Outpatient & Intensive Outpatient Services are Continuing Virtually!

Our **Adult IOP** is for ages 18+. This program offers patients a minimum of 10 hours of services weekly including skills training group, individual DBT therapy and mindfulness component. We have a morning track from 9 -12pm as well as an evening track from 5 – 8pm to best meet individual needs.



Our **Multi-Family Adolescent Program** is a 2-hour DBT Skills Group for teens and their parents. The group meets weekly and covers the DBT model based on the curriculum of Dr. Alec Miller and Jill Rathus that combines Dr. Marsha Linehan's skills training manual with skills specifically tailored to address the needs of adolescents and their families. The 16-week group curriculum is educative, fun and interactive.

Our **Adult DBT Skills Groups** are now running virtually! These groups meet weekly and cover the DBT model created Dr. Marsha Linehan. Mindfulness, Distress Tolerance, Emotion Regulation, and Interpersonal Effectiveness are modules covered in a small, specialized group setting. The 16-week skills training is educative and interactive.



The Power of Gratitude

by Caitlin Purdy



PhotoCredit: sugarthegoldenretriever.com

Gratitude is a fundamental part of human beings. It is what stabilizes our existence and keeps us grounded. What most people don't know is that opening your heart to gratefulness can be the secret to finding happiness.

Note that I said finding happiness rather than achieving happiness. This is an important distinction. If the end goal of your life is to achieve happiness, then are you not happy along the journey? Isn't the journey supposed to be the best part?

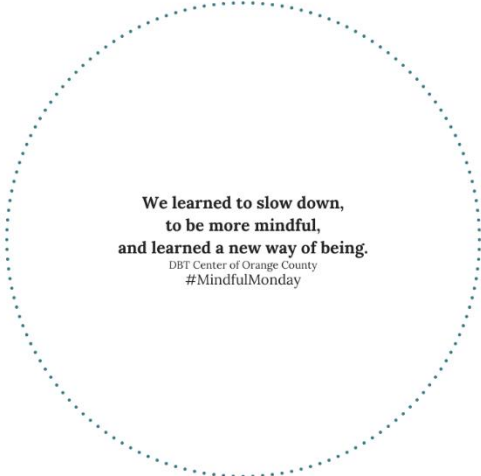
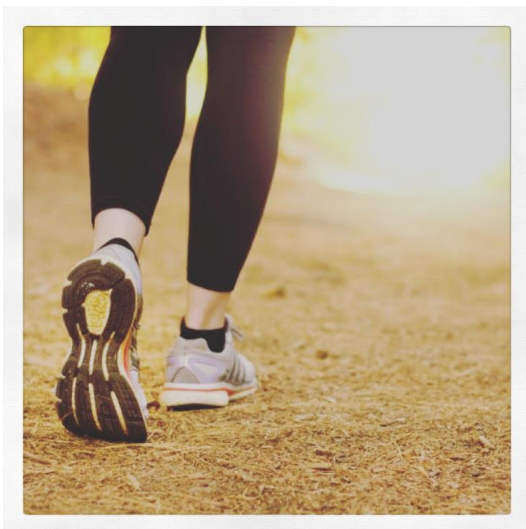
The idea of achieving happiness is a 21st century mindset put in place by businesses who wanted you to believe something so false that it is dangerous. It is the idea that having more on the outside will make you, on the inside, feel happier. Turns out having more on the outside can make us feel emptier than ever.

My challenge to you is to put this 21st century mindset aside and instead use gratitude to find happiness within every single moment of your life. I promise you it will feel much more fulfilling. It can even help to get you out of your worst slumps.

The easiest way to implement this into your life is to make it a daily ritual to write down one thing that you are grateful for. It doesn't have to be big. It can be the smell of coffee in the morning, a deeply held dream, laughing with an old friend, or even the delicious microwaveable meal that hit the spot after a tiring day. It is that easy. It doesn't even need to be written in a beautiful notebook. I chose to write in my phone notes so that the next time I feel like the world is against me, I have a written list of reasons in my pocket to prove me wrong.

I promise, if you make gratefulness part of your daily life it will change not only how you see the world, but how you see yourself. You will no longer believe that happiness is something you must achieve, because it turns out it has been inside of us all along.

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**We learned to slow down,
to be more mindful,
and learned a new way of being.**
DBT Center of Orange County
#MindfulMonday

Be present to your emotions today.
Explore them.
Turn your attention
to the feeling.
Where is it in your body?
What is going on?
Practice non-judgment.
Breathe through it.
#MindfulMonday
DBT Center of Orange County



Feeling Overwhelmed?
Remember "RAIN"
Four steps to stop being so hard on ourselves.

R	A	I	N
Recognize what's going on	Allow the experience to be there, just as it is	Investigate with kindness	Natural awareness, which comes from not identifying with the experience

  mindfulmagazine

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