

Coaching

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

Reasons for phone coaching:

- Practice changing ineffective ways of asking for help
- Apply DBT skills to everyday life
- Report successes to the therapist
- Repair your relationship with your therapist

Goals of coaching:

Decrease suicidal or self-injurious crisis behaviors

Increase generalization of behavioral skills

Reinforce effective skill use

What to expect from coaching:

- Calls are brief – generally no more than ten to fifteen minutes
- The therapist will be following the Phone Coaching Protocol (see below), which you should review with your individual therapist.
- After a brief description of the current situation, the therapist will discuss skills that have been tried and review other skills that might help.
- Phone coaching calls are not meant for analyzing or 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.

24-Hour rule:

- 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.
- You are expected to call for phone coaching before you engage in ineffective or 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 ineffective behaviors.

Coverage:

- Your individual therapist will discuss with you hours of availability.
- Your individual therapist will discuss procedures for calling, including how to reach her most effectively, how long you can expect to wait for a call back, and what to do while waiting for a return call.
- Please be aware that there will almost certainly be some times when your therapist will not be able to return your call for several hours.

Coaching is not:

- A way to get in extra therapy sessions when more sessions are needed.
- Intended to discuss complex or non-urgent issues. That is what you do in individual sessions.
- A way to soothe yourself when you feel anxious, bored or lonely or have no one to talk to.
- Intended to create or reinforce dependency
- A way to get validation, encouragement or support on a regular basis
- A way to shift responsibility for client's ineffective choices onto the therapist

Before You Call

What is the intensity of my emotions from 0 to 100? RIGHT NOW? _____

What is the specific problem I need skills for? _____

What skills have I tried? _____

Where did I have difficulty applying them effectively? _____

What is my most important immediate goal right now? _____

This is my _____ call in the last seven days.