

FAST Skill

DBT: Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills

The **FAST** skill from **Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)** helps you maintain respect for yourself in a relationship. When your primary focus in an interpersonal situation is how you feel about yourself when it's over - whether or not you get what you want - being fair, not apologizing, sticking to your values, and telling the truth can help.

F**(Be) Fair**

- Be fair: that means you and the other person are equally important and deserving of consideration.
- Validate the other person's feelings and your own.
- Don't ignore your own wishes just to keep the peace.
- ✓ "I can see why you were feeling mad. I was feeling sad because..."
- ✗ "You're totally right, I shouldn't have said anything..."

A**(No) Apologies**

- Do not over-apologize! Especially do not apologize for making requests, having an opinion, having preferences, or disagreeing.
- Practice omitting "I'm sorry" when speaking up for yourself.
- Do not look ashamed or invalidate yourself.
- ✓ "I understand what you're saying, but I don't agree."
- ✗ "I'm so sorry, I don't know, but maybe if we see it another way..."

S**Stick to Values**

- Know your own values (not values that are just someone else's).
- Beforehand, know how you will act in accordance with your values.
- Unless you have a very important reason, stick to your values.
- ✓ "I don't think it's right to do X. I'm going to do Y instead."
- ✗ "I guess doing X just this once won't be too bad..."

T**(Be) Truthful**

- Tell the truth, even if it's uncomfortable.
- Don't act like you're helpless when you're really not.
- Don't make up excuses or exaggerate a problem.
- ✓ "I should have done Z, and I didn't. I'll make sure to do it next time."
- ✗ "I mean, no one told me I *had* to do Z, it's not my fault!"



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F: What are the thoughts and feelings you want to make sure you express? Remember to be **fair** to yourself and the other person.

A: Are you likely to **apologize** in this interaction, even for having an opinion, preference, or disagreement? Practice writing and saying what you need to say without adding “I’m sorry.”

S: Which values do you need to **stick** to in this situation? If you stuck to them 100%, what would you say and do? Is there anything about this situation that might tempt you to abandon them?

T: Think about the **truth** of situation. How can you express yourself honestly?

**This worksheet provides information but is not a substitute for therapy. It works best with guidance from a professional.*



Additional Resources to Support Your Mental Health Journey

It can be hard to know where to begin looking for support in your mental health journey. Getting a referral from a primary care physician is a reliable first step. Also, sometimes family and friends have experienced similar issues and have professionals they would recommend. The experts at ChoosingTherapy.com are here to help as well, with resources we have reviewed and recommend. Our [strict editorial standards](#) ensure our reviews are fair, honest, thorough, and based on firsthand experience.

You Can Trust ChoosingTherapy.com



325+
Companies Reviewed



3,625+
Hours of Firsthand Experience



1,545+
Data Points Analyzed



[Best Online Therapy](#)

Online therapy is a convenient way to connect with a licensed therapist to address mental health issues, reduce unhealthy behaviors, develop effective coping skills, and get more satisfaction out of life. Many companies accept insurance and most have next-day appointments available.

[Best Online Psychiatry](#)

Online psychiatry providers enable patients to consult with licensed psychiatrists and other mental health professionals. They can evaluate, diagnose, and prescribe medication to help manage mental health issues. Many companies accept insurance and most have next-day appointments available.



[Best Mental Health Apps](#)

Apps can be great way to monitor mood, track sleep, journal, and practice healthy coping skills like mindfulness and meditation. There are apps specifically designed to help people reduce the symptoms of depression, anxiety, ADHD, chronic stress, and burnout.

[Therapist Directory](#)

When you're looking for a mental health provider with a very particular skill set, level of experience, or personality type, a therapist directory can be very helpful. Using the filters, you can refine your search until you find a therapist who feels like a perfect fit.





Tools for Self-Assessment and Psychoeducation

Figuring out the next step in your mental health journey can be overwhelming. Developed by psychologists, the tools at [ChoosingTherapy.com](https://www.ChoosingTherapy.com) can help. Our mental health self-assessment quizzes can help you explore common symptoms of mental health concerns, as well as find the best therapy style for you. Our mental health worksheets can guide you through therapy concepts and how to use them in your life.

[Learn More with Mental Health Quizzes](#)

Our collection of psychologist-developed mental health quizzes can help you learn if you are experiencing mild, moderate, or concerning levels of anxiety, depression, stress, burnout, and more. Each quiz also provides targeted resources based on your answers. These self-assessments are designed to offer insight, not diagnoses, and can be a helpful first step in recognizing symptoms and deciding whether to seek further support. If you have concerns about your mental health or your quiz results, we recommend you reach out to a licensed mental health professional.



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