

RAVEN Skill

DBT: Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills

The RAVEN Skill is a newer Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) skill designed to guide you through negotiating during a conflict. This skill helps you increase the chances that negotiation will be successful by remembering that each person has valid needs. This worksheet will introduce the skill and provide ideas for compromise.

R

Relax

- Stay calm. Take a deep breath and relax.
- ✓ *Breathing deeply; thinking before speaking.*
- ✗ *Raising your voice; speaking before thinking.*

A

Avoid the
Aversive

- Avoid aversive strategies, like threats, guilt-tripping, dismissing others' needs, withdrawing, blaming, or belittling.
- ✓ *"I'm frustrated too. Let's see if there's a compromise here"*
- ✗ *"Fine, I won't ask for your help again; I won't talk to you anymore"*
- ✗ *"You're so sensitive; why do you need special treatment?"*
- ✗ *"You always make everything so much harder than it has to be"*

V

Validate

- Validate the other person's need or concern.
- Find a solution that meets some of each person's needs.
- ✓ *"I think I get it - it would help you most if I did X in the future?"*
- ✗ *"I need A, B, and C. I'm not willing to budge on that"*

E

Examine
Values

- Examine your interpersonal values - what's most important to you?
- What is your goal for this conflict and this relationship?
- ✓ *Treat others as you want to be treated.*

N

Neutral
Voice

- Use a neutral voice. Avoid sounding angry or dismissive.
- ✓ *"Okay. I can see your point of view" in a neutral voice*
- ✗ *"OKAY. FINE. I'll do what you want. Are we done??"*

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



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R: How can you **relax** before talking with this person? During the conversation? How will you know when it's time to use a relaxation skill (what will you feel in your body)?

A: Is there any **aversive** strategy that you tend to use when upset or backed into a corner (threats, guilt-tripping, dismissing others' needs, withdrawing, blaming, or belittling)? What might tempt you to use one of these strategies (a behavior of the other person, an emotion you're feeling, etc.)?

V: Try to anticipate the other person's perspective, thoughts, and feelings in advance. How can you **validate** and address (some of) their needs?

E: Examine which **values** are the most important to you in relationships. How can you turn those values into action?

N: How can you make sure to stick to a **neutral voice**? You may need to watch out for circumstances that make you mad and result in using an angry or dismissive tone. What are those circumstances?

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Take turns offering solutions with the person you are negotiating with. If you can't agree on a solution, consider the following compromise strategies:

Split the difference

Find the solution right in between your preference and theirs.

- *John wants to buy a nicer car and Jane would rather buy a less expensive one. They each decide their preferred budget, then look for a car with a price in the middle.*

Take turns

Alternate who takes care of a responsibility.

- *Jill and Eli's toddler is going through a very difficult phase with her bedtime routine. One parent does the routine one night, and the other parent does the routine the next night.*

Each gets some

Make sure each person gets part of their request.

- *Leah and Jen are moving in together. Each figures out her top priorities for an apartment and they look for places that meet at least one priority for each person.*

I'll split the cookie, you choose a piece

One person decides the options available and the other person gets to choose.

- *Neither Scott nor Anne like making decisions. Scott proposes three ideas for dinner and Anne chooses one. Next time, they trade places.*

Make a trade

You fulfill one request of theirs, and they fulfill one request of yours.

- *Jordan asks Nick to stop leaving the laundry in the washer overnight, and Nick asks Jordan to wipe down the kitchen counter when Jordan is done doing the dishes.*

My way when I'm doing it

Whoever is in charge of a responsibility gets to dictate how it is done.

- *Liam likes to make dinner from scratch, while Brianna prefers focusing on convenience. Each cooks the way they like when in charge of dinner for the night.*

Trial run

Agree on a period of time to try out something new and decide if it's working or not.

- *Emil wants a regular date night on the calendar; Frank prefers staying more spontaneous. Frank agrees to try it out for a month and then decide.*

Why not both?

Find a solution that meets both your needs and theirs.

- *Kacie wants Tim to show more affection, and Tim wants Kacie to spend more time with him. Kacie protects time in her busy schedule for affectionate date nights that Tim plans.*





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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