



## Success Story: You get what you G.I.V.E.

The following success story discusses a 17-year-old's experience in the Devereux Mapleton Campus adolescent Residential Treatment Facility (RTF) in the Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) program. Devereux has participated in DBT training and consultation with the [Treatment Implementation Collaborative](#) (TIC) since January 2019. This story also highlights some of the implementation strategies that Devereux has used to successfully implement DBT. DBT Therapist, Kylie Meyer, worked with Sasha\* when she joined the DBT unit and discusses the changes in Sasha's course of treatment since joining DBT. Devereux Mapleton Campus RTF is comprised of three units with one unit, Carriage House, being a DBT unit where all youth attend DBT individual and group sessions and receive DBT coaching as needed. Devereux incentivizes youth to join the DBT unit through the use of Devereux Dollars and the DBT store. Residents on other units can show their commitment and desire to be in DBT by attending individual and group DBT sessions for four weeks. Once they have completed the four weeks they can move to the DBT unit. Sasha describes her life before, during and after DBT at Devereux Mapleton's campus.



*To learn more about Devereux's commitment to DBT and increasing the use of evidence-based practices [click here!](#)*

*\*Pseudonyms are used to protect client privacy.*

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### **EPIC: Why did you think Sasha would be a good candidate for DBT?**

**Kylie:** We saw her struggling and staying stuck with certain behaviors. We tried different interventions. And as you know DBT is really good for extreme behaviors. It's expanded from self-harm to all behaviors across the board that need regulating. It was like the missing link for her. She came into group and bought in immediately.

### **EPIC: Did you initially feel motivated to be a part of DBT?**

**Sasha:** At first, I didn't want to, I just didn't want to be on the other unit. And now that I've been part of DBT it has helped me a lot with regulating my emotions and my behaviors.

### **EPIC: When did you know DBT was working?**

**S.:** When I realized my behaviors were coming

### **EPIC: What is the biggest change you noticed in Sasha after DBT?**

**K:** I do think the biggest thing is the openness and transparency and the ability to be vulnerable and honest in conversations. I ask a tough question and I get the truth immediately from her and I don't think that was the case before. I know it's the truth.

### **EPIC: How do you think DBT will help you when you leave here and go back home?**

**S.:** I'll probably have to use it a lot because I struggle when I'm out of here. I make a lot of mistakes, but I have to learn from them and not keep doing them.

### **EPIC: How does DBT help you to regulate and manage your emotions?**

**S.:** I breath or go in my room or talk to someone about how I feel. I haven't been walking out. I

down and I could talk about how I was feeling with someone and not just keep it in. I have a tendency to keep in my emotions and my anger builds up. I can release it now and express how I feel.

**K.:** There were two moments. One was related to what she just said. She was struggling and we sat in my office talking for two hours about very real life adult problems and she was appropriate and able to take in advice that is not easy to hear with a very mature reaction. A more appreciation than anything. The other moment was the tour. Annie and Shari, the trainers from TIC, came to campus and Sasha led them on a DBT tour of our campus. We have a pretty advanced program here. She told a story of how DBT changed her course of treatment here and that she learned to regulate emotions/behaviors through DBT and I teared up while she was talking.

**S.:** I showed them the DBT board. I had kind of destroyed it. I tore it down. But before it was torn down. We had emojis and we choose our emojis everyday. We do it in the morning and after school and choose our emoji and the level we are at (0-34 SUD score). It has all our DBT skills on it. I did a lot of radical acceptance and DEAR MAN and GIVE. I think GIVE was my favorite one (Gentle, Interest, Validate and Easy Manner). I am fixing the board today.

I also showed them our DBT Store and which is campus wide now. You get Devereux Dollars depending on your participation in DBT coaching. When you get coaching depending on whether you ask for coaching you get \$20 and it's random you don't know when you're going to get it, you get \$5 using a skill first and then asking for coaching and then a \$1 for just asking for coaching and you get \$5 for going to both groups. And you go to the store and there's a lot of stuff there and you know what is there so you can work towards it (blankets, wash clothes, deodorant, makeup). It's nice stuff and they put stuff there they know we are going to want.

**K.:** We started Devereux Dollars because we weren't seeing enough coaching outside of group and to help generalize coaching and skills to outside of group. We are also incorporating life skills to the DD so that residents can practice the real-life skills they will need outside of here. We do this thing where you use the dollars for one thing you want and one thing you need. We are trying to tie in DBT skills and real-life skills you're going to need when you leave here and it has been really successful in the two months that we have had it running.

don't really get AWOLs (Absent Without Official Leave) anymore but I have been getting them recently because I'm leaving and I've been going through things. It helped me with AWOLs too because I used to get them like crazy.

**EPIC: Do you think DBT helps youth?**

**S.:** I feel as though it helps if you want the help. Like me with the expressing stuff. It helped me a lot with that. And not responding to everything someone says. I'm still working on that. Philly is always going to be around. The same things that happen when you are 17 or 18 are going to still happen when you're 30. Nothing is going to change. Just people getting shot.

**EPIC: What would you say to someone who is skeptical about DBT?**

**S.:** I would explain how I felt in the beginning and how I didn't engage. Getting into it, sitting in and listening and learning about it. It will have a good impact on you if you accept the help.

**EPIC: Do you think the non-judgement part of DBT is hard for teenagers?**

**S.:** Yes because there's a lot of judgement as teenagers. But it's hard for adults too. It's just a choice of wording.

**K.:** The goal in group is to re-frame judgments. We encourage them to turn into it as observe and describe. Or the feeling rather than the outright judgement.

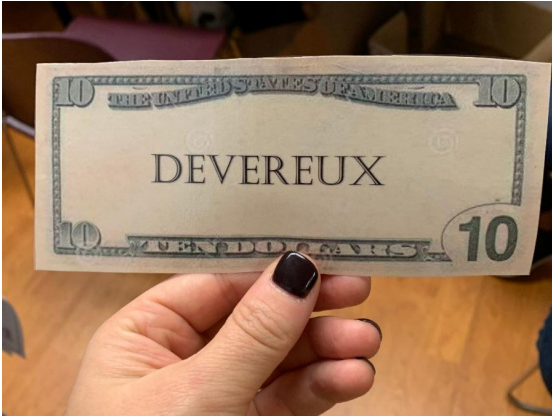
**EPIC: How has DBT helped you with your relationships?**

**S.:** When I talk to people, I don't think about DBT. This week, I have been kind to my peers because I'm leaving. They are going to miss me. I know Anna\* will miss me the most. She always came to me and she looks up to me and is going to miss me. I speak up when I want but I am going to have to be mindful of that when I leave here because you don't last long if you do that.

**K.:** DBT is the reason Sasha and I were able to form a relationship in the first place because I'm the DBT group therapist. It was a really great opportunity to get to know Sasha and see her grow. Sasha reminds me of what Annie (TIC trainer) says in the trainings. A lot of the time we are doing DBT without knowing we are doing DBT. Sasha uses the skills naturally like acceptance and sitting through and riding the wave. Opposite action is something I've seen her start to do as well.

**EPIC: Any last words about DBT and your journey here?**

**S.:** Best of luck to whoever does DBT! Engage in it, accept it and take your time. That's it.



Pictured Top Left: The DBT Store  
 Pictured Bottom Left: A Devereux Dollar  
 Pictured Above: The DBT Board

\*Pseudonyms are used to protect client privacy.

## DBT Skills and Core Components

DBT incorporates individual therapy as well as group skills training sessions. DBT also includes between session coaching where the DBT client is able to access the DBT therapist for "real-life" coaching for the skills being learned. The skills are taught in such a manner as to propel clients towards achieving their "Life Worth Living Goal." The skill modules taught include: Mindfulness, Interpersonal Effectiveness, Emotion Regulation, and Distress Tolerance.

### Repair

In the success story, Sasha references "destroying" the DBT Board but then also how she is fixing the board. Repair is a key concept in DBT and describes an action a person takes to compensate for a misdeed they committed. In the example of Sasha's story, her misdeed was destroying the board and her repair was to fix the board.

### Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills

DBT uses acronyms to help clients remember skills. Sasha mentioned using DEAR MAN and GIVE which are skills that help individuals approach communication in ways that are more thoughtful and deliberate and less reactive and impulsive.

Learn more about effectiveness skills here!

### DEAR MAN stands for:

- Describe the situation in concrete terms
- Express how the situation makes you feel
- Assert your wishes
- Reinforce why outcome is desired
- Mindful and in the present moment
- Appear confident
- Negotiate and give in order to get

### GIVE stands for:

- Gentle: Approach the other party in a gentle manner
- Interested: Act interested by listening and not interrupting
- Validate: Validate and acknowledge the other person's wishes
- Easy: Assume an easy manner

### Radical Acceptance

Radical Acceptance is the practice developed by

Marsha Linehan of accepting everything about yourself, your situation, and your life without question, blame, or pushback. Rather than fighting against circumstances or self, which causes more suffering, radical acceptance allows individuals to accept themselves and their circumstances so that they can better move past them. Radical Acceptance is a skill taught within the Distress Tolerance module.



*Click the video above to watch Dr. Marsha Linehan, DBT Developer, discuss how she learned Radical Acceptance.*

## DBT Resources



To check out the list of DBT Providers in Philadelphia, [click here for adolescent](#) and [click here for adult](#) providers!



For more information about DBT Core Components and Treatment Model, [click here!](#)



Treatment Implementation Collaborative has great resources, [click here!](#)

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