Phone Coaching In DBT

Dialectical Behavior Therapy is different from most therapies for several reasons. One of those differences is that a very important part of the treatment is phone coaching.

What is Phone Coaching?

People who participate in standard DBT promise to call their individual therapist or designated skills coach in order to get help applying the skills they learn in skills training to their everyday life.

There are 3 main purposes of phone coaching:

1. To prevent suicidal and self-injurious behaviors.
2. To get feedback and suggestions when you are practicing your skills. You can also share your skills practice successes (“good news”)! 
3. To repair your therapy relationship if there has been a problem between you and your therapist.

Phone Coaching is not:

✗ A way to get in extra therapy sessions when more sessions are needed.
✗ Therapy over the phone, to discuss complex issues. That is what you do in your individual sessions.
✗ A way to soothe yourself when you feel bored or lonely or have no one to talk to.

The 24-Hour Rule:

Your DBT therapist will not allow any phone contact or unscheduled contact during the 24 hours after you have engaged in self harm. If you have harmed yourself and need medical care, obtain medical care in the hospital emergency department if necessary.

Talk to your individual therapist about your best plan for phone coaching!
Phone Coaching Worksheet

Use this to help you to organize your call for skills coaching, if needed.

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

What is the specific problem I need skills for? __________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

What skills have I already tried? __________________________________________

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_________________________________________________________________

Where did I have trouble with them? __________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

What is my most important immediate goal right now? __________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

This is my _____ call so far this week.