

INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS HANDOUT 16

([Interpersonal Effectiveness Worksheets 11](#), [11a](#), [11b](#))

How to Think and Act Dialectically

- 1. There is always more than one side to anything that exists. Look for both sides.**
 - Ask Wise Mind: What am I missing?** Where is the kernel of truth in the other side?
 - Let go of extremes:** Change “either-or” to “both-and,” “always” or “never” to “sometimes.”
 - Balance opposites:** Validate both sides when you disagree, accept reality, and work to change.
 - Make lemonade out of lemons.**
 - Embrace confusion:** Enter the paradox of yes and no, or true and not true.
 - Play devil’s advocate:** Argue each side of your own position with equal passion.
 - Use metaphors and storytelling** to unstick and free the mind.
 - Other ways to see all sides of a situation: _____

- 2. Be aware that you are connected.**
 - Treat others as you want them to treat you.**
 - Look for similarities among people instead of differences.**
 - Notice the physical connections** among all things.
 - Other ways to stay aware of connections: _____

- 3. Embrace change.**
 - Throw yourself into change:** Allow it. Embrace it.
 - Practice radical acceptance of change** when rules, circumstances, people, and relationships change in ways you don’t like.
 - Practice getting used to change:** Make small changes to practice this (e.g., purposely change where you sit, who you talk with, what route you take when going to a familiar place).
 - Other ways to embrace change: _____

- 4. Change is transactional: Remember that you affect your environment and your environment affects you.**
 - Pay attention to your effect on others** and how they affect you.
 - Practice letting go of blame** by looking for how your own and others’ behaviors are caused by many interactions over time.
 - Remind yourself that all things, including all behaviors, are caused.**
 - Other ways to see transactions: _____

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INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS HANDOUT 16B

Important Opposites to Balance

- 1. Accepting reality AND working to change it.
- 2. Validating yourself and others AND acknowledging errors.
- 3. Working AND resting.
- 4. Doing things you need to do AND doing things you want to do.
- 5. Working on improving yourself AND accepting yourself exactly as you are.
- 6. Problem solving AND problem acceptance.
- 7. Emotion regulation AND emotion acceptance.
- 8. Mastering something on your own AND asking for help.
- 9. Independence AND dependence.
- 10. Openness AND privacy.
- 11. Trust AND suspicion.
- 12. Watching and observing AND participating.
- 13. Taking from others AND giving to others.
- 14. Focusing on yourself AND focusing on others.
- 15. Others: _____

- 16. Others: _____

- 17. Others: _____

INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS HANDOUT 16C

Identifying Dialectics

For each group, check the most dialectical response.

- 1A.** Pay attention to your effect on others.
- 1B.** Assume that others' reactions to you are unrelated to your treatment of them.

- 5A.** Examine a difficult relationship by looking at how the interactions over time between you and the other person may be problematic.
- 5B.** Assume that difficulties in a relationship are caused completely by you or by the other person.

Saying:

- 2A.** "I know I am right about this."
- 2B.** "I can see your point of view, even though I do not agree with it."
- 2C.** "The way you are thinking doesn't make any sense."

Saying:

- 6A.** "It is hopeless. I cannot do it."
- 6B.** "This is a breeze. I've got no problems."
- 6C.** "This is really hard for me, and I am going to keep trying."

Saying:

- 3A.** "Everyone always treats me unfairly."
- 3B.** "I believe the coach should reconsider his decision to cut me from the team."
- 3C.** "Coaches know best who to keep on teams and who to cut."

- 7A.** When you disagree with someone, be sure and be very clear about your point of view.
- 7B.** When you disagree with someone, try and see their point of view.

- 4A.** Judge friends as disloyal and uncaring if they start changing in ways you don't like.
- 4B.** Accept that interests change.

- 8A.** Demand that relationships be stable without changing.
- 8B.** Embrace change and see it as inevitable.

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