

DBT Interpersonal Effectiveness: GIVE & FAST

Balancing relationship effectiveness with self-respect during conflict or requests.

GIVE - support the relationship

- Gentle: avoid unnecessary attacks, threats, or contempt.
- Interested: listen and show attention.
- Validate: acknowledge understandable feelings or perspectives without pretending to agree with everything.
- Easy manner: use warmth or appropriate lightness when it fits.

FAST - protect self-respect

- Fair: be fair to yourself and the other person.
- Apologies: avoid excessive apology for existing, having needs, or setting a reasonable boundary.
- Stick to values: do not abandon important values solely to avoid disapproval.
- Truthful: avoid exaggeration, excuses, or pretending helplessness.

Balance

Different conversations may prioritize objectives, relationship, or self-respect differently. Therapy can help identify which priority matters most in a given situation.

Try this reflection

In your hardest conversations, which gets lost first: the goal, the relationship, or your self-respect?

Using this resource: For education and skill-building only; not diagnosis, medical advice, or crisis care. If you feel overwhelmed, pause and seek appropriate professional support. In the U.S., call or text 988 for crisis support; call 911 for an immediate emergency.