

DBT DEAR MAN Worksheet



Plan a clear, respectful request or boundary while protecting the relationship and your self-respect.

Plan the message

D - Describe	State the relevant facts briefly and without judgment. Focus on what was said or done.
E - Express	Use clear feeling or opinion language. Do not assume the other person already knows your experience.
A - Assert	Ask directly for what you want, or say no clearly. Make the request specific and realistic.
R - Reinforce	Explain the likely benefit of responding to the request. Appreciation and natural consequences can make the purpose clearer.

Stay effective

M - Mindful	Stay with the main point. If the conversation drifts, return calmly to the request instead of debating every side issue.
A - Appear confident	Use a steady voice, attentive posture, and a pace you can maintain. Confidence does not require aggression.
N - Negotiate	Be willing to consider workable alternatives. Ask what the other person can do and decide which parts are essential.

Before the conversation

- Clarify your objective, the relationship you want to preserve, and the self-respect values you want your behavior to reflect.
- Choose a reasonably calm time and place. If direct communication could increase danger, prioritize safety planning and professional support.

Practice worksheet

Situation and objective - what outcome am I asking for?

Describe - the observable facts:

Express - my feelings, opinions, or needs:

Assert - my specific request or limit:

Reinforce - why cooperation may help:

Mindful - how I will return to the main point:

Appear confident - the tone, posture, and pace I want to use:

Negotiate - acceptable alternatives and non-negotiable limits:

Attribution and reference

DEAR MAN is an interpersonal-effectiveness skill from Dialectical Behavior Therapy, developed by Marsha M. Linehan. This independently prepared educational worksheet summarizes the skill in original language and is not affiliated with or endorsed by Behavioral Tech. Reference: Linehan, M. M. (2015). DBT Skills Training Manual (2nd ed.). Guilford Press.

This handout is educational and is not a substitute for individualized assessment or treatment. If you are in immediate danger, call 911. In the United States, call or text 988 for crisis support.