



## Interpersonal Effectiveness Quick Guide

THINK (Used to reduce negative emotions)

**Think:** about the other person's point of view. What are their emotions?

**Have empathy:** Put yourself in the other person's shoes.

**Interpretations:** of the other person's behaviors. Think about possible reasons behind behaviors. Start with far out reasons and move towards realistic reasons.

**Notice:** the other person. Notice when they are trying to be kind and improve the relationship.

**Kindness:** in your response. Kindness does not mean forgiving and forgetting immediately.

FAST (Used to maintain self-respect)

(Be) **Fair:** to yourself and the other person. Remember to validate your own feelings and wishes, along with the other person's.

(No) **Apologies:** Don't over-apologize. Don't apologize for having an opinion or disagreeing.

**Stick to values:** Stick to your own values. Don't lose your values or integrity for the other person.

(Be) **Truthful:** Don't lie. Don't act helpless, exaggerate, or make up excuses.

(Be) **Gentle:** Be nice and respectful. No attacks, threats, judging, sneering

(Act) **Interested:** Listen and appear interested in the other person. Face the person. Don't interrupt them or talk over them.

**Validate:** with words and actions, show that you understand the other person's feelings and thoughts about the situation.

(Use an) **Easy manner:** Use a little humor. Smile. Be light-hearted.

**Describe:** the situation in a simple way. Ex: "My friends are going out to dinner on Thursday."

**Express:** what you would like. Ex: "I would like to go out to dinner with them."

**Assert:** Why this is important to you in a way that is respectful and not aggressive. Ex: "I have not been able to see them in a while, and it would mean a lot to me if I could."

**Reinforce:** When you do get what you asked for. Ex: “I will do my homework before going out to dinner.”

**Mindful:** Stay in the moment. Don’t worry about the past or the future (such as what your friends will say if you cannot go).

**Appear Confident**

**Negotiate:** When it doesn’t look like you are going to get what you want, be flexible.

**Sources:**

Linehan, Marsha M. (2015). *DBT skills training handouts and worksheets, second edition*. Guilford Press.

Sunrise Residential Treatment Center. (2018, June 29). 4 Steps to happy relationships.  
<https://www.sunrisertc.com/interpersonal-effectiveness/>