

# Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) Group Skills Training For Depressed Older Adults

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## Abstract

Effective and affordable therapies are needed for older adults. In this research we evaluated the effectiveness of a modified Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) protocol for improving symptoms and functioning in a group of older adults. We provided 7 months of weekly DBT skills training in a group setting. Results showed significant improvements from pre to post treatment on adaptive coping that are proposed to create vulnerability to depression and improvements in depression symptoms, sleep, quality of life and community functioning. The study findings suggest that the group skills training component of DBT can be successfully implemented for old adults and that further research to determine its efficacy in comparison to other treatments is warranted.

**Keywords:** Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), Group Therapy, Skills Training, Depression, And Older Adults

## Introduction:

Depression is a usual problem among older adults (Lin et al., 2003), but it is not a normal part of aging. In fact, studies show that older adults feel satisfied with their lives, despite having more illnesses or physical problems (Diener & Chan, 2011). Nevertheless, essential life changes that happen, as we get older may reason feelings of uneasiness, stress, and sadness (Mousavi Nik & Basavarajappa, 2012). Moving from work into retirement, or dealing with a serious disease and the death of a loved one, can leave people feeling anxious or depression (Maryam Mousavi Nik, Assari, Khaneh Keshi, & Eshaghi Farahmand, 2014a). After a period of adjustment, many older adults can regain their emotional balance, but others do not and may develop depression. Although there is evidence for the efficacy of antidepressants and for some individual and group psychotherapy interventions for depressed older adults, a