



**Mental Health & Substance Abuse Treatment for Teens**





# Who We Treat

Adolescents 12 to 17 years old struggling with mental health, substance abuse and/or behavioral issues.

# Evolve's Programs

Our admissions team is skilled in helping families and providers determine what level of care is appropriate for each teen.



Residential Treatment Center (**RTC**)



Partial Hospitalization Program (**PHP**)



Intensive Outpatient Program (**IOP**)



# How to Cope with an Emotionally Dysregulated Teen

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**Alyson Orcena, LMFT**

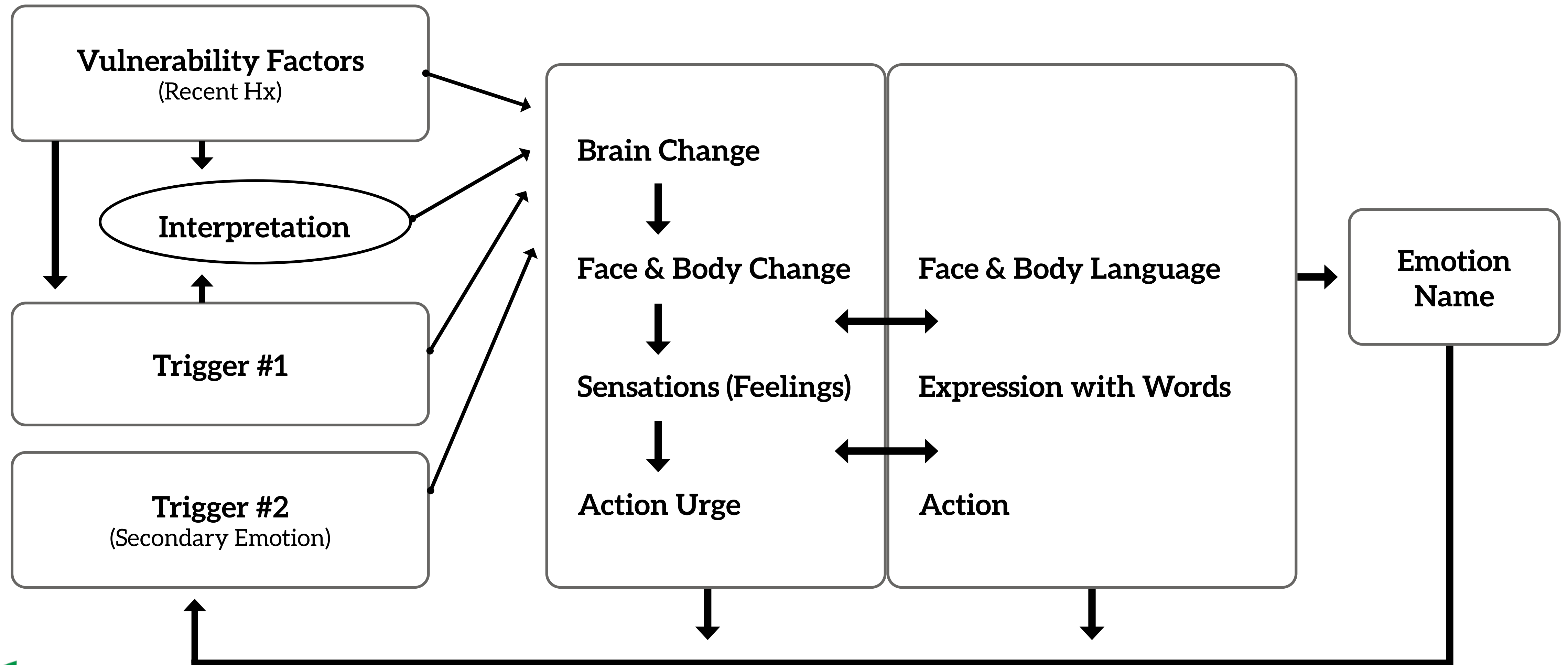
Executive Clinical Director

Evolve Treatment Centers

# Understanding Emotions

- Understanding how emotions work is key to understanding and coping with dysregulation
- We learn how to regulate emotions in infancy and childhood
- Emotions help protect us and communicate to others
- Emotions involve a *full system response*
- Come and go in waves
  - » They don't last forever!
- Typically last 5-7 seconds without additional prompting

# DBT Model for Describing Emotions



# Emotion Regulation Versus Dysregulation

- When we "regulate" emotions, we notice they are there and either allow them to pass or do something to cope with them
- *Dysregulation* occurs when we don't do the above and emotions get very intense and difficult to control
  - » Can be linked to *high emotion sensitivity*
- We all experience dysregulation from time to time

# What This Looks Like

- **Ways of coping that can lead to problems**
  - » **“Big” reactions that seem out of proportion to the situation**
    - Example: yelling and sobbing when asked to do something they don't want to do
  - » **Out of control behaviors**
    - Verbal and physical aggression, impulsivity, rule-breaking, etc.
  - » **Damage to relationships**
  - » **Self-destructive behaviors**
    - Self-harm, suicidal behaviors, substance abuse, etc.



# Family Challenges

## Impact on Caregivers

- Anxiety, depression, trauma
- Discord in romantic relationships

## Impact on Siblings

- Competing for attention
- Anxiety
- Isolation
- Copy-cat behaviors





# The Importance of Validation



**Can help regulate others and yourself**



**Improves communication**



**Improves relationships**



**Decreases anger**



**Can help your teen feel more willing to be skillful**



# Levels of Validation

## 1. Active and mindful listening

Make eye contact, nod your head, etc.

## 2. Acknowledge and reflect

“So what you’re saying is...”

## 3. Read between the lines

“I hear that you’re feeling angry. I wonder if you might also be feeling sad?”

## 4. Place in context of the person’s past experiences

“It totally makes sense to feel scared to go around the neighbor’s dog after you were bit by a dog last year.”

## 5. Place in context of present circumstances

“This makes complete sense! Anyone would feel upset in your shoes.”

## 6. Be radically genuine

Be your authentic self and treat the other person as an equal

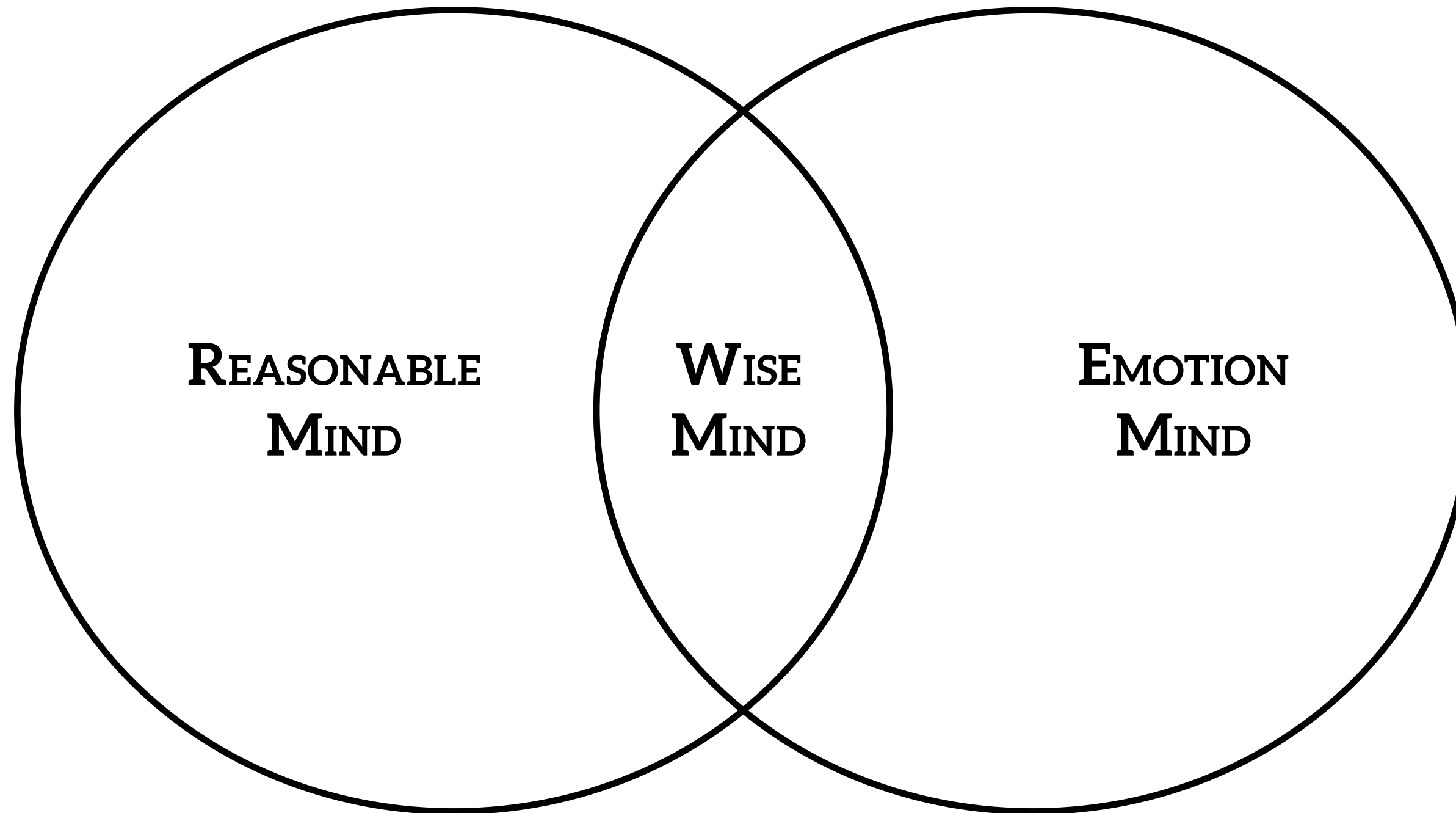


# DBT States of Mind

**Reasonable Mind is:**

- Cool
- Rational
- Task-Focused

**When in reasonable mind,**  
you are ruled by facts, reason, logic, and pragmatics. Values and feelings are not important.



**Emotion Mind is:**

- Hot
- Mood-Dependent
- Emotion-Focused

**When in emotion mind,**  
you are ruled by your moods, feelings, and urges to say things. Facts, reason, and logic are not important.

**Wise Mind is:**

- The wisdom within each person
- Seeing the value of both reason and emotion
- Bringing left brain and right brain together
- The middle path



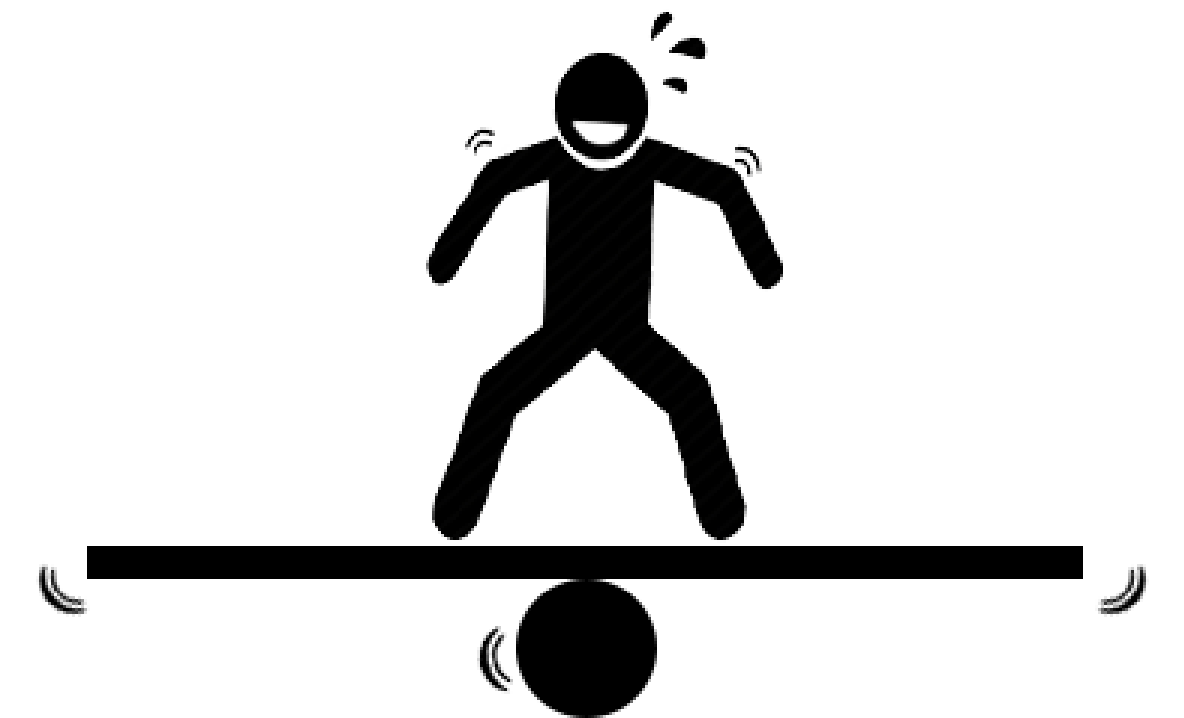
# Dialectics : Finding the Middle Path

## What does it mean?

- ▶ Replacing extreme thinking with balanced thinking
- ▶ “Both and” thinking instead of “either or” thinking
  - » Extreme, black and white thinking: “She can’t be trusted, she is always acting up”
  - » Dialectical thinking: “She makes mistakes, and she works hard to be skillful”

## Why is it important?

- ▶ Reduces *dysregulation*
- ▶ Improves relationships and communication



# Additional Ways to Manage Your Own Distress

- **Collaborate with your co-parent or other caregivers**
  - » **Be a team!**
- **Self-soothe with scent, sight, sound, touch, taste, and/or movement**
- **Take care of your body in order to prevent Emotion Mind**
  - » **Treat physical illness, maintain balanced eating, avoid mood-altering substances, maintain balanced sleep, and exercise**
- **Validate yourself!**
  - » **This is hard, and it can get better**

# Questions?

## Sources:

Linehan, M. (1993). Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment of Borderline Personality Disorder. New York: The Guilford Press.

Linehan, M. (2015). DBT Skills Training Manual. New York: The Guilford Press.

Miller, A. and Rathus, J. (2015). DBT Skills Manual for Adolescents. New York: The Guilford Press.

## Other Resources:

<https://www.borderlinepersonalitydisorder.org/family-connections/>

Parenting a Child Who Has Intense Emotions: Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills to Help Your Child Regulate Emotional Outbursts & Aggressive Behaviors. Harvey, Pat, ACSW LCSW-C, and Jeanine A. Penzo, LICSW. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications, 2009.

Borderline Personality Disorder in Adolescents: What to Do When Your Teen Has BPD. Aguirre, Blaise A. MD Beverly, MA: Fair Winds, 2014.

# Thank You!



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**Join us for our next community workshop on February 24th!**

Registration now open on our website!

Call us today for a free consultation:  
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