

DBT GIVE Skill Worksheet

Communicate in ways that protect trust and connection

Purpose of GIVE

GIVE is a DBT relationship-effectiveness skill. Use it when preserving trust, connection or mutual respect matters. GIVE does not require agreement or surrendering a boundary; it shapes how you communicate while remaining clear.

Element	Effective practice	Watch for
G - Gentle	Use a respectful tone; avoid threats, insults and contempt.	Harshness disguised as honesty; passive aggression.
I - Interested	Listen, ask relevant questions and stay present.	Rehearsing your reply; interrupting; checking out.
V - Validate	Show what makes sense in the other person's perspective or emotion without endorsing harmful behaviour.	Fake agreement; minimising; immediately correcting.
E - Easy manner	Use warmth, flexibility or appropriate lightness when it fits.	Joking about pain; forced cheerfulness; sarcasm.

Plan the conversation

What relationship matters here, and what do I want the other person to experience from me?

Gentle: Rewrite the first sentence so it is direct and respectful.

Interested: What question can I ask? What will I listen for?

Validate: Complete: "It makes sense that you... because..." What can I validate without agreeing with everything?

Easy manner: How can I reduce tension without dismissing the issue?

Relationship-effectiveness check

Before speaking, ask	My answer
Am I being respectful to both of us?	
Am I listening as well as explaining?	
Am I validating something genuine?	
Am I keeping my boundary or request clear?	

After the conversation: What helped connection? What felt invalidating or unclear? What will I try next time?

Use this worksheet safely

This worksheet is for education and skills practice. It does not replace assessment, diagnosis, crisis support, legal advice or individual treatment. In situations involving threats, coercive control, stalking or violence, prioritise safety and seek specialist help rather than relying only on communication skills.

Research basis: Behavioral Tech describes GIVE as Gentle, Interested, Validating and Easy manner, used when relationship effectiveness is important. This is an original worksheet and does not reproduce official handouts. Sources consulted: Behavioral Tech Institute GIVE teaching series; NHS DBT self-help resources; peer-reviewed DBT skills-training literature.