



FaithWorks Counseling

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Understanding Emotional Mind, Reasonable Mind & Wise Mind

What Is DBT?

DBT stands for Dialectical Behavior Therapy.

It teaches skills to help people:

- manage emotions
- reduce impulsive reactions
- improve relationships
- tolerate stress
- make healthier decisions

One important DBT concept is learning the difference between:

- Emotional Mind
- Reasonable Mind
- Wise Mind

Emotional Mind ❤️

What Is Emotional Mind?

Emotional Mind happens when feelings take control of thoughts and behaviors.

When in Emotional Mind:

- emotions feel very intense
- reactions happen quickly
- decisions are based mostly on feelings
- it can be hard to think clearly

Examples of Emotional Mind:

- Yelling when angry
- Sending impulsive texts
- Crying uncontrollably
- Assuming someone hates you
- Overreacting to criticism
- Making decisions only based on emotions

Thoughts in Emotional Mind:

- "Nobody cares about me."
- "I can't handle this."
- "I need to fix this NOW."
- "They did that on purpose."
- "Everything is ruined."

Body Clues:

- racing heart
- tight chest
- clenched fists
- crying
- shaking
- feeling overwhelmed

Reasonable Mind

What Is Reasonable Mind?

Reasonable Mind focuses on facts, logic, and planning.

When in Reasonable Mind:

- emotions are pushed aside
- decisions are based on facts only
- thinking is organized and rational

Examples of Reasonable Mind:

- Making a budget
- Following directions
- Solving a problem step-by-step
- Looking at evidence before reacting
- Staying calm during a discussion

Thoughts in Reasonable Mind:

- “What are the facts?”
- “What solution makes sense?”
- “Let’s think this through.”
- “What evidence do I have?”

Problem With Staying ONLY in Reasonable Mind:

Sometimes emotions are ignored completely, which can:

- make others feel disconnected
- create emotional numbness
- prevent emotional processing

Wise Mind

What Is Wise Mind?

Wise Mind is the balance between Emotional Mind and Reasonable Mind.

Wise Mind:

- honors emotions
- uses logic and facts
- helps people respond instead of react
- leads to healthier choices

Wise Mind is often described as:

“The calm, centered place inside you.”

Examples of Wise Mind:

- Taking a break before responding
- Praying before making a decision
- Saying, “I’m upset, but I want to handle this calmly.”
- Setting a healthy boundary respectfully
- Choosing not to react impulsively

Thoughts in Wise Mind:

- “My feelings matter, but I don’t have to act on them immediately.”
- “I can pause before responding.”
- “Two things can be true at the same time.”
- “I can feel emotional and still make a wise decision.”

Comparing the Three States of Mind

Emotional Mind	Reasonable Mind	Wise Mind
Feelings control behavior	Logic controls behavior	Balance of feelings & logic
Impulsive	Detached	Thoughtful
Reactive	Analytical	Calm and intentional
“I feel it, so it must be true.”	“Only facts matter.”	“Feelings matter AND facts matter.”

How to Move Into Wise Mind

STOP Skill

S – Stop - Pause before reacting emotionally.

T – Take a Breath - Use belly breathing or grounding.

O – Observe - What am I feeling? What story am I telling myself? What facts do I actually know?

P – Proceed Wisely - Choose a response instead of reacting impulsively.

Wise Mind Coping Skills:

- Deep breathing
- Prayer
- Journaling
- Taking a walk
- Listening to calming music
- Talking to a safe person
- Grounding exercises
- Counting slowly
- Using positive self-talk

Christian Reflection

Be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry. — James 1:19

Wise Mind helps us slow down, seek wisdom, and respond with self-control rather than reacting impulsively.

Remember:

You are not trying to get rid of emotions.

You are learning how to:

- understand emotions
- slow down reactions
- make healthier choices
- respond wisely instead of impulsively

Progress over perfection.