

# Phone Coaching

**Rational for phone coaching:** Not all therapy can be done within the context of individual and group sessions. Sometimes, it is necessary for you to call for phone coaching, especially in crisis situations when your urges to engage in harmful behaviors are very high.

## **Reasons for phone coaching:**

- Practice changing ineffective ways of asking for help
- Generalize DBT skills to everyday life
- Report successes to the therapist

## **Goals of phone coaching:**

- Decreasing suicidal crisis behaviors
- Increasing generalization of behavioral skills
- Reinforcing successful skill use

## **What to expect from phone coaching calls:**

- Calls are brief—generally ten to fifteen minutes
- The therapist will be following the Phone Coaching Protocol, which you should review with your individual therapist. After a brief description of the current situation, the therapist will discuss skills that have been tried and review other skills that might help.
- Phone coaching calls are not meant for analyzing or solving a crisis. They are to assist you in getting through the crisis without using ineffective behaviors so that analyzing and solving can be done in the next therapy session.
- To assist in generalizing skills, you may call for a brief check-in when there is no crisis situation.

## **24-Hour rule:**

- **Following self-harming behaviors, you are not allowed to call for phone coaching, or to contact your individual therapist in other ways, for a 24-hour period.** You can and should attend scheduled appointments, even during these 24 hours.
- If you do call during the 24-hour period following self-harming behaviors, you will be instructed to contact other resources and the call will end.
- You are expected to call for phone coaching before you engage in ineffective or self-harming behaviors. Calling after engaging in these behaviors is not appropriate. The therapist can only be helpful before you use these behaviors because, in essence, afterwards you have already taken care of your distress by engaging in ineffective behaviors.

**Weekday Coverage:**

- Weekday coverage is from 7am until 10 pm Monday thru Friday, during which time your individual therapist will be available for phone coaching.
- Your individual therapist will discuss procedures for calling, including how to reach her most effectively, how long you can expect to wait for a call back, and what to do while waiting for a return call. Please be aware that there will almost certainly be some times when your therapist will not be able to return your call for several hours.

**Weekend Coverage:**

- From 7 am until 10 pm Saturday and Sunday, one of Clearwater’s therapists will be on call to handle all phone coaching, and you will not be able to directly reach your individual therapist (unless your therapist happens to be on call that weekend). During these hours, you need to call the **Weekend Phone Coaching Line: 510-289-9890**.
- The on-call therapist does not answer the phone, but rather receives messages and calls you back. You can expect to receive a call back after you contact the on-call line within 2 hours.
- Please do not contact your individual therapist by phone, text or email during weekend hours. If you do, your therapist will refer you to the Phone Coaching Line.
- The on-call phone coach will be following the Phone Coaching Protocol. It is recommended that you fill out our Phone Coaching Form before or during the call to maximize your ability to benefit from coaching.
- Your individual therapist will be informed of weekend phone coaching calls during the following week.
- The on-call phone coach will respect the 24-Hour rule about self-harming behaviors.

I have read and understand Clearwater’s policies and procedures for telephone coaching.

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Signature

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Date