DBT session note

Client | Date | Session no.

1. Brief context

What the client came with, key events.

2. Key themes and affect

Themes, feelings and body reactions named in the session.

3. Target priorities and weekly self-monitoring

Targets from life-threatening to quality of life, and what the client tracked this week.

4. Chain analysis

Prompting event → vulnerability → links → behavior → function → solution.

5. Skills

Module and skill, the link it targets and how it went.

6. Dialectics: acceptance and change

Where the client held both acceptance and change, in her words.

7. Agreements and homework

Tasks and observations until the next session.

8. Risks

Only signals that came up. Empty if none.

9. Speech and thinking features

Anything notable in the form of speech. Usually empty.

10. Plan for the next session

What to return to.

DBT session note: filled example

Client Anna, 34 (fictional) | Date 11/12 | Session no. 4

1. Brief context

Came in after a conflict with her manager, has slept badly for a week.

2. Key themes and affect

Anxiety → "my chest tightens before planning meetings".

3. Target priorities and weekly self-monitoring

Quality of life → checks the report 5 times an evening, rated the urge 4 of 5.

4. Chain analysis

Error in the report → **a week of poor sleep** → "they'll fire me" → checks 5 times → anxiety drops for an hour.

5. Skills

Emotion regulation, check the facts → for the "fired" link, practiced in session.

6. Dialectics: acceptance and change

Synthesis → "I'm anxious, and I can still send it after one check".

7. Agreements and homework

Check the facts before each planning meeting, note the urge to check.

8. Risks

None mentioned.

9. Speech and thinking features

None noted.

10. Plan for the next session

Chain of the next checking evening, a skill for the sleep link.