



MARCUS'MEND
DBT SKILLS & WORKSPACE

USER GUIDE

Skills you actually use.

A practice space, not a textbook.

How Marcus'Mend turns a DBT skill into a sentence you can genuinely say tomorrow — step by step, on your own situation.

Info site marcusmend.vercel.app/en



Version 1.1.0 · As of 18 September 2026

English

At a glance

WHAT	An interactive practice space for Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)
FORM	Installable web app (PWA) and native Android app — both usable fully offline and without an account
CONTENT	38 DBT skills (32 individual skills + 6 skill bundles) from all four DBT modules, plus a lexicon of 41 terms
AREAS	Six — four follow the skill you choose, two apply across all of them
LANGUAGES	German and English, switchable at any time while you work
PRIVACY	Everything you enter stays on your device. No cloud, no server, no tracking
FOUNDATION	The skills of evidence-based DBT, anchored in Linehan and McKay — the source is visible on every piece of content
NOT	Not a substitute for diagnosis, therapy or crisis care

Contents

- 1 What Marcus'Mend is built for
- 2 Four steps to your own script
- 3 The six working areas
- 4 Backing up and restoring
- 5 On the go: Android app and web app
- 6 How the app is built
- 7 Limits, privacy and sources



Koshka is reading along

A black cat with a reference manual comments throughout this guide. She appears wherever an action has a clinical reason behind it — why a step is built this way and not another, and where it comes from. If you only want to know which button to press, you can skip her.

She explains and puts things in context. She does not treat.

What Marcus'Mend is built for



Between “I have read about DEAR MAN” and “I know what I am going to say tomorrow” lies practice — and that is exactly what books leave out.

You have a difficult conversation tomorrow — with your manager, a parent, a friend — and you do not know how to start. Or you are emotionally flooded right now and need a way to come down *now*, before you say something you will regret.

DBT has effective skills for exactly these moments. They usually sit in books and worksheets, though: **explained, not practised**. Between “I have read about DEAR MAN” and “I have a sentence I can really say tomorrow” lies a gap that reading alone does not close.

Marcus'Mend is where a skill stops being a chapter and starts becoming your sentence.

A process, not a content collection

The app does not simply reproduce DBT content; it follows the path DBT itself takes: recognise your own state, choose the fitting skill, practise it on a real situation, check the result. That is why you do not begin in a table of contents but at the Emotion Compass — with the question of how you are doing right now.

Who it is for

- **People who already know DBT skills** — from therapy or a skills group — and want to make them usable in everyday life.
- **People facing a tense conversation** — setting a boundary, a conflict, a hurt — who want to put it into words and rehearse beforehand.
- **People in therapeutic care**, as a supplement between sessions: practise, print, take it with you.
- **Professionals** as a demonstration and practice tool.

Five commitments

APPLY RATHER THAN READ	You practise on <i>your</i> situation until a sentence stands there that you can say — not one you have understood.
EVERYTHING STAYS WITH YOU	Your drafts never leave your device. No cloud, no server, no account. <i>You</i> decide where a backup goes.
NOTHING GETS LOST	Every draft is saved on the device automatically and survives a reload — with no save button.
EVIDENCED, NOT ASSERTED	Every step names its source: Linehan's manual or McKay's workbook, with chapter and page.
USABLE STRAIGHT AWAY	Short entry points, clear prompts for action — even when tension is running high.

What Marcus'Mend explicitly is not

Marcus'Mend is a **learning and practice tool** for DBT skills. It replaces no diagnosis, no therapy and no crisis care. When things become acute, the way leads to professional help — the app points you there, it does not take its place.

CHAPTER 2

Four steps to your own script



Choose a skill, load a situation, put it into words step by step, take the result with you. About ten minutes the first time.

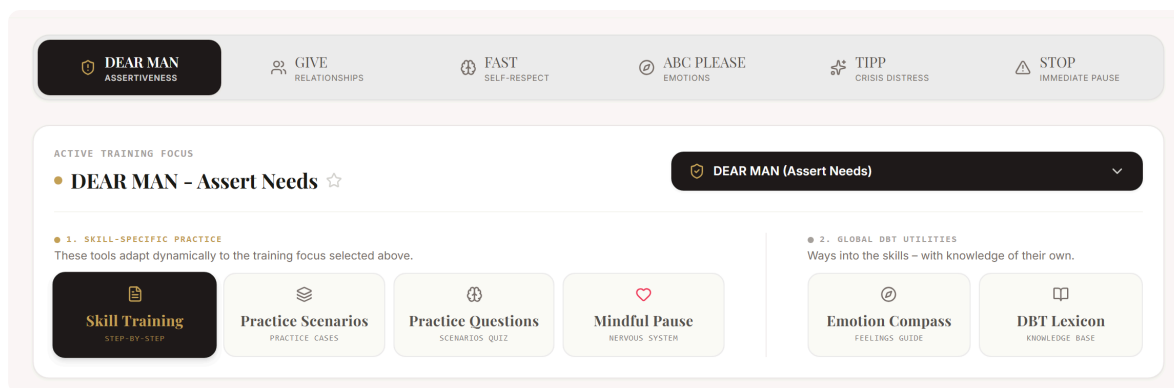
This is the main path through the app. It takes about ten minutes the first time and ends with a finished, printable text. All the other areas (Chapter 3) hang off this path.

1 Choose the skill

Above the working area sits the **active training focus**. On the left are the six **skill bundles** — multi-step modules with an acronym: DEAR MAN, GIVE, FAST, ABC PLEASE, TIPP, STOP. On the right, **“Choose a single DBT skill”** opens the list of the remaining 32 skills, grouped by module.

Below that lies the area bar, split in two: four areas follow the skill you have chosen, two apply across all of them.

Not sure which skill? Then start via the Emotion Compass (Chapter 3).



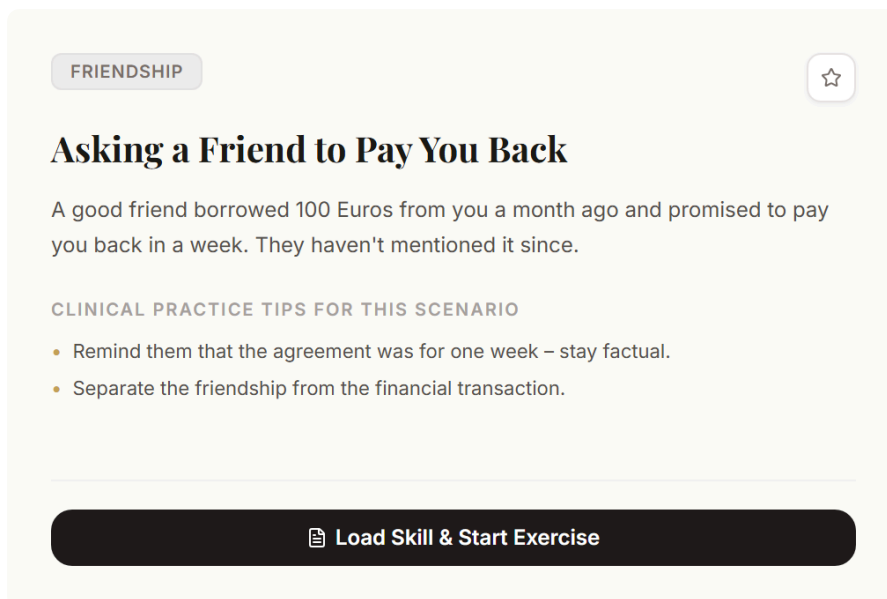
Skill selection and area bar. At the top the six bundles and the single-skill menu, below them the four skill-related areas (left) and the two cross-cutting ones (right).

2 Load a situation

Switch to **Practice Scenarios**. Each card describes an everyday situation and brings clinical practice notes with it. **“Load skill and start practice”** carries the scenario into Skill Training and pre-fills the context.

Instead, you can enter your real case with **“Custom Scenario +”**. The path from there is the same.

You have got there when the name of your situation appears at the top of Skill Training.



A scenario card. The situation, clinical practice notes and the button that starts the exercise. The star at the top right marks it as a favourite.

3 Put it into words, step by step

Skill Training leads you through the letters of the acronym — for DEAR MAN that is D, E, A, R, M, A, N. Each step is its own card with the same layout throughout: on the left what belongs in this step, on the right your text.



The step tabs. You can jump between steps at any time; the dark tab is the active one.

D • DESCRIBE

Describe the situation factually

Listen

Describe the situation clearly and objectively. Use only verifiable facts and avoid judgments, accusations, or exaggerations.

Source: Linehan Manual · Ch. 8, Sect. 5 (DEAR MAN, p. 249); supplementary McKay Workbook · Ch. 10

[Read more about DEAR MAN in the Lexicon →](#)

WRITING INSTRUCTIONS

Write 1-2 sentences based purely on facts. Imagine a video camera is recording the scene – what would it see?

YOUR DRAFT

134 chars

Ich arbeite nun seit zwei Jahren in dieser Position und habe im letzten Jahr die Projektleitung für drei neue Großprojekte übernommen.

QUALITY CHECKLIST

Verify your text against these DBT guidelines to ensure maximum effectiveness:

- ✓ Used only indisputable facts (no interpretations)?
- ✓ No judgmental words like "always", "never", "unfair", or "disrespectful"?

What the step asks for. The explanation, below it the source line with chapter and page and a jump into the matching lexicon entry. "Read aloud" reads the step out.

COMMON TRAPS (PLEASE AVOID!)

- Accusations ("You are always late")
- Selling subjective perception as fact ("You do not respect my work at all")

Common traps. The typical missteps of this step — when describing, for instance, accusations and perception sold as fact.

INSPIRING PHRASINGS

"You assigned me three additional tasks this week, even though my work schedule was already full."

"We agreed to meet at 7:00 PM, and it is now 7:30 PM."

"In the last month, I took on additional shifts on four weekends."

Model phrases. Ready-made sentences to adopt when you are stuck. The symbol on the right copies one into your field.

4 Use the script

While you type, the app assembles the steps into a coherent text in the background. At the end comes the summary view: **print** (the print layout hides the navigation, and you can save it as a PDF) or **copy to the clipboard**.

Completed exercises move into the list below the training area as a **manifest** and stay readable there.

You have got there when a text stands there that you can read aloud without faltering.

Saved Manifestos

Your completed practice runs for this skill



EXAMPLE MANIFESTO



D Describe	Ich arbeite nun seit zwei Jahren in dieser Position und habe im letzten Jahr die Projektleitung für drei neue Großprojekte übernommen.
E Express	Ich freue mich über dieses Vertrauen, merke aber auch, dass meine Verantwortung gestiegen ist, und wünsche mir, dass sich das finanziell widerspiegelt.
A Assert	Ich möchte Sie bitten, mein Bruttogehalt ab dem nächsten Monat um 10% anzuheben.
R Reinforce	Mit dieser Anpassung gehe ich hochmotiviert in die anstehenden Projekte und kann mich langfristig voll auf das Wachstum unserer Abteilung konzentrieren.
M Mindful	Ich verstehe, dass das Budget knapp ist, aber angesichts meiner gestiegenen Verantwortung halte ich eine Erhöhung von 10% für angemessen.
A Appear Confident	Ich spreche mit fester Stimme, sitze aufrecht und halte Blickkontakt mit meiner Führungskraft.
N Negotiate	Sollten 10% sofort nicht möglich sein, können wir uns auf 5% jetzt und weitere 5% in sechs Monaten einigen?

The finished script. Each letter with the sentence it has become — here the example manifest supplied for “asking for a pay rise”.

If you get stuck

THE SENTENCE DOES NOT SOUND LIKE YOU

The model phrase is a suggestion, not a target. Overwrite it with your own words — the checklist tests the rule, not the style.

YOU DO NOT KNOW WHAT BELONGS IN THE STEP

“Read aloud” reads the explanation to you, “Read more about ... in the lexicon” leads to the full definition with its source.

THE SITUATION DOES NOT FIT YOU

Go back to Practice Scenarios and load a different card — or create your real case with “Custom Scenario +”.

YOU ARE TOO WORKED UP TO WRITE

Take the Mindful Pause first, then carry on writing. The draft stays where it is while you pause.



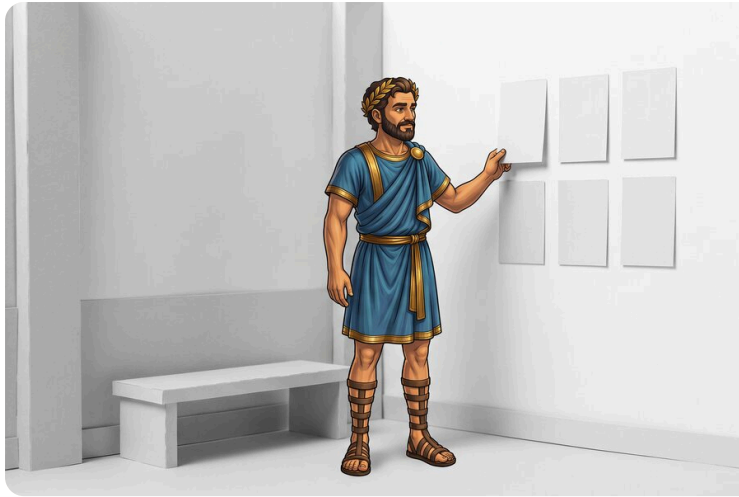
Why the text breaks into steps

Because an acronym like DEAR MAN is not a mnemonic but a sequence. First *de-scribe* the situation, then *express* your own feeling, then *assert* the request — start with the request and you lose the ground it stands on. The app does not enforce the order, but it shows it.

And the traps sit next to the input field rather than at the end for a reason: a sentence can be corrected while it is forming; a finished one can only be defended.

Source per step inside the app — Linehan, DBT Skills Training Manual; supplemented by McKay, The DBT Skills Workbook.

The six working areas



Four areas follow the skill you choose at the top. Two are what lead you to it in the first place.

The area bar is deliberately split in two. The first four areas change their content as soon as you choose a different skill at the top — they always show *this* skill. The last two cut across all skills and are entry points into the whole.

1 Skill Training

SKILL-RELATED

The main area from Chapter 2: step by step through the acronym, with guidance, model phrases, traps, checklist, source reference and read-aloud. If no situation is selected, the app offers a fitting one — you never face an empty form.

2 Practice Scenarios

SKILL-RELATED

Everyday situations with clinical practice notes, switchable between three views: **Current skill** shows the cases for the selected skill, **All scenarios** opens the full set with search and filters (area of life, stress level, DBT category, tags), **Custom scenarios** the cases you created yourself. Favourites sit at the top.

3 Practice Questions

SKILL-RELATED

Questions with immediate feedback that explains *why* an answer holds up or leads into a trap. Two question types — which step or which category fits, and: which of the phrasings is the dysfunctional one. Three modes (current skill, all questions, learning game) feed a shared score with ranks.

CURRENT VIEW:

Practice Questions (Quiz)

/

DEAR MAN - Assert Needs

Dialectical Behavior Therapy

DBT Practice Questions

MODULE: DEAR MAN - ASSERT NEEDS

Active Skill

All Questions

Learning Game

Test your knowledge! Learn to distinguish between highly effective assertiveness and typical communication traps.

DEAR MAN - Assert Needs

CURRENT MODULE

1 / 7

CLASSIFICATION

Which DEAR MAN step does this statement belong to: "We had agreed that you would take out the trash today, and the bin is now full."

☐ D - Describe

☐ E - Express

☐ A - Assert

Your Points Account

ACROSS SESSIONS

TOTAL POINTS

0

* Points earned

CURRENT RANK

Beginner (Bronze)

0

Next level at: 10

RESET ACCOUNT

Support in Emotional Crises

Marcus'Mend supports therapeutic skill practice but does not replace psychotherapeutic or medical emergency care. In an acute crisis, please contact a professional support service.

Crisis Lifeline (24/7): **988** | Emergency Services: **911** | [View all contacts](#)

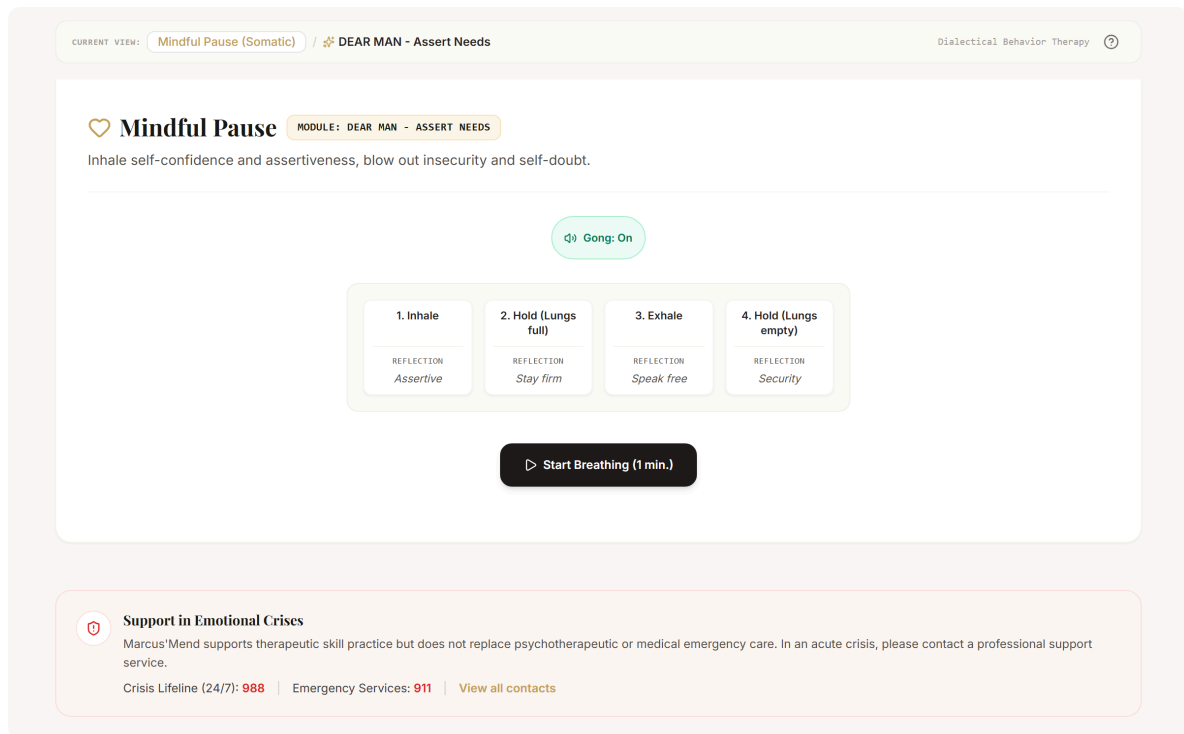
Practice Questions. The question on the left, the score with the current rank on the right.

4 Mindful Pause

SKILL-RELATED

A breathing exercise of about a minute in four beats — breathe in, hold, breathe out, hold, four seconds each — with a growing and shrinking orb, a phase display, a gong you can switch off and a closing bell.

What makes it particular: it is **not a general timer**. For each of the 38 skills, the title, subtitle and all four breathing phases are written specifically. For *Radical Acceptance* the phases are Reality → Hold → Let go → Emptiness, for *Opposite Action Urge* → Hold → Release → Emptiness. That is why the pause sits among the skill-related areas.

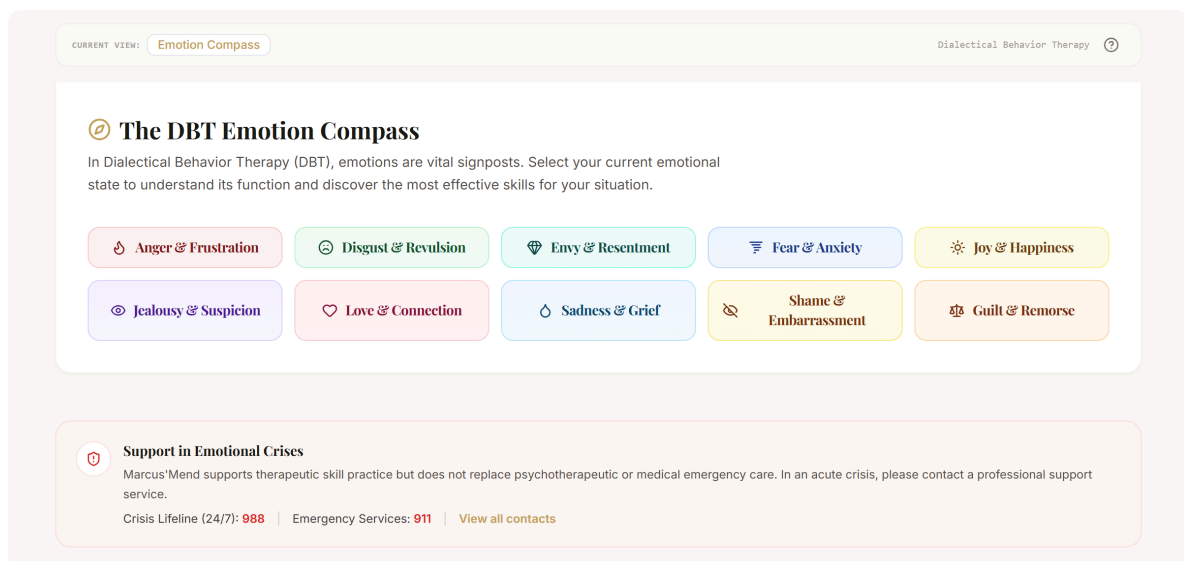


Mindful Pause for DEAR MAN. “Breathe in confidence and steadiness, breathe out doubt and hesitation” — here the four phases carry the stance of the skill.

5 Emotion Compass

CROSS-CUTTING

The entry point when you do not yet know the name of the skill — and the view the app starts in. You choose among ten basic emotions (anger, disgust, envy, fear, joy, jealousy, love, sadness, shame, guilt), refine your state and jump straight into the matching skill, into the Mindful Pause or into a lexicon entry.



Emotion Compass. First the emotion is placed — “anger often signals that personal boundaries have been crossed” — then comes the path into action.



Why the app starts with the emotion

Because the order in DBT is not arbitrary. A skill only works if it fits the state: someone under high tension cannot plan a conversation — there the body helps first, not the argument. That is why the beginning is not the skill list but the question of how you are doing right now.

It also means there is no “best” skill. There is the one that fits this moment — and that changes several times over the course of a day.

6 DBT Lexicon

CROSS-CUTTING

41 terms to look up, filterable by module and searchable, with a glossary index for quick jumps. The entries reference each other, and every source line leads to its book. From Skill Training you get straight to the right place via “Read more about ... in the lexicon”.

CURRENT VIEW: DBT Lexicon & GlossaryDialectical Behavior Therapy

DBT Lexicon & Glossary

Look up key concepts of Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) — from foundations like dialectics and the biosocial model to the core skills. Every explanation is source-based, drawn from the Linehan manual and the McKay workbook.

Search terms or explanations...

All Terms 41Mindfulness 4Distress Tolerance 8Emotion Regulation 5Interpersonal Effectiveness 10DBT Core Concepts 14

A Life Worth Living

DBT CORE CONCEPTS

The long-term DBT aim: building a life that carries one's values, relationships, and positive experiences.
Source: Linehan Manual · Chapter 9 (Accumulate Positive Emotions)

ABC PLEASE

EMOTION REGULATION

The preventive side of emotion regulation: building resilience and lowering emotional vulnerability — mentally (ABC) and physically (PLEASE).
Source: Linehan Manual · Ch. 9 (ABC skills + PLEASE, Section 17); supplementary Emotion Regulation Handouts 14/19/20

ACCEPTS (Distraction)

DISTRESS TOLERANCE

Seven ways to steer attention away from distress in a crisis until the acute wave subsides — a pick-and-choose menu, not a fixed sequence.
Source: Linehan Manual · Ch. 10, Section 7 (Distress Tolerance Handout 7)

Assertive Listening

INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Listening as an active information skill — deliberately finding out what the other person means, feels, and needs, instead of just waiting for your turn to speak.
Source: McKay Workbook · Chapter 10 (Assertive Listening / Blocks to Listening)

Assertiveness Scripts

INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

A four-part script from McKay's workbook — facts, feeling, request, optional self-care solution — for

Glossary Index

ALL TERMS QUICK ACCESS

Click any term to jump directly to its detailed definition.

DBT CORE CONCEPTS

A Life Worth Living

Biosocial Model

Body Scan Meditation

Chain Analysis

Cue-Controlled Relaxation

Dialectics

Effectiveness as a Principle

Emotion Mind & Reasonable Mind

Functions of Emotions

Invalidating Environment

Missing-Links Analysis

Safe-Place Visualization

Sensory Awareness

Willingness & Willfulness

DISTRESS TOLERANCE

ACCEPTS (Distraction)

Community Reinforcement

IMPROVE the Moment

Radical Acceptance

Self-Soothe

STOP Skill

TIP Skills

Turning the Mind

EMOTION REGULATION

ABC PLEASE

DBT Lexicon. Search and module filter on the left, glossary index on the right; each entry names the chapter and handout of its source.

Marcus'Mend · User Guide

marcusmend.vercel.app/en

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Two buttons in the header that are not areas. “About the app” opens the quick guide, source references and privacy policy. “Mood” opens a voluntary check-in, which also asks of its own accord at the first Skill Training of a session (Chapter 4).

CHAPTER 4

Backing up and restoring



There is no server holding your sentences. So there is also no backup other than the one you made yourself.

Because nothing sits in a cloud, nothing ends up anywhere else on its own. That is the price of the commitment from Chapter 1 — and the reason this area exists.

Automatic: the running draft

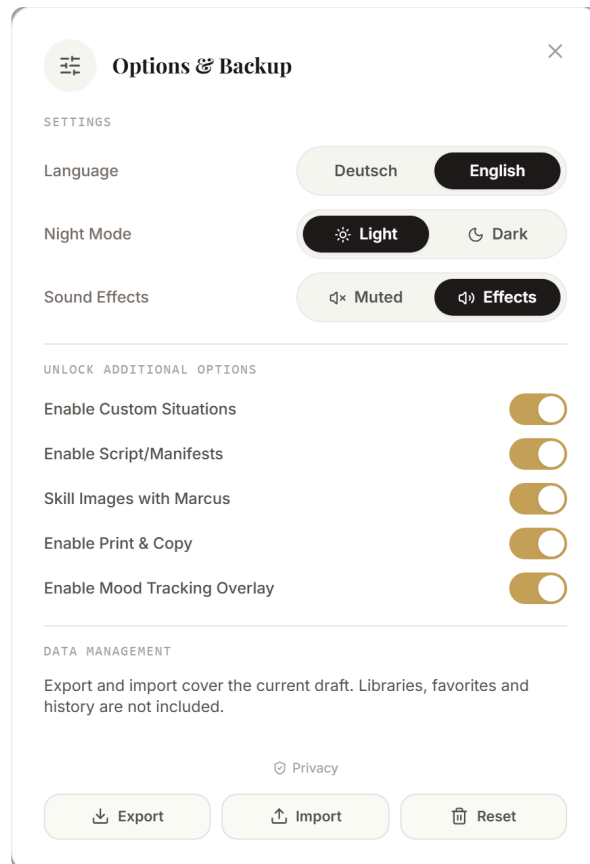
What you type is saved continuously in your device's storage. A reload, a closed tab, a restart — the draft is back. You do not have to do anything for that; there is deliberately no save button.

Manual: the backup file

Options in the header opens *Options & Backup*. Three buttons sit at the bottom:

- **Back up** writes your current working state into a file that you put away yourself — on the device, in your cloud, on a stick. The app does not place it anywhere on its own.
- **Load** restores such a file, on another device too. What happens to existing data is stated in the dialogue before you confirm.
- **Delete** resets the workspace. Also with a confirmation prompt.

What the backup contains — and what it does not. Backing up and loading concern the current draft. The collections — saved manifests, custom scenarios, favourites and your score — are not part of this file. The dialogue says so again on the spot.



Options & Backup. At the top language, dark mode and sound; in the middle the optional features you can switch off; at the bottom back up, load and delete.

What you can switch off

The same dialogue holds the optional features as switches: custom situations, saved scripts, the skill images with Marcus, printing and copying, and the mood check-in. If you want the app lean, this is where you turn off what you do not need.



Why there is no cloud

What you write in here is, in case of doubt, health data — a conflict with your father, a hurt, an urge. Creating an account for that would mean putting exactly those sentences on someone else's servers. That was considered and rejected, not overlooked.

The flip side is yours to carry: two devices do not sync by themselves. Anyone working on both takes the backup file along.

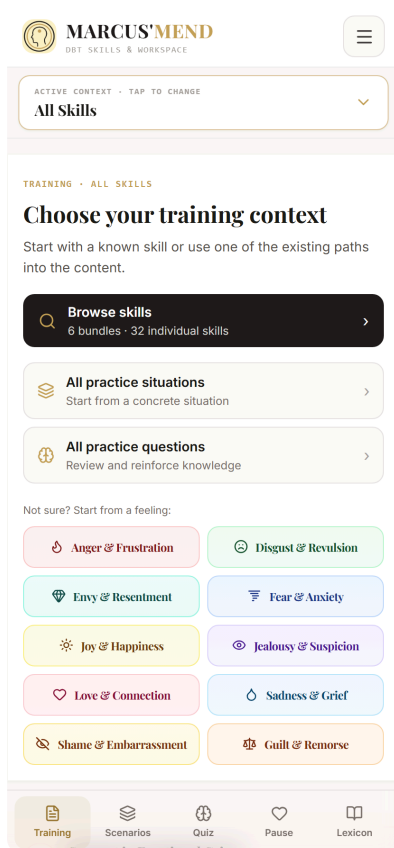
On the go: Android app and web app



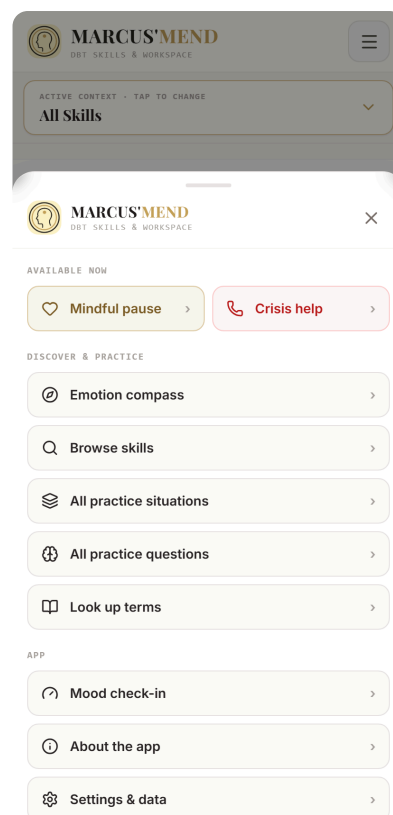
*The same app by two routes —
with two separate sets of data.
The bridge between them is a file.*

Marcus'Mend exists twice: as an Android app from the Play Store and as a web app that can be installed in the browser. In content they are the same; what differs is where the app sits and how it updates.

TOPIC	ANDROID APP	WEB APP IN THE BROWSER
Start and offline	Everything is installed along with it, offline from the first start.	The first call needs a connection; offline works as soon as the app files are stored.
Where the data sits	In the device's app storage.	In the browser profile, bound to the app's address.
Backing up	The file first lands in the app cache, then the Android share dialogue opens. Choose a permanent destination there.	An ordinary download.
Updating	Via the Play Store.	The app lets you know when a new version is ready.
Read aloud	In both cases this depends on your system's speech output — whether it is present and whether it speaks offline.	



Mobile view. Below a certain screen width, a dedicated app navigation replaces the area bar — the six areas sit in the bar at the bottom.



The menu. Everything that sits in the header at the desk is listed here one below the other: areas, exercises, mood, settings.

There is **no** synchronisation between the browser and the Android app. Both versions keep separate sets of data; the way from one to the other is the backup file from Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 6

How the app is built



Anyone who wants to know what lies beneath the surface can settle in: you do not need this chapter to use the app.

This chapter is for everyone who wants to know what sits behind the surface — clinically and technically. You do not need it to use the app.

The 38 skills

Marcus'Mend covers all four DBT modules: mindfulness, distress tolerance, emotion regulation and interpersonal effectiveness. They are reachable through two entry points — the six acronym-based bundles and the menu of 32 individual skills, grouped there by module and alphabetical within.

BUNDLE	WHAT FOR
DEAR MAN	Making a request without damaging the relationship
GIVE	Carrying the relationship while something difficult is discussed
FAST	Keeping your self-respect, even when pressure builds
ABC PLEASE	Building emotional baseline stability before anything happens
TIPP	Coming down through the body when tension is very high
STOP	Halting the impulse before it becomes an action

The four-step sequence that explains the interface

The division into areas is not a menu design but the DBT sequence itself: **recognise** (Emotion Compass) → **choose** (skill selection) → **apply** (Skill Training on a scenario) → **check** (practice questions, checklists, saved manifests). That is why the app starts in the compass and not in a skill list.

Where the content comes from

Every step, every scenario and every lexicon entry is anchored in a primary source and names it visibly — with chapter, section and page, and with a marker showing whether the content comes from the manual or the workbook.

- Marsha M. Linehan, *DBT Skills Training Manual*
- Marsha M. Linehan, *DBT Skills Training Handouts and Worksheets*
- Matthew McKay et al., *The Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills Workbook*

Technical

Interface	React with TypeScript, built with Vite; the Android version is produced from the same code via Capacitor.
Operation	A pure client application. There is no application server, no sign-in and no interface through which content would be loaded later.
Storage	The device's local storage. No account, no synchronisation, no encryption — the last deliberately, because without an account there would be no meaningful key.
Offline	The web version is an installable PWA and keeps its files locally; the Android version brings them along.
Printing	Through the system's print function, with a dedicated print layout without navigation.



What “evidence-based” means here

DBT as a treatment has been studied in controlled trials — that applies to the treatment, not automatically to every app offering its content. Marcus'Mend therefore claims only what it can evidence: that the skills it conveys are those of DBT and are tied to the original sources. There is no efficacy study of this app, and none is claimed.

CHAPTER 7

Limits, privacy and sources



A practice tool is not a treatment. The difference is not a formality but the frame.

Limits

Marcus'Mend is a learning and practice tool. It makes no diagnosis, replaces no treatment and is not emergency care. Nor does it judge whether a skill is the right one for your situation — that assessment stays with you and, where there is one, with your practitioner.

Privacy in three sentences

- What you enter does not leave your device. There is no server that would receive it.
- There is no account, no registration, no analysis of your behaviour and no advertising.
- Local storage is not encrypted. If your device is accessible to others, save your state as a file and re-set the workspace.

You will find the full statement in the app under *About the app* → *Privacy*.

Sources

The clinical content follows the three standard works linked in the app under *About the app* → *Further reading*:

*A sentence you can say is worth more
than a chapter you have understood.*



MARCUS'MEND
DBT SKILLS & WORKSPACE

A practice space for DBT skills: choose a skill, put it into your own words on your own situation, take away a script you can actually say.

Info site marcuscumend.vercel.app/en

Web app marcuscumend.netlify.app



DBT MANUAL NAVIGATOR
Marcus'Mind

A reference work on DBT: understand skills, compare them and find the fitting next step — across all four modules.

Info site marcusmind.vercel.app/en

Web app marcusmind.netlify.app/en



WIE FÜHLST DU DICH?
Marcus'Mood

A mood diary with skill suggestions: name the feeling precisely, see how it develops, get fitting DBT skills suggested.

Info site marcusmood.vercel.app

Web app marcusmood.netlify.app



Marcus on YouTube

The same character who guides you through this manual explains DBT skills there in short videos — as a supplement to practising in the app.

Channel youtube.com/@MarcusModus-DBT