

DBT CENTRE OF VANCOUVER, INC.

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Overview

The DBT Centre of Vancouver, founded by Drs. Alex Chapman and John Wagner in 2007, provides evidence-based treatment for persons suffering from a variety of psychological difficulties. We specialize in the treatment of persons with borderline personality disorder (BPD) and related problems, in addition to other multi-diagnostic, complex clients. Although we provide a variety of different evidence-based, primarily cognitive-behavioural, treatments, we emphasize the principles and practices of Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) in much of our work with clients, and we have a full DBT program, including weekly individual treatment, weekly DBT skills training groups (4 groups, occurring on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays), and a therapist consultation team. Currently, DBT has the most scientific evidence for the treatment of BPD and related difficulties. One of the most important ingredients of DBT is the teaching of practical skills in the areas of mindfulness, emotion regulation, interpersonal effectiveness, and distress tolerance. We began this group to help loved ones of those with BPD to bring some of these skills into their daily lives, reduce stress, minimize caregiver burnout, and to better understand and more effectively interact with their loved ones.

Objectives

This group is designed for partners, family members, loved ones, and friends of persons with borderline personality disorder (BPD). The focus will be on the types of DBT skills that we teach our clients at the DBT Centre and how to apply them to your daily lives as well as your interactions with your loved one(s). Some of the main objectives of this group are to:

- Increase participants' knowledge of BPD and effective treatment.
- Increase participants' familiarity with effective, practical DBT skills.
- Help participants learn how to incorporate these skills into their own daily lives.
- Discuss ways to apply effective skills and strategies with loved ones who struggle with BPD and related problems.

Group Format and What to Expect

Each group session, occurring for 2 hours, will be structured and will consist of the following: (1) a brief practice in mindfulness, (2) discussion of "homework" assignments to use and practice skills learned in group, (3) discussion of questions or topics as they arise, and (4) teaching, discussion, and practice of new skills and strategies. Although we have a schedule of topics for each week, at times, the topics discussed will flow according to the group needs and interests.

Important Rules and Tips

1. Please keep all information that you learn about other participants and their loved ones, including any identifying or other information, strictly confidential. Be careful about when, where, and how you might have discussions with other participants, and remain aware of the potential dangers and threats to confidentiality arising from the use of social networking to connect with other participants.
2. All participants are expected to arrive on time and complete all assigned homework/practice assignments each week. If you are unable to arrive on time or to make it to one of the sessions, please contact Jen Gerullis (info@dbtvancouver.com, or 604-569-1156) to let her know ahead of time.
3. Please keep in mind that this group will have a strong focus on care for the caregiver. Although we will certainly discuss how to apply various skills and strategies in the context of your relationship with your loved ones, do not lose sight of the importance of your taking care of yourself, using the skills to enhance your daily life and reduce stress, and to improve your other relationships. Remember that you have to put your own oxygen mask on before assisting others.

Some Recommended Readings

- Baumeister, R. F., & Tierney, J. (2012). *Willpower: Rediscovering the greatest human strength*. Penguin Books.
- **Chapman, A.L., & Gratz, K.L. (2007). *The borderline personality disorder survival guide: Everything you need to know about living with BPD*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications.
- *Chapman, A.L., Gratz, K.L., & Tull, M.T. (2011). *The DBT skills workbook for anxiety disorders*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications.
- *Gratz, K.L., & Chapman, A.L. (2009). *Freedom from self-harm: Overcoming self-injury with skills from DBT and other treatments*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications.
- Linehan, M.M. (1993). *Skills training manual for treating borderline personality disorder*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Manning, S. (2011). *Loving someone with borderline personality disorder: How to keep out-of-control emotions from destroying your relationship*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Pryor, K. (1999). *Don't shoot the dog! The new art of teaching and training*. Bantam.

** provided and required reading.

* available at the DBT Centre for purchase.

OUTLINE OF TOPICS (tentative)

This is the tentative weekly schedule of topics for the group. The topics, however, may vary based on the needs of the group.

Week 1 Overview, Orientation, Facts on BPD, and Mindfulness

- Read through syllabus, come up with important questions that you would like us to cover throughout the group, and bring this next time.
- Read Chapters 1-3 of the BPD Survival Guide
- Begin a daily mindfulness practice for at least 5min/day.
- Read and review mindfulness worksheets in binder, and practice at least two mindfulness skills, noting your experiences on Mindfulness Worksheet 2.

Week 2 Emotions and Emotion Regulation

- Continue daily mindfulness practice for at least 5min/day.
- Read Chapters 4-6 of BPD Survival Guide
- Read and review functions and model of emotions.
- Complete Emotion Regulation Worksheet TBD.

Week 3 Emotion Regulation Cont'd, Self-Care

- Read Chapters 10-12 of BPD Survival Guide
- Read and review material on PLEASE skills
- Choose at least 2 PLEASE skills to get started working on over this next week.
- Come up with your goals and take at least 1-2 action steps in each area.

Week 4 Interpersonal Effectiveness

- Continue daily mindfulness practice for at least 5min/day.
- Continue to work on your own self-care, PLEASE skills.
- Read and review material on DEAR MAN skills
- Practice DEAR MAN with at least 2 people over the next week.

Week 5 Interpersonal Effectiveness Cont'd

- Continue daily mindfulness practice for at least 5min/day.
- Continue to work on your own self-care, PLEASE skills.
- Read and review GIVE and FAST skills
- Practice GIVE and FAST with at least 2 people over the next week.

Week 6 Validation, Behaviour change, and Observing limits

- Continue daily mindfulness practice for at least 5min/day.
- Continue to work on your own self-care, PLEASE skills.
- Write down ways in which you could start reinforcing behaviours you want to see more of and extinguishing/avoiding reinforcing behaviours you want to see less of.
- Write down your goals for limits you wish to observe, and come up with a plan for how you might do so.
- Practice validation with at least 2 people over the next week.

Week 7 Distress Tolerance strategies, Crisis Survival

- Continue daily mindfulness practice for at least 5min/day.
- Continue to work on your own self-care, PLEASE skills.
- Practice self-soothing strategies (see worksheet TBD).
- Put into action your observing limits plan.

Week 8 Distress Tolerance strategies, Radical Acceptance

- Continue daily mindfulness practice for at least 5min/day.
- Bring questions, challenges, and issues to group.
- Practice radical acceptance using worksheet TBD.