
DBT Options at CMHA TVAMHS

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is DBT?

Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) is an approach to helping people who have problems with their emotions or the things they find themselves doing. It helps one learn new skills to better respond to emotions, tolerate distress, be mindful of the present and have effective relationships with others.

‘Dialectic’ means balancing opposites (like acceptance and change) and seeing how they go together.

Who is eligible?

DBT benefits people 16 years and older, with borderline personality disorder, suicidal behavior, addiction, depression, post traumatic stress (PTSD) and eating disorders. (this is not an exhaustive list).

The team will complete a variety of intake, screening tools and consultation to better assess program engagement and suitability once a referral has been received.

Criteria to Consider when Referring

- Diagnosis of Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD), Mood Disorder, anxiety disorder or adjustment disorder. (although diagnosis not necessary but presentation of traits)
- Difficulties with emotional regulation, interpersonal relationships and conflict
- Suicidality, self-harm
- Managing crisis situations, escalation
- Impulsive behaviours

Requirements to Participate

- Voluntary engagement
- Knowledge of the referral in place
- Able to share the floor with other participants
- Able to interact respectfully with other participants
- Willing to keep camera turned on during online groups
- Computer/phone with WIFI connection
- Private confidential space to participate
- Stable housing
- Homework completion
- Able to commitment to length of program (twice a week for 36 weeks, once a week for 12 weeks)

DBT is not recommended if:

- Significant barriers that would impact treatment
- active suicidal, homicidal or in need of crisis stabilization
- experiencing active psychosis which impacts functioning for which a different treatment is recommended
- You have a cognitive impairment which impacts insight and capacity for new learning

I have engaged in DBT programming historically can I still register?

Yes, however priority will be given to those who have never engaged in DBT programming.

What is the difference between the programs offered?

The *Intensive* stream is 36 weeks in group and covers DBT Skills in depth over 3 modules and

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offers 1:1 coaching. Therefore, longer term engagement and more frequent involvement. The *Life Worth Living* stream is 12 weeks in group and is an abbreviated version of basic DBT skills training.

How to decide what program is best?

We would encourage you to review program commitments of the various streams indicated in more detail on our website and referral form, to help choose which is the preferred option.

The team will complete a formal screening tool which will provide context into presenting concerns. This is used to help determine which stream is better suited to meet one's needs based on symptomology, responses and total score. Therefore, there is a chance the program fit may be different than the option originally selected on the registration form. This will be reviewed with each participant prior to enrollment.

What is the time commitment?

Group is offered *weekly for 90 minutes* in length, with an option for a morning or afternoon session. Program commitments may vary depending on the DBT stream. Homework is apart of the expectation and often reviewed during group and/or individual sessions along with any skills practice.

How long can I expect to wait from registration to program entry?

The timeframe varies based on current waitlist and programs running. Whenever possible, we try to accommodate schedules by running two

groups (morning and afternoon) for each stream at a time.

The average wait time for the Intensive program is approximately 1 year. The average waitlist for Life Worth Living is approximately 6 months.

I am trying to register but the course selected is full

Registration will automatically close once we reach a certain number of referrals. Therefore, the referral form will not allow entry of information. We encourage you to check back on the program page for reopening information. www.cmhatv.ca/start

We have a capacity of 12 participants per session in order to ensure group safety, engagement, quality and availability for interaction.

I reside outside of the Thames Valley Area; Can I still register?

Unfortunately, at this time only those residing within the Thames Valley area (London, Middlesex, Elgin, Oxford) can engage in programming. Please see [Helpful Resources](#) documents for additional options.

What happens if I miss a group?

Group attendance and guidelines are reviewed during week one orientation. We understand that life happens, we ask to let the facilitators know if unable to attend by emailing dbt.program@cmhatv.ca *As a general practice, individuals are unable to miss more than 3 sessions total, or 2 sessions consecutively.* This will be reviewed

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on a case by case basis. As a result, one may not receive a certificate of completion.

I no longer can participate this round, can my spot be held?

Unfortunately, due to the length of our waitlist and volume of interest of those ready to engage in group, we are unable to hold a spot for future attendance. We invite and encourage you to reconnect when able to commit to the program.

Those who are already enrolled in a stream and need to defer a module for the intensive program, may be granted the ability to do so upon request.

A participant can choose to withdraw from programming at any time during treatment, we ask and encourage individuals to connect with their facilitators and coaches to provide feedback and additional options.

What Can I Expect in Group?

Skills based group that requires sharing of skills implemented in their life. This group focuses on applying skills to current life events and summarizing disclosures to allow space for all participants to share.

Will I have to share about past trauma?

The group focuses on current life events and how to change patterns of problematic behaviour. When past trauma arises in context of applying skills, participants are expected to be mindful of the impact to others and summarize the disclosure to ensure this is a safe space for all. The facilitators may check in with the individual privately depending on the nature of what was shared and the individual's

presentation. Safety of participants upon engaging and exiting group is a priority.

What will I gain following program completion?

You will receive a certification of completion acknowledging your involvement in the program.

