

## BORDERLINE PERSONALITY DISORDER

BPD is a chronic recurring psychiatric illness characterised by mood disturbances, suicidality and self harming behaviours. It is recognised as one of the most distressing mental disorders for patients and relatives, and one of the most challenging for clinicians to treat. Patients with borderline personality disorder are at high risk of completing suicide and are frequent users of psychiatric and medical services representing one of the most common groups of 'revolving door patients'

## WHAT IS DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOUR THERAPY?

Dialectical behaviour therapy (DBT) is a treatment currently considered best practice in helping people who use problematic and sometimes life-threatening behaviours as a way of coping with intense and unstable emotions. These behaviours might include self-harm and/or suicidal acts, of other impulsive behaviours such as substance abuse, spending, binge eating, or engaging in unsafe sex.

DBT is essentially a skill-based therapy, offering more practical and effective coping techniques. DBT uses a cognitive behavioural approach and includes a strong emphasis on acceptance of the person as they are, combined with the expectation that current behaviours need to change. The tension that arises between this need for both acceptance and change is known as a 'dialectical tension'. Dialectics refers to finding the middle ground between two opposites. DBT requires a strong commitment to the therapy from both the client and the therapist.

Very often patients with BPD end up in hospital as a result of their behaviour therefore in DBT the targets would be to decrease problematic behaviours, reducing/preventing hospital admission and to increase coping skills such as crisis survival and coping skills.

## HOW DOES DBT WORK?

Treatment consists of 3 main modalities for clients:

- Group behavioural skills training for 2.5 hrs per week. There are four main modules taught in the group:

**Core Mindfulness Skills** – this module is taught at the beginning of all the following modules. The focus of mindfulness is to increase one's awareness of events, emotions and behaviours and to learn how to do this in a focused and non-judgemental manner. Mindfulness skills are central to DBT.

**Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills** – this module focuses on learning to communicate one's needs effectively, and dealing with interpersonal conflict.

**Emotion regulation Skills** – Is about understanding emotions, learning how to reduce emotional vulnerability and decreasing emotional suffering.

**Distress Tolerance Skills** – To increase one's ability to tolerate and survive crisis, and to accept life as it is in the moment.

- Individual psychotherapy to coach the client in applying the skills taught in the group and to problem-solve current difficulties the client is facing.

- Phone coaching for clients with their individual therapist during office hours.

DBT therapists also meet once per week to ensure good communication between group skills trainers and individual therapists.

If you require any further information please contact Stirling Mental Health Resource Centre 01786 446913



**Stirling Integrated Community Mental Health Services.**  
**Livilands Resource Centre.**  
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**Referral Criteria:**

The Resource Centre offers treatment for people who have been assessed and meet our criteria for a moderate mental health problem which can be treated within our group programme

Please note: to access the day hospital and the treatment programme a referral needs to be made via a GP or Consultant Psychiatrist.

## **DIALECTICAL BEHAVIORAL THERAPY**

