

Maple Leaf DBT

Maple Leaf Professional Center

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Frequently Asked Questions

What is DBT?

"DBT" stands for Dialectical Behavior Therapy. It is a behavioral health treatment originally designed for individuals with Borderline Personality Disorder. DBT is a cognitive and behavioral type of counseling that is useful to people who have problems in relationships, with impulsive behavior, regulating emotions, tolerating distressful times, and controlling their attention. Most people who are in DBT attend both individual treatment and skills group.

What is a DBT Skills Group?

A DBT Skills Group is a class where various skills for living are taught. At our Maple Leaf DBT Skills Group individuals who need help with Interpersonal Effectiveness, Distress Tolerance, Emotion Regulation and Mindfulness meet each week for two and a half hours.

The first half of group is for skills practice review. The second half of group is lecture and discussion about new skills material. Please read the following FAQ's for other details.

When does the group meet?

Maple Leaf DBT offers two skills groups. Both meet on Wednesdays. One meets from 11:30 until 1:00 p.m. and the other from 4:00 p.m. until 6:30 p.m.

How many groups do I attend?

Everyone in Skills Group commits to one year of group.

How does the group run?

The year breaks down roughly into eight-week modules. During the first two weeks of each module, we'll talk about Core Mindfulness skills. The remaining six weeks are devoted to learning Distress Tolerance, Interpersonal Effectiveness, or Emotion Regulation skills. It takes about 24 to 26 weeks to work through the curriculum. Then the whole thing repeats again, so each member will be exposed to the entire curriculum twice. The reason for the second exposure to the skills is that repetition aids learning, and people invariably tell us that they got more out of training the second time around.

The first five minutes is spent doing a mindfulness practice. Then we have homework review for the next hour. During homework review, members have the chance to trouble-shoot homework practice or "toot their horns" about effective skills use. Following homework review is a ten-minute break. After break, we will learn, discuss, and practice new skills for about an hour. Then we will assign homework for the coming week, do a brief wind-down, and wrap up at 8:00 p.m.

The only deviations from this arrangement are for new members joining and for graduations. When new members join we will all spend a few minutes introducing ourselves. And of course when members graduate we have a brief ceremony marking their achievement.

How big is the group?

At Maple Leaf DBT, our group has room for eight members plus two group leaders, for a total of ten.

Is the group gender - specific?

Our group is open to both men and women.

Can I continue in skills group beyond one year?

For most people, one year of skills training goes by pretty quickly (it's hard to imagine, but it really does). Some people want to continue coming either to fine-tune their understanding of skills, or to have the structure of class to help them practice. Members who graduate from our skills training class can continue their involvement at any time, space permitting, for six-month increments.

What about individual DBT vs. other kinds of individual psychotherapy?

There is no clear research about what the effective ingredients in DBT are. What we know is that something in therapy works, and it may be that what works for one person is not sufficient for another.

It has been our experience that some people benefit from having a combination of individual DBT plus DBT skills group. Others seem to do just fine with having skills training and some non-DBT individual therapy. (*cont.*)

In the United States, most people involved with DBT attend skills group and do not have individual DBT sessions. We are happy to talk with you about this question, but unfortunately can offer no guidance based on science because this question simply has not been answered yet.

What is required for me to participate?

All skills group members must be in ongoing individual therapy. If you are not already in individual therapy you will need to find yourself a therapist. If you're interested in finding an individual DBT therapist there are some possibilities listed on our Resources page.

Do I have to be diagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) to join the skills group?

Regardless of what your diagnosis may be, the main question we ask people to consider is the following, do I have the skills deficits in the areas that the skills group addresses?

While DBT has been shown to be effective for chronically suicidal women with BPD, there is no reason to think that it won't be effective for other people as well. Currently DBT is being tested on women with eating disorders and on both men and women with heroin addiction. DBT has been researched on people prone to irritability, and is being taught to teens and their families.

So as you consider skills group, ask yourself if you're having trouble maintaining relationships, or feeling like the rollercoaster of emotions is getting the better of you, or having difficulty doing well during life's inevitable bumps, or feeling like a stranger to yourself.

What is a Diary Card?

A Diary Card is a half-sheet of paper that helps group members track their skills practice over the week. All members bring diary cards to skills training sessions and we look at them during your skills practice review. All of the DBT skills are listed. The purpose of this card is to help you highlight your skillfulness and recognize when you are being skillful.

Most of the time when people come to skills group they have a self-critical habit of mind - they tend to be self-judgmental. The Diary Card is one way to counteract that self-judgment, as it allows group members to just notice and describe what they do that is skillful.

The card also serves as a way for your individual therapist and us to track your skills use over the week without you having to spend time remembering it.

Where is Maple Leaf DBT?

We are located at the Maple Leaf Professional Center, 7812 Lake City Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115.

How much does DBT Skills Training cost?

DBT Skills Training runs very much like a college class.

Tuition is \$600 each for four eight week modules, and \$675 for two nine week modules.

Payment is due to Bob Goettle at the beginning of the first session.

Under some circumstances we may make other payment arrangements - if there is some question here, please call us and we will do what we can to make it work.

The total cost of one year of skills training is \$3750.

Unfortunately because group rates offered by health insurance companies are well below our costs, we do not accept health insurance.

How do I sign up and/or get more information?

We would like to hear from you! Please call or email either of us to get more information. Bob Goettle can be reached at (206) 372-8400 or at bob@mapleleafdbt.com. Noelle Mestres can be reached at (425) 771-7036 or at noelle@mapleleafdbt.com.