Accessing the groups

- Please speak with the person from your care team (i.e. your care coordinator or doctor) to find out if/how these groups may be of help. This person will initially speak with the group facilitators/team managers.

- Following discussion, the group facilitators will arrange a ½ hour meeting with you face to face. The aim at this meeting is to explain the need for commitment; talk about the groups and how they work. There will be an opportunity for questions.

- If there is agreement that the groups could be helpful, and there is a sense of sufficient commitment from you, then you will be accepted onto the programme and given details of start times for the next available group.

- You will be given the DBT client contract to read, sign and return.

Service contact details

Please contact your local Psychological Therapies Co-ordinator for further details:

South Somerset – 01935 428420
Taunton – 01823 368518
Somerset Coast – 01278 720220
Mendip – 01749 836717

This leaflet is available in other formats, including easy read summary versions and other languages upon request. If this would be helpful to you, please speak to a member of staff.

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Author: CBT/DBT and DBT/ES Groups
Development Coordinator
Ref: SS PST 005

Headquarters:
Somerse Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
2nd Floor, Mallard Court, Express Park, Bristol Road, Bridgwater TA6 4RN
Tel: 01278 432 000 Fax: 01278 432 099
Email: foundationtrust@sompar.nhs.uk
Web: www.sompar.nhs.uk
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DBT Skills Groups

The Trust offers DBT (Dialectical Behaviour Therapy) Skills Groups only as part of our Psychological Therapies Service.

The groups are open to people who struggle with relationship difficulties; problems with changeable emotions, or difficulty in controlling troublesome or distressing thoughts. The groups will also help those who find themselves engaging in risky behaviours such as self harm.

People will learn the necessary skills to help them manage problems with anger, suicidal and self-harming behaviour, episodic depression, irritability or anxiety, intense or chaotic relationships, impulsivity, stress and feelings of emptiness.

What is DBT?

Dialectics is a way of understanding the world, a philosophy; it holds that there is always more than one way to see a situation, and more than one way to solve a problem. It teaches us that: all people have unique qualities and different points of view. It is important not to see the world in “black and white” or “all or nothing” as there are many ways to understand a situation. Things can change and if you can understand yourself, then change is possible.

Understanding yourself and your world helps expand your thoughts, helps to resolve standoffs and conflicts and lets you explore new ways of behaving.

There are four Skills Modules designed to teach new Behaviours:

Mindfulness (2 weeks)
This is a key part of the programme, and helps people to learn how to focus their mind and attention, and to accept non-judgemental feedback.

Distress Tolerance (6 weeks)
This helps people learn how to tolerate stress, distress and impulsive behaviour by finding ways to survive and tolerate difficult moments in helpful ways, rather than feeling (or being) self-destructive.

Emotion Regulation (6 weeks)
Teaches how to identify and name current feelings, to move away from reacting to feelings so strongly, and to increase positive emotions.

Interpersonal Effectiveness (6 weeks)
Teaches how to ask more effectively for what you need, how to say ‘no’ when needed, and how to manage conflict in relationships.

Groups run weekly for 2 hours for 24 weeks

- Mindfulness sessions are run at the beginning of each module, and underpin each module.
- People are encouraged to use the skills and practice between sessions. It has been shown that practice is a crucial part of learning the new skills needed to bring about change. Homework is set and followed up at the beginning of the next session.
- Handouts are provided to group members to cover the skills, you will be responsible for those.
- Regular attendance is expected.
- Each module is 8 weeks, 2 weeks Mindfulness, 6 weeks for the topic.