

DBT Skills Group

Ground Rules for Participation

Because groups are run differently from individual therapy, we want to review the basic policies and ground rules for group participation.

Attendance:

The group meets from 2:30-4:00 or 4:30 p.m. on Wednesdays. DBT Skills Groups are structured so that clients can learn all of the skills in twelve sessions. We ask that each group member commit to attending all twelve sessions. The material offered in each session builds upon each session. Absences detract from the group's ability to work as a unit, and we encourage you to consider this group as a primary commitment. If you must miss a session, however, please give at least 24-hours' notice. If you know ahead of time that you will miss a meeting, please let group members know at the previous meeting. You will be allowed one missed session at no cost for each 12-week module, but you are expected to pay for any other missed sessions during that period (which may run longer than 12 calendar weeks). Groups will start and end on time; please honor this, as late arrivals are disruptive.

Fees:

The fee for the group is \$75.00 per session. Fees are payable at the beginning of each session in cash or check. Any problems or questions about your bill should be discussed with one of the facilitators outside of the regular group time.

Confidentiality:

What is said in group stays in group. You may wish to discuss your own experiences in group with others, but the names of other group members and their experiences must be safely guarded. Confidentiality may only be broken if someone reports the following:

1. Danger to herself or others
2. Abuse of a minor or an elderly person.

In either of these events, it will be the facilitators, not the members, who break confidentiality to report what was said to the appropriate people.

Individual Psychotherapy:

All members will participate in individual psychotherapy while participating in the DBT Skills Group. Dr. Ezust or Dr. Bliss will be contacting your therapist each week to discuss your progress in group and individual therapy.

Self-harm:

Members are asked not to discuss self-harm gestures and attempts with each other except during group or individual therapy. Members are expected, however, to report any thoughts of harming themselves to their individual therapist and to the group facilitators. A member is encouraged to accept the help that is offered to her when she reports thoughts of harming herself.

Group Process:

In order to help members stay as emotionally present as possible during group sessions, issues between group members or between group members and leaders take priority over other issues. Similarly, if something is interfering with a members' ability to be present in group, it is important to bring that up.

We encourage each group member to take risks but to proceed at her own pace. We will support members in finding a pace that works for them. In addition, we encourage the expression of anger when appropriate. However, you may not physically hurt yourself or anyone else, and if you break anything, you must pay for it.

A member of the group may not enter into a primary relationship with another member of the group. In addition, there will be no sexual contact between group members or between the group leaders and members. If group members have contact outside of group, we ask that you let the group know that you did so (although contact outside the group is certainly permissible).

Substance Use:

Smoking during group or in the building is not permitted. Members are expected to be alcohol and drug-free (except for prescription medication taken as directed) during sessions.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss these policies, we will be happy to do so. Please see www.oakhurstpsychotherapy.com for DBT forms, the brochure, these rules, or information about the group facilitators. DBT forms are on the "Links" page.