**Northampton Center for DBT**

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**Contract for Outpatient Services**

**Welcome to Northampton Center for DBT**

Thank you for applying for admission to Northampton Center for DBT. Please read this document closely as it includes important information about Northampton Center for DBT services and policies. Feel free to ask questions about the information herein and understand that, when you sign this document, it will represent an agreement between yourself and Northampton Center for DBT (NCDBT).

**Application Process**

Following a brief telephone interview, participants will meet with Kristen to assess eligibility as a candidate for the Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) skills class. You and Kristen will work together to determine if the classes offered through NCDBT are right for you and determine eligibility.

**Concurrent Individual Therapy**

All participants will be strongly encouraged to be involved in individual counseling while participating in this program. There may be times when contact between your therapist and NCDBT could be helpful for additional support. Participants in this program will be asked to sign a release of information form allowing for communication with individual therapists. If you would like help in finding a therapist, referrals will gladly be provided.

**Treatment Risks and Benefits**

The primary goals of the class are to support participants in increasing their abilities to respond effectively to emotions, events and interpersonal difficulties. As is true of all types of psycho-educational classes, individuals may experience uncomfortable emotions like sadness, anxiety or anger during the process. Participants are also expected to experience reduction of unwanted behaviors and emotions, improvements in ability to manage interpersonal conflicts and increased confidence and competence in a number of realms. There is no way to guarantee what the process or outcome will involve for each individual.

**Class Meetings**

DBT skills classes will be held Thursday evenings in Northampton. Class begins promptly at 6 p.m. and end at 7:30 p.m. It is important that participants make every effort to be punctual.

In each class, Kristen will teach DBT skills and assign homework from Marsha Linehan’s, (the creator of DBT) Skills Training Manual for Treating Borderline Personality Disorder. Completing this homework is a vital component of developing familiarity and competence with the skills and homework will be shared during the class. Because of the seminar-like nature of the class, the focus is on learning skills. It is not a therapy group, therefore processing of problems or symptoms in depth will not be addressed.

**Confidentiality**

Clients are not to release identifying information about anyone in the class to anyone outside the class. Although this is a class and not psychotherapy, Northampton Center for DBT follows confidentiality standards in the field of psychotherapy. This means that, in general, the law protects the privacy of all communications between participant and group leaders, and Northampton Center for DBT can release information about a client to others only with the participant’s written consent. However, there are a few exceptions of which participants should be aware:

* In most legal proceedings, participants have the right to prevent Northampton Center for DBT from providing any information about their treatment. However, in some situations involving child custody and those in which a participant’s emotional condition is an important issue, a judge may order our testimony if they determine that the issues demand it.
* There are some situations in which we are legally obligated to take action to protect others from harm, even if we must reveal some information about a participant’s treatment. This is the case in situations where it is our belief that a child, elderly person or disabled person is being abused or if we believe that a participant is threatening serious bodily harm to him or herself or someone else. Actions that we may be required to take in such cases include but are not limited to: contacting the potential victim, alerting law enforcement, filing a report with a state protective agency, contacting the participants’ designated emergency contacts or seeking hospitalization for the participant. These situations have rarely occurred in my practice and experience. If a similar situation should occur, Northampton Center for DBT will make every effort to avoid revealing participants’ identities and personal information as well as to alert the participant to the situation and work with the participant to identify and prepare for steps that must be taken.
* In complicated cases it may be necessary to consult with other professionals about a case. In this situation every effort would be made to avoid revealing the identity of participants. Any consultant is also legally bound to maintain confidentiality. Unless a participant objects, participants would not be alerted about these consultations unless it seems vital to our work together.

While this written summary of exceptions to confidentiality should prove helpful in informing clients about potential problems, participants’ questions or concerns regarding this information are welcome.

**Other Group Policies**

 Beverages are allowed during class, but not food.

- Cell phone use is not permitted during class.

 Participants are not allowed to attend group while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

 Participants must behave respectfully towards other participants and DBT trainers.

- Please refrain from wearing scented products to class to be sensitive to other participants physical needs.

**Professional Fees**

The cost of an intake assessment is $125. Each 90 minute class costs $65. Participants will enroll for 8 weeks in the Interpersonal Effectiveness Modules and for 10 weeks in the Emotion Regulation and Distress Tolerance Modules. Full payment ($520/8 weeks; $650/10 weeks) is due in advance of each module and participants are not reimbursed for missed sessions. Please be aware that these classes are not covered by insurance and all payments are nonrefundable.

**Contacting DBT Trainer**

The DBT group leader’s role is to instruct and facilitate classes. The group leader is not available for emotional support outside the classroom. I, Kristen, encourage you to address any individual counseling issues with your therapist. If participants are experiencing an emergency, they should contact Northampton’s 24-hour Emergency Services (413-586-5555), 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. Reasons to contact Kristen include attendance issues (i.e. anticipated late arrival, missing a session) and issues regarding homework (i.e. requesting assignments after missing a session). Contact Kristen (978-697-3903) in such cases.

The participant’s signature below indicates that you, the participant, have read the information in pages 1-3 of Northampton Center for DBT’s Contract for Outpatient Services and agree to abide by its terms during the course of your work with Northampton Center for DBT.

Participant’s Signature and Date:

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Participant’s Printed Name:

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Northampton Center for DBT Trainer Signature and Date:

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***Thank you for joining Northampton Center for DBT. I look forward to working with you!***