DBT Foundations: Theory and Mindfulness: Facilitator Pack

THE TALKING THERAPIES UK FACILITATOR PACKS



DBT Foundations: Theory and Mindfulness: Facilitator Pack

Teaching the course to a group

A facilitator pack · 2 sessions · for trainers

TALKING THERAPIES UK

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First edition, 2026.

This pack accompanies the course “DBT Foundations: Theory and Mindfulness” on Talking Therapies UK Training & CPD and its course book. It is drawn from the course and is kept current with it: whenever the course changes, the pack is set again.

This printing was set on 27 October 2026 from the course as it stood that day.

A note on teaching from this pack. It supports qualified trainers and supervisors teaching within their competence. Running the course from it does not award the course’s CPD certificate, which participants gain by completing the course online.

Set in Poppins and Roboto, the Talking Therapies UK typefaces.

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How to use this pack

This pack is for trainers and supervisors who teach the Talking Therapies UK course “DBT Foundations: Theory and Mindfulness” to a group: a session for each of its 2 modules, with timed plans, the points to draw out, group activities and discussion questions, the course’s assessment with answers, an attendance register and an evaluation form.

Part 1 sets out the course and how to plan it. Part 2 has a timed plan for each session, built from the course’s own modules, lessons and practice tasks; read it with the module it teaches. Part 3 holds the course’s assessment with its answers, an attendance register and an evaluation form.

What this pack covers

- Plan the course as 2 sessions
- Follow a timed plan for each session
- Draw out each lesson’s key points
- Run each lesson’s practice task as a group activity
- Check understanding with the course’s own questions
- Keep a register and gather evaluations

PART 1

Planning the course

What the course covers, who it is for, and how to run it.

CHAPTER 1

About DBT Foundations: Theory and Mindfulness

Dialectical Behaviour Therapy began where other treatments were failing, with clients whose emotions arrived faster, harder and longer than anyone had taught them to manage, and it remains the most influential answer the field has produced. This foundation course teaches DBT from first principles for clinicians, skills trainers and trainees, assuming no prior DBT experience.

The first module builds the theoretical ground: Linehan's biosocial theory, in which pervasive emotion dysregulation grows from the transaction between a vulnerable nervous system and an invalidating environment, taught with the compassion and precision that make it, delivered well, the treatment's first intervention. You will study the founding dialectic of acceptance and change, validation as a technology with levels rather than a warmth to be hoped for, and the structure of a full DBT programme, including the consultation team that treats the therapist. The second module teaches core mindfulness as DBT actually trains it: wise mind located experientially between reasonable mind and emotion mind, the what skills of observe, describe and participate, and the how skills of non-judgemental, one-mindful and effective practice, the anchoring capacities on which every later skill depends.

Substantial written lessons with key points and practice tasks that put the concepts to work, with a study tutor throughout, a final assessment, and a personalised certificate on passing. The ground floor of the whole DBT pathway, built properly.

By the end of the course, participants will be able to

- Explain dialectics as DBT's philosophical engine: thesis, antithesis and synthesis in clinical form
- Describe the biosocial model and use it to make dysregulation comprehensible and non-blaming
- Teach the mindfulness 'what' skills: observe, describe and participate
- Teach the mindfulness 'how' skills: non-judgementally, one-mindfully and effectively
- Explain wise mind and coach clients to find it
- Structure skills teaching: didactic, practice, feedback and homework

Who it is for

The course is pitched at practitioners and trainees meeting the subject for the first time, and colleagues in allied roles who want a grounding in it.

At a glance

- 2 sessions of about 180 minutes, one for each of the course's modules.
- The online course is accredited for 6 hours of CPD.
- Each participant needs the course book, or access to the online course, for reading between sessions.

CHAPTER 2

Planning the sessions

Run one session for each module, a week or a fortnight apart, so that participants can read the module and try its practice task between sessions. The sessions can also be run as a block over two or three days.

OVERVIEW

The course at a glance

Session	Module	Lessons	Time
1	Theory and stance	5	180 minutes
2	Core mindfulness	4	180 minutes

The group

- Six to sixteen participants: enough for small-group work, few enough for everyone to contribute.
- Agree ground rules at the first session: confidentiality, respect for different experience, and how participants will speak about their own clients (with nothing that could identify them).
- Ask before the course about access needs, and send any reading a week ahead.

What you need

- A copy of this pack, and the course book or the online course for each participant.
- A flipchart or whiteboard, and space for groups of three or four to work.
- Printed copies of the attendance register and the evaluation form in Part 3, which you may copy for the groups you run.

Keeping it safe

Training about psychological difficulties can bring up participants' own experience. Say at the start that anyone may step out, have someone available to talk to afterwards, and know where to point a participant who is struggling: their GP, their own supervisor or employee assistance programme, or Samaritans on 116 123.