

DBT Essentials Training

I currently work within a young offender's mental health team as a CAMHS Practitioner and Occupational Therapist.

I attended the DBT essentials training by APT on the 26th-28th of November 2018 in Leicester at College Court. It was a 3-day course and upon completion I received Level 1 APT Accreditation in DBT. Following the course, we were also invited to undertake an online exam to progress to Level 2. The fee covered the tuition, a workbook, lunch and refreshments.

The course gives an overview of the basics in DBT, its development as a therapy, what it is and its components including team consultation, phone support and group skills. In addition, the training offers an overview of the following topics applicable to DBT; validation, metaphors, problem solving, contingency management, emotional regulation, interpersonal effectiveness, mindfulness, distress tolerance, walking the middle path. The training offered multiple methods of learning including a PowerPoint presentation, group discussions, group work, videos, individual tasks and practicing skills such as mindfulness.

I found the training very informative and feel like it has developed my understanding of DBT, how it differs to other therapies, how it is designed to be offered within a DBT specialist team but also how I can apply it to my current role. I work with high risk young people who experience difficulties with emotional regulation and tolerating distress. Essentially DBT is aimed to help stabilise individuals which I feel is applicable to many other professionals working with individuals experiencing mental health difficulties. Having attended the training, I will be able to contribute to the implementation of a DBT skills group within my service as well as utilising various aspects of DBT within my individual sessions. One of the exercises explored as part of the training which I have already incorporated within a 1:1 session with a young person was chain analysis. Chain analysis involves focusing on an incident and for my client group this would be either self-harming or engaging in offending behaviours. This analysis not only looks at the steps that led the young person to the incident and the consequences afterwards but assists them in exploring what hypothetical alternatives they could have taken prior to the incident to have led them to another outcome.

I would highly recommend this training and the venue itself to any professional who is wanting to learn more about DBT, works with young people with mental health needs and wanting to utilise DBT skills within your current role or is due to start working within a specialist DBT team.