

## **Statement of Understanding for Consent for Therapy at Dialectical Behavior Therapy Center of San Diego (DBTCSD)**

Before beginning therapy at DBTCSD, it is important to fully understand what therapy will involve and the policies and procedures of the clinic. Please read this and ask for clarification if necessary before you sign. We keep a copy of this consent form at [www.dbsandiego.com](http://www.dbsandiego.com)

### **Our Approach to Psychotherapy**

Our therapy approach is cognitive-behavior therapy (CBT), which is a particular kind of therapy that involves the application of findings from psychology research to help individuals change in ways they would like to change. CBT is very present-focused, based on the belief that the current environment is very important in affecting our present emotions and behavior. The procedures used in CBT are generally intended to improve the person's well-being and quality of life by expanding the person's skills, abilities, and independence, and by improving abilities for managing emotions and the situations that trigger them. There is an emphasis in CBT on monitoring and evaluating the individual's progress to determine how effective the intervention is. Two specific forms of CBT we utilize are Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT). All of these approaches are very similar in that they help you develop various ways to effectively tolerate and change your emotions, control your behavior, improve relationships, and build a meaningful life. You will also practice expressing yourself fully and behaving in ways that will create better relationships. In doing so, it is important for us to focus on the positive and negative interactions between us because they are often similar to how you interact with other people, which allows you to experiment with different ways of relating, and then to take it to your relationships outside of therapy.

### **Our Treatment Team**

Milton Brown, Ph.D. is the head of the DBTCSD treatment team. Dr. Brown received a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from University of Washington in 2002 and received ten years of training in DBT from Marsha Linehan. Currently he is an associate professor at the California School of Professional Psychology at Alliant International University, for which he teach classes on cognitive behavior therapy and DBT.

DBT is a team-based treatment approach, and the team consists of staff therapists (paid employees) and clinic associates (therapists who are not employees of DBTCSD). The treatment team meets at least once per week to discuss current cases, and all therapists are available to all clinic patients when the primary therapist is needed but not available, for example in case of emergencies or out of town travel. DBTCSD staff therapists and clinic associates are listed at the end of this consent form and on our website [www.dbsandiego.com](http://www.dbsandiego.com).

### **Confidentiality**

All identifying information about your treatment and treatment records are kept confidential. Written records are kept in locked file cabinets in our offices, and electronic records are kept in a password-protected Microsoft Access database on our own DBTCSD computer. Information you submit through our web page will be sent anonymously by omitting your name (you will identify yourself using a combination of your month and day of birth, and the last four digits of your Social Security Number), and your data will be transmitted as scrambled text. If you prefer, you can arrive early before your session and do these forms in our waiting room or during your sessions. It is important to be aware that e-mail communication, especially non-encrypted e-mail, can be easily accessed by unauthorized users which can violate your confidentiality. We occasionally send clients email reminders about sessions and forms, which displays "DBT San Diego" ([dbsandiego@gmail.com](mailto:dbsandiego@gmail.com)) as the sender. Check below if you do not want to receive such emails from us.

The DBTCSD treatment team and our head office administrator, Pinh Brown, will have access to your personal information and treatment records, but will only view your information on a need-to-know basis. The DBTCSD treatment team meets at least once per week to discuss current cases. Office staff will access your personal information for the purpose of scheduling and billing, but will not have access to your clinical records. The law requires that we keep your records for seven years following treatment, at which point they are destroyed, except for a brief treatment summary.

Client's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Because we teach graduate students in psychology, we occasionally present cases to our students. We may discuss your case with them without sharing any possible identifying information. These students/interns are also bound by law and the ethics of our profession to keep all such case material confidential.

There are some exceptions to confidentiality according to state laws:

1. If you tell us, or we suspect, that a child, elderly person, or disabled person is being abused, either by neglect, assault, battery, or sexual molestation, or other forms of maltreatment, we are required by California state law to report our suspicion of such abuse to the appropriate state agency.
2. If you seriously threaten to harm someone else, we have the legal duty to warn that person and the police.
3. If you seriously threaten to harm yourself, we may need to contact the police and/or a family member.
4. If your records are subpoenaed by an attorney, they will not be released without your written consent. However, they must be released if a court order signed by a judge orders us to do so.
5. If you are using insurance, we may be asked by the insurance company for ongoing treatment reports. These would include a diagnosis, a summary of treatment to date, and plans for future sessions.

At DBTCSD, we continually strive to improve our understanding of the problems we treat and the ways to help people change. We sometimes statistically analyze questionnaires and outcomes of our clients and publish them in scientific journals in the hopes that other treatment providers can also learn ways to improve the care they provide. In publications, we never include client names or any possible identifying information.

Check here, if you do not consent to receive email reminders from us.

Check here, if you do not consent to publication of your numeric data.

## Services & Procedures

Individual therapy sessions are usually scheduled for 50 minutes, once per week. At times, sessions may be scheduled for 90 minutes or the frequency of sessions may be altered if there are indications that such changes would help reach your goals. Your primary individual therapist, but not your group therapists, will be available via telephone for helping you apply coping skills to challenging life situations.

## Fees & Methods of Payment

Our usual fees for 50 minute individual therapy sessions:

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| \$160 | Dr. Brown                                       |
| \$150 | Dr. Gutierrez                                   |
| \$120 | unlicensed therapist                            |
| \$200 | per individual session lasting 60 to 90 minutes |

Our usual fees for other services:

|       |   |             |
|-------|---|-------------|
| \$75  | per <u>adult</u> group therapy session              | 60-120 min. |
| \$80  | per <u>adolescent</u> group therapy session         | 90 min.     |
| \$600 | assessment of all DSM mental disorders              | 4 hrs       |
| \$300 | assessment of BPD and bipolar disorder              | 2 hrs       |
| \$225 | assessment of borderline personality disorder (BPD) | 90 min.     |

The base fee for individual therapy sessions includes 15 minutes per week of telephone contact for skills coaching. There will be an additional fee of \$20 for every 10 minutes of telephone-based skills coaching beyond the initial 15 minutes per week. The fee for off-site sessions will include driving time. The fee for diagnostic assessment interviews is \$75 per half-hour, such that if the assessment lasts shorter than the allocated time (see above), then part of the pre-paid fee will be refunded at the rate of \$75 for each 30 minute increment. We provide a written summary report of the problems and diagnoses following the final diagnostic assessment interview. The fee for returned checks is \$40.

Fees for assessments and individual therapy sessions are to be paid at the beginning of each session unless other arrangements are made in advance. Group sessions are billed like tuition at the beginning of each month. At the last group therapy session of each month, clients are to pay for all group sessions in the following month. Payments are required for missed group therapy sessions, even when you notify us in advance of your absence from group. Advanced payments for missed groups will not be refunded.

We do not accept credit card payments. If your health insurance plan covers psychotherapy, we will provide a statement that can be submitted to your insurance company. Ordinarily, we expect you to pay the fee

Client's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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billed and to obtain reimbursement for the insured portion from your insurance company. We are willing to mail your reimbursement paperwork directly to your insurance company if you prefer, which would include sending your diagnoses. If you cannot pay your full session fee, we can discuss a lower fee, a payment plan, or referral to another mental health provider. In January of each year session fees will increase \$5 per session to account for predictable increases in operating expenses. Unpaid balances may be reported to a credit bureau or collection agency, following reasonable attempts at collection.

### **Scheduling Sessions**

If you need to change or cancel an individual therapy session leave your therapist a telephone message (see Contact Information section, below). If you do not show up for a scheduled individual session, you will be charged your usual session fee unless you have canceled it 24 hours in advance. The late cancellation charge for individual therapy sessions will be waived if you cancel due to physical illness or an emergency and you leave your therapist a phone message as soon as possible; however, the fee will not be waived more than once every four months. Cancellations made via email will not be honored, and will still incur the full session fee. Payment is required for all missed group therapy sessions, however, regardless of your reason for missing, even when you notify us in advance of your absence from group. The group therapy fee will not be waived. If you are late for a session, the remaining minutes can be used for therapy. If at any point you have not attended a DBTCSD individual therapy session for more than 30 consecutive days, for any reason, we will end your treatment at DBTCSD. In such case, to resume therapy you will need to sign a new consent form, and until you officially resume therapy by attending another therapy session DBT therapists will not be available to you for skills coaching phone calls or crisis management.

### **Emergencies**

Generally, first call your primary individual therapist when emergencies arise. When your primary therapist is out of town or otherwise unavailable for extended periods of time, you can call other DBTCSD therapists (all phone numbers are listed at the end of this consent form). We may not always be available to you immediately by telephone but for emergencies you can expect a call back within about two hours. If you have a clinical emergency, you can also call the Crisis Line at 1-800-479-3339. If you believe you cannot maintain your own safety and life until we are in contact, or it is a medical emergency, we expect you to telephone 911 or go to a hospital emergency room and discuss your current situation and the possibility of admission to the hospital's psychiatric unit. We require that you notify us via telephone of psychiatric emergencies and that you do not communicate emergencies to us via email or telephone text messages.

### **Audio-Video Recording**

The audio and video of all assessments and treatment sessions will be digitally recorded and stored on a computer server at DBTCSD. The computer has strong pass-word protection and the door to this room is kept locked when not in use. Phone calls will be audio recorded if we believe you are at high risk for suicide, self-injury, or other serious behaviors. The primary purpose of these recordings is to enable us to provide the highest quality services to our clients. DBT is a team-based therapy in that all therapists receive consultation or supervision from other DBTCSD therapists, which involves occasionally reviewing therapy sessions in our weekly team meeting. You have the right to request certain sessions not be recorded, and to review your recordings and delete any portions you may wish to delete. We will never show your sessions to anybody other than current DBTCSD therapists unless we first get your written permission to do so. We will occasionally transcribe parts of your sessions, and will modify the written text to protect your identity. The video and audio recordings will be kept until you end therapy at DBTCSD, after which the audio files will be permanently deleted.

\_\_\_\_\_ Check here, if you do not consent to your sessions being recorded

### **Disc of Video Recordings**

Most clients will be given a DVD with digital recordings of videos of coping resources, including DBT skills training videos. We intend to only lend you the disk and ask that you return it before ending therapy with us. We are not authorized to give away these copy-righted materials.

Client's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Risks of Psychotherapy**

Psychotherapy is a complex process, and no guarantees can be made about it or that you will benefit from it; it is even possible that adverse effects can occur. This might include some worsening of symptoms or interpersonal difficulties. At any time you may ask us to explain the approach and techniques, and we will be glad to explain them. If you have any concerns about your treatment, please raise these with one of us. You may also choose to end treatment at any time – we only ask that you discuss this with us in advance so that we can try to work out any problems between us. If there are other therapists or alternative treatments that might better serve you, we will discuss these with you at that time.

I have read the above information and have had an opportunity to ask questions to clarify the conditions under which I consent to treatment. I have received a copy of this agreement. Furthermore, I give DBTCSD permission to thank \_\_\_\_\_ for sending me to DBTCSD.

Client’s printed name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Client’s signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Client’s signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Client’s signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Release of Information for Billing Purposes**

Some people request we send bills or payment summaries to their insurance company or to family members or other people who will pay for their therapy. By signing below, you authorize me to provide specific information on bills or payment summaries. Sometimes insurance companies request additional clinical information such as treatment plans or summaries, before they will provide reimbursement. This information will become part of the insurance company files and will probably be stored in a computer. Though all insurance companies claim to keep such information confidential, we have no control over what they do with it once it is in their hands. You should know that insurance companies do sometimes share information with each other (or ask you to release it), and that sometimes this information may affect your ability to obtain life insurance, coverage for “pre-existing conditions,” etc. In some cases, they may share the information with a national medical information databank. We make every effort to protect your privacy and to minimize the details we release.

I authorize DBT Center of San Diego to provide the following information (those which I initial below) to \_\_\_\_\_ (name) at \_\_\_\_\_ (address & phone)

\_\_\_\_\_ name, date of birth, home address

\_\_\_\_\_ all fees and fee descriptions

\_\_\_\_\_ all diagnosis codes, except for \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ treatment plans and summaries and other basic information about your presenting problems.

Client’s signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# *Dialectical Behavior Therapy Center of San Diego (DBTCSD)*

## **DBTCSD Treatment Team**

The DBTCSD treatment team is headed by Milton Brown. Dr. Brown received a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from University of Washington in 2002 and completed two years of post-doctoral training in clinical psychology and behavior therapy at the Behavioral Research and Therapy Clinics (University of Washington). During these positions he received ten years of training in DBT from Marsha Linehan. He completed his clinical internship at the Veteran Affairs Palo Alto Healthcare System, which included training at the National Center for Post-traumatic Stress Disorder. Currently he holds a position as an assistant professor at the California School of Professional Psychology at Alliant International University, for which he teach classes on cognitive behavior therapy and DBT. His clinical work and research focus on the evaluation and treatment of anxiety disorders, borderline personality disorder, shame, and self-hatred. He holds an active psychology license in the state of California (Lic # PSY20785).

## **Staff Therapist Employees**

*Amanda Gutierrez* received a Psy.D. in clinical psychology from Azusa Pacific University in 2009, and completed her post-doctoral training at the Sharp Mesa Vista Hospital DBT Intensive Outpatient Program. 2005-2006 she worked at the DBT program at Harbor Medical Center at University of California at Los Angeles. She holds an active psychology license in the state of California (Lic # PSY23873).

*Kristen Dahlin* is working towards her Ph.D. in clinical psychology at Alliant International University, having already received a Master of Arts in Psychology from Alliant. She has worked with adults with a variety of disorders including mood disorders, psychosis, substance abuse, and personality disorders. She worked at the Trauma Research Institute at Alliant since 2009, and completed specialized training in DBT and treating anxiety in youth. She is currently registered in the state of California as a psychological assistant (PSB), but is not yet licensed in California. Her clinical work is supervised by Dr. Brown.

*Julia Nance* is working towards her Ph.D. in clinical psychology at Alliant International University, having already received a Master's degree from Alliant. She has extensive training in evidence-based cognitive-behavioral treatments for emotional disorders. Her research is focused on using biofeedback to promote emotion regulation in borderline personality disorder. She also works at the San Diego LGBT Community Center. Her clinical work is supervised by Dr. Brown.

If you wish to make a complaint about our activities as therapists you can contact the California Board of Psychology (1-866-503-3221).

## **Clinic Associates**

*Leslie Karwoski Anderson* (Lic # PSY 24069) received a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from the University of Kansas in 2007, began training in DBT on her internship at Duke University, and 2007-2010 received DBT training from Marsha Linehan and worked at the Dialectical Behavior Therapy Center of Seattle. She received extensive training in DBT and evidence-based treatments for mood disorders, eating disorders, and other problems related to emotion dysregulation. She has experience with treating adults, adolescents, and their families. She has a clinical faculty appointment in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of California at San Diego. She has co-authored book chapters and articles on eating disorders. Dr. Anderson is an associate of DBT Center of San Diego, but is not an employee.

*Jill Stoddard* (Lic # PSY21852) received a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from Boston University where she worked at the highly regarded Center for Anxiety and Related Disorders. She received extensive training in the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of anxiety and mood disorders. She is currently the Director of the Center for Stress and Anxiety Management and she is also an assistant professor at Alliant International University.

## **Contact Information**

|                  |          |
|------------------|----------|
| Milton Brown     | 619-602- |
| Amanda Gutierrez | 619-861- |
| Kristen Dahlin   | 805-453- |
| Leslie Anderson  | 206-948- |

Client's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_