



Patient Information on Policies, Procedures and Practices of Central Coast DBT (CCDBT) and Informed Consent for Treatment

This document contains important information about Central Coast DBT treatment, psychologist-patient relationship as well as our office policies. There is also a brief summary of information about the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), a Federal Law that provides privacy protections and patient rights with regard to the use and disclosure of your Protected Health Information (PHI). In compliance with HIPAA, you will also be provided with a Notice of Privacy Practices, which explains this in greater detail. It is important that you read this document carefully and do not hesitate to contact us with questions.

Psychotherapy Service and Procedures

A “Psychotherapy patient” or “treatment” relationship does not exist until an initial evaluation is completed and your signature is appended and dated at the bottom of this form. Patients may discontinue treatment at any time, and it is always recommended that they do so after discussion with their therapist. Similarly, your therapist may need to terminate your treatment if, in his/her judgment you are not benefiting from treatment or are non-compliant with treatment requirements. We will offer appropriate referrals to assure your continuum of care and operate from a best practices perspective. These referrals may include the following: individual and family therapy, group therapy and medication management.

Components of CCDBT’s Comprehensive DBT Program

Comprehensive DBT includes several modes of treatment including individual therapy, group skills training, phone coaching and a therapist consultation group. Initially you will meet with Dr. Vigna to assess your readiness for entry into our DBT Program or Skills Group. Comprehensive DBT requires a significant time commitment as well as significant motivation and commitment to work hard to make changes. Once your level of readiness and commitment is determined, your work towards Building A Life Worth Living begins!

- Initial Consultation: This is a ninety (90) minute individual session.
- DBT Individual Therapy: This is a fifty (60) minute individual session. The session will be scheduled with your therapist at an agreed upon time. If you are unable to attend, you must provide 24 hours’ notice in advance to avoid charges. Individual DBT sessions include Diary Card and Behavior Chain Analysis review and process.
- DBT Skills Group: This is a weekly ninety (90) minute group involving education on DBT skills to allow for you to learn the skills so you can begin to apply them. All clients MUST be working with an individual therapist for admission to this group.
- Phone Coaching: This is provided to clients between therapy sessions to allow for generalization of skills.
- DBT Consultation: This is a weekly group for treating psychologists to allow for assurance that treatment is being provided effectively.

Risks & Benefits

Psychotherapy can have benefits and risks. The goal of mental health treatment is to decrease target symptoms. Since therapy often involves discussions around certain unpleasant aspects of your life, you may experience uncomfortable feelings of sadness, anger, guilt, frustration, loneliness and helplessness. Psychotherapy may increase these feelings and symptoms may worsen before they improve. Symptoms may continue, or new symptoms may emerge during the course of treatment; however, the hope is that this is temporary and through psychotherapy many benefits will evolve. Psychotherapy often leads to improved relationships, solutions to specific issues, and significant reduction in feelings of anxiety and depression. You will be encouraged to utilize skills to help cope with difficult emotions, change destructive patterns of thinking, improve interpersonal relationships and hopefully impact your overall behavior and wellness in a positive manner. However, there are no guarantees of what the process will mean for you. Alternative treatments and therapeutic modalities may need to be considered. Please do not hesitate to ask any questions that may arise during treatment.

Limits of Confidentiality



The law protects the privacy of all communications between a patient and psychotherapist. In most situations, treatment information can only be released if you sign a written authorization form that meets certain legal requirements as imposed by HIPAA and/or California law.

- It is legally required of us that we act to prevent physical harm to yourself or others when there is “clear and imminent” danger of that happening. In cases of imminent suicidal behavior, the therapist may consider notification of family members as one means to protect the patient, but this would typically be discussed with the patient first.
- We are legally required to report ongoing child, elder, and disabled abuse.
- If you are involved in a court proceeding and a request is made for information concerning your diagnosis and treatment, such information is protected by the psychotherapist-patient privilege. Your psychotherapist cannot disclose any information without a court order or your written consent.
- We may have to release your records when ordered to do so by a court subpoena. However, we will discuss the details of privilege with you beforehand and request a written release from you if we judge this to be in your best interest.
- If you file a lawsuit or complaint against your psychotherapist, he/she may disclose relevant information regarding your treatment in order to defend himself/herself.
- As a DBT therapist, it is normal practice to consult with other DBT professionals to ensure the highest quality of patient care. Your therapist will make every effort to avoid revealing PHI, and the other professionals are legally bound to keep the contents of the consultation confidential. Unless you object, your therapist will not disclose these consultations unless she/he feels that it is important for your work together.
- We may need to release information regarding you to insurance carriers as required for payment or review of a claim.
- We may use a fax machine or email to send treatment plans and other evaluations to your insurance company, specific agencies and other providers. Although we make every attempt to safeguard this information, faxed and emailed information is not necessarily guaranteed confidential.

DBT Skills Training Group Confidentiality: It is of utmost importance that all group members maintain confidentiality and neither disclose the content of sessions nor the identity of fellow group members. It is highly recommended that any meaningful exchange outside the group also be discussed in the group. In skills training group, the other members of the group are not therapists. They are not regulated by the same ethics and laws that bind CCDBT psychologists such as the limits of confidentiality and the reporting laws have been outlined earlier in this document. While the expectation is that all group members will maintain confidentiality, you cannot be certain that they will always keep what you say in the group confidential. You are ultimately responsible for what you say and what you think, feel, or do with the feedback you receive in the group.

Professional Records

The laws and standards of our profession require that we keep treatment records. You are entitled to receive a copy of your records, or we can prepare a summary for you instead. Because these are professional records, they can be misinterpreted and/or be upsetting to untrained readers. If you wish to see your records, we recommend that you review them with us so that we can discuss the content. You will be charged for time spent copying or reviewing records

Appointments and Cancellations

Individual Sessions: Sessions are arranged by appointment only. If an appointment is cancelled or missed without 24-hour prior notice, a regular charge will be made to your account.

DBT Group Therapy: If you miss a group therapy session (no show or cancellation), you will be unable to make up the session and the regular charge will be placed on your account. If you miss four (4) consecutive group sessions (no show or cancellation of group therapy), you will no longer be allowed to attend. You may reapply for services after the twenty-four (24) Week curriculums.

Communication

Dr. Vigna frequently communicates with patients via cell phone. This includes calls, texts and email. Phone coaching is often done via text messaging. Please understand that your confidentiality is always compromised when communicating by electronic devices or mail. There is always the risk of breaches in confidentiality when electronic or mail communication of any type is used for private information. Your use of such means of communication with your psychotherapist constitutes implied consent for reciprocal use of electronic and mail communication. Phone and email communication with Dr. Vigna, or other clinicians affiliated with Central Coast



DBT, should not be utilized in the case of mental health emergencies. If you are at risk of hurting yourself or anyone else, please call 911 and/or the mental health crisis hotline.

Please circle whether you authorize contact by cellular phone via calls and/or texts and email.

YES

NO

Fees and Payment

Individual Sessions: There are charges for initial assessments, consultations, therapy, skills training or other services you may request. The fee for a ninety (90) minute initial consultation is \$200.00. Dr. Vigna's fee is \$180.00 for a sixty (60) minute individual therapy. Fees are prorated for longer sessions.

DBT Skills Group Fees and Payment: The fee for the twenty-four (24) week adult curriculum is \$1,680.00. The fee for the twenty (24) week adolescent curriculum that also includes at least one caregiver is \$2,400.00. Each weekly group session lasts 90 minutes. DBT Skills Training group fees are payable in part at the start of each module: Adults - \$420 at the start of each of the four modules; Adolescents - \$480 at the start of each of the five modules. In other words, the fee for each module is due before each Mindfulness module as this module is repeated prior to the other modules. The fee for DBT Skills group is non-refundable. In some cases, clients are permitted to pay for the skills training groups weekly as they go.

All group fees include brief telephone coaching calls/texts (less than 15 minutes). If you require more than two coaching calls per week, or need coaching calls longer than 15 minutes, you will be billed at a prorated rate based on the session rate in ten (10) minute increments.

Forms of Payment: We accept cash or checks. Superbills or invoices will be provided at the end of each month (usually by email). If writing a check, please make the check payable to Angela Vigna, Psy. D. and mail it to 5985 Cuesta Verde Goleta, CA 93117. Returned checks will incur a \$35.00 returned check fee.

Canceling a session with less than 24 hours' notice will result in you being billed at the standard session rate and missed appointments are not reimbursable by insurance. Please give careful consideration to canceling a session with less than 24 hours' notice.

Reports and Collaterals: If you request phone contact, in-person consultation, and/or written reports for schools, physicians, and/or insurance companies for example, you will be charged per the time spent at your regular session fee in ten (10) minute increments.

If you become involved in legal proceedings that require our participation, you will be charged for all of our professional time including preparation and transportation costs to court.

Insurance Coverage: We are not contracted with any insurance company as an in-network provider; therefore, we do not submit insurance claims or bill insurance companies. We request that you pay the full fee for each session when billed for individual and DBT skills group sessions. We can provide you with a superbill to submit to your insurance company for potential coverage. It is your responsibility to verify how much your insurance company will reimburse you when you submit your claims. We do not guarantee how much your insurance company will reimburse you; however, most of Dr. Vigna's clients do get some reimbursement due to DBT being an evidenced based treatment for emotion dysregulation and due to the lack of providers who offer DBT in Santa Barbara. It is suggested that you contact your insurance company case manager prior to beginning treatment and ask about the options for reimbursement for DBT, including the possibility for a Single Case Agreement (SCA).

Actions that shall result in the termination of the agreement

Actions that shall result in discharge include, but are not limited to, the use of drugs or alcohol, holding or trafficking any drugs or paraphernalia, holding or trafficking any weapons, and any violence to another patient or staff member. The patient also understands that any violation of the rules signed and dated by both patient and the Central Coast DBT staff may result in termination of the



agreement. Patient acknowledges that Central Coast DBT rules are necessary to provide a safe and supportive recovery environment.

Patient Rights

HIPAA provides you with a number of rights which briefly include the right to amend the information in your record, to limit what information is disclosed and to whom, to request restrictions as to how you are contacted, and to receive an Accounting of Disclosures or a list of all information that has been released about you. You can also file a complaint about our policies and procedures regarding your records with the Federal Department of Health and Human Services. Please review the Notice of Privacy carefully.

Complaints and Grievances

Any patient who has a grievance arising from their treatment at Central Coast DBT may present their grievance, verbally or in writing to their therapist. This individual will investigate the nature of the grievance and seek to reach an acceptable and reasonable resolution in a timely manner. However, if the patient continues to be dissatisfied with the decision made, they are encouraged to take their grievance outside the program (e.g. state licensing board, patient rights advocacy group). All grievances will be kept confidential unless the law requires that they be disclosed. All investigations and communications regarding the grievance will be documented in patient's file.

Consent to Treat a Minor

Central Coast DBT generally requires the consent of both parents prior to providing any services to a minor child. If any question exists regarding the authority of a parent or caregiver to give consent for psychotherapy, we will require copies of supporting legal documentation such as a custody order prior to the commencement of services. If your child participates in treatment, please understand the importance of allowing him/her to develop a confidential relationship with your child's psychologist. As such, you understand that most personal information that your child discusses with his/her psychologist will not ordinarily be shared with you. Instead, your child's psychologist will provide you with general summaries of your child's progress without sharing private details. However, please understand that the office is committed to inform you about unusual or dangerous symptoms or behaviors.



Client Consent to Psychotherapy

I have read this statement, had sufficient time to be sure that I considered it carefully, asked any questions that I needed to, and understand it. I understand the limits to confidentiality required by law. I understand the fee per session and my rights and responsibilities as a client, and my psychologist's responsibilities to me. I understand that I can end therapy at any time I wish.

Client Signature: _____

Date: _____

Client Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____