

# Handbook of Available Resources Minneapolis VAMC

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Please be aware that dates for programs are subject to change.  
Please contact your VA Healthcare Provider to verify  
correct dates and locations.

## **Action Planning for Wellness and Recovery**

The goals of APWR: To create plans to manage mental health symptoms and create crisis plans. This treatment is used for any mental health issues.

### **What to expect:**

- Group format, completing one session each, for 10 sessions.
- A group of men and women, 6-12 people.
- The group is currently part of research examining therapy dog participation in groups.
- Patients are randomly assigned to a group with or without a therapy dog.
- Patients with dog phobias or severe allergies are NOT appropriate for APWR at this time.

If you are interested, please ask healthcare provider to refer you.

## **ADS Relapse Prevention Program**

### **Goals of RP:**

- To provide patients a refresher course in relapse prevention skills they have learned in the past through other treatments
- Gain possible new coping skills

### **What to Expect:**

- The group will take place on Tuesday(s) and Thursday(s) from 1000-1200 for 3 weeks
- Group, two times weekly for 3 weeks
- The Relapse Prevention program is less intensive than a primary treatment and is intended for veterans whose goal is abstinence but have recently had relapse or may be at elevated risk for relapse

**To register:**

Drop-in at Intensive Outpatient /Relapse Prevention screening group Fri at 9:00am in 1J-127 \*You must check-in between 9:00 and 9:30 a.m. at 1J-127 in the Addiction Recovery Services area. Late arrivals will be asked to return the following week.

# **GROUP THERAPY MENTAL HEALTH INFORMATION**

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# **Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)**

## **Group for Recovery**

If you cope with emotions, thoughts, or memories that bother you by trying to avoid them and if this gets in the way of your life causing isolation, withdrawal, or other ways of “escaping”, ACT may help you.

ACT can be an effective treatment for depression, anxiety, chronic pain, and other areas where people use avoidance-based coping.

### **The goals of ACT:**

- Reduce avoidance-based behaviors by learning acceptance-based skills.
- Learn what values are important to you, what kind of a person you want to be, and what you want your life to stand for.
- Increase participation in life activities and experiences you value.
- Learn to accept what you cannot control.

### **What to expect:**

- One 90 minute session every week for 8 weeks, followed by two monthly “booster” sessions.
- There are usually 8-12 people (both men and women) and two group facilitators.
- Each session starts with a Mindfulness exercise, followed by review of take home tasks, and ends with a review of new skills or group exercises.
- Stories and group “experiential” exercises help teach ACT skills and concepts.

### **You must be willing to:**

- Do the group exercises.
- Complete the take home task worksheets and practice the skills between sessions.
- Share brief description of your take home task during each session.

- Commit to make every effort to attend all of the group sessions.
- If you are interested in ACT, please ask your health care provider to refer you.

## **ARS Women's Group**

### **Goals of ARS Women's Group:**

- Gain relapse prevention skills
- Gain positive coping skills
- Sober Support

### **What to expect:**

- Group setting with 8-12 female veteran members
- Group format, completing one session each, for 6 sessions
- Group will be every 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month at 1pm

### **To register or for more information:**

- Please contact Amber Hearing, LICSW (612) 467-236

## **Alcoholic Anonymous**

### **Goals of AA:**

- Sober Support
- Gain coping skills
- Gain relapse prevention skills

### **What to Expect:**

- Group setting
- Drop in Group, no need to make an appointment



**Where to meet:**

- Room 1H-106
- Mondays at 6:00pm
- Tuesdays at 6:00pm
- Wednesdays at 6pm
- Thursdays at 6pm
- Sundays (Alavets) at 9am

**For questions:**

- Please contact: John Moore, LICSW (612) 467-4783

## **Anger Management**

**Goals of Anger Management:**

- To decrease anger and acting out

**Eligibility Criteria:**

1. There be a documented treatment coordinator of record to help manage crises.
2. The veteran be aware of the referral, and willing to make changes in their behavior.
3. The veteran be able to tolerate engaging in group therapy with 8-10 other veterans.
4. The veteran not be imminently suicidal or homicidal.
5. The veteran not be psychotic, and if manic, that they be on a stable medication regimen.

**What to expect:**

- An 8-session CBT based protocol that meets once weekly for 90 minutes
- Typical group structure is 45 minutes of check-in, and 45 minutes of new didactic content

- On average, 8-10 veterans are enrolled per cohort

\*Please contact healthcare provider for referral

## **Balance Group**

### **Balancing - Resolving Problems in Living:**

#### **Goals for Balance Group:**

- Decrease suicidal ideation
- Decrease chaos

#### **What to Expect:**

- Ongoing Weekly Group Two groups: Full Modules Thursday 10:30 –12:00 p.m. Tuesdays at 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
- capacity of 8 patients for full module group.
- Open to new members only at start of a new module.
- Each module starts with two weeks of Mindfulness followed by one of the other modules above.
- Each module is eight to nine weeks long. Individuals can sign up for one or all of the modules.
- Participants can expect to learn new skills each week and are expected to practice the skills in between sessions, as well as complete homework.
- There is an attendance expectation and if an individual misses too much of a module they will be terminated from the group. They may be reassessed for appropriateness to rejoin the group at the beginning of the next module.
- This group is a skill training group – not a therapy group.
- Open to off-team referrals as space allows.

#### **Exclusion criteria:**

Actively and severely suicidal; actively engaging in self-injurious behaviors; actively substance dependent, or excessive no shows for MH appointments.

\*Please contact healthcare provider for referral.

## **Building Spiritual Strength**

### **Goals for Building Spiritual Strength:**

- An interfaith educational and support group for veterans who want help to use their spiritual resources in coping with trauma

### **What to Expect:**

- The group will meet weekly for 8 weeks for 2 hours in each session
- Weekly written homework is required
- Members of any spiritual group, or individuals who are not a member of any formal group, but interested in spirituality, are welcome

### **Contact Information:**

- For further questions contact Dr. Irene Harris, 612-467-1654

## **CAFÉ (Client and Family Education) Program**

### **Goals for CAFÉ:**

- Talk about things that may make living with a mental illness easier for you and your loved ones
- Each week different topics will be presented pertaining to living with mental illness
- Connect with others going through similar struggles

### **What to Expect:**

- Drop in group setting- No appointment needed
- We meet every Friday afternoon from 1pm to 2pm in Room 1H-106 (1P156 starting 2015)
- Different presenter for each weekly topic

### **Contact information:**

Please contact Brian Lockwood, LICSW for any questions regarding group setting (612) 467-3877. If you'd like to confirm who is presenting on a particular day, feel free to call Susan Roberts at 612-467-4026.

# **Cognitive Behavioral Social Skills Training (CBSST)**

## **What is CBSST:**

A form of group therapy designed originally for individuals with schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder that combines elements of both cognitive behavioral therapy and social skills training. It is considered to be most appropriate for addressing positive symptoms of psychosis, associated symptoms such as depression and anxiety, and teaching more effective ways of coping with symptoms and solving problems.

## **Goals for CBSST:**

- Increase coping skills and cognitive restructuring

## **What to Expect:**

- Groups are typically led by two CBSST staff members. CBSST staff represent various disciplines, including psychology, social work, nursing and psychiatry.
- The groups meet twice per week, and the full cycle of the group curriculum takes about 4 months.

## **Eligibility:**

Veterans getting care for serious mental illness, including (but not limited to) schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, and bipolar disorder. The veterans do not need to be on medication to be in the group.

## **Who to contact:**

\*Please contact healthcare provider for referral to program

# **Community Activity Group**

## **Goals for Community Activity Group:**

- To reduce dependence on hospital for social and recreational contact
- A way to branch out and expand your comfort zone
- To meet other veterans
- To find more fun, low cost activities in the Twin Cities

**What to expect:**

- 8 session group
- Meets at various community locations

**For contact information:**

Call Lisa Hoffman-Konn (612)313-3277 or Ben Fischer (612)313-3280

## **Dialectical Behavior Therapy**

**What is DBT?**

- Dialectical means that there is more than one way to look at a situation or behavior, everything is connected to everything else, and change is constant and inevitable for the treatment of individuals who engage in self-harm behaviors
- DBT views behaviors as something that people have been learned in order to cope with emotions
- DBT aims to reduce problem behaviors
- To increase skillful behaviors
- DBT helps people learn how to better understand and value themselves and others
- DBT is an effective treatment for people who have difficulty controlling their emotions and behaviors

**Who could benefit from DBT?**

Veterans who:

- Are engaging in self-harm behaviors
- Struggle with handling their emotions
- Have current behaviors that interfere with long-term goals
- Struggle with relationships
- Are confused about themselves and their emotions and behaviors
- Act impulsively

## **What makes DBT different from other treatments?**

- Balancing change with acceptance/validation
- Learning new behaviors to replace the old behaviors that don't work
- Individual, weekly therapy with a trained DBT therapist
- Weekly skills training group
- 24/7 phone coaching with a skills trainer to help veterans with practicing skills when they need it most
- Using daily diary cards to track behaviors and skills
- Identifying events that started the problem (precipitating events)
- Identify factors that might increase reactions(vulnerability factors), and consequences
- Weekly consultation team meetings for the therapists and skills trainers to provide support for each other and continue learning

## **What are the goals of DBT?**

- Moving from being out of control to being in control of one's emotions and behaviors
- Reducing, then eliminating life threatening behaviors, behaviors that interfere with treatment, and behaviors that destroy the quality of life
- Learning skills that help people to: Control their attention so they stop worrying about the future or obsessing about the past
- Increase awareness of the "present moment"
- Learn to identify and deal with their emotions
- Develop new relationships
- Improve current relationships
- End relationships that aren't working
- Increase understanding of what emotions are, how they work, and how to have them without feeling overwhelmed

- Tolerate painful emotions without resorting to self-harm or self-destructive behaviors
- Move from emotionally shutting down to experiencing emotions fully
- Build an ordinary life and solve ordinary problems
- Move from feeling incomplete to completeness/connection
- Build a life worth living

**Requirements of DBT:**

DBT is a specialized, time-limited, intensive treatment that is not right for everyone. Veterans who are in the program must:

- Commit to attend at least 6 months of weekly individual and group therapy
- Commit to daily journaling
- Be willing to accept help and have interest in learning new ways of coping with life

**Who to contact:**

Talk to your mental health provider to find out more about the program. If you and your provider agree that DBT might be a good idea for you, then please refer to contact information below:

**Contact:**

Laura Meyers, PhD-612-467-3037 to set up an evaluation for the program.

**Family Psycho-Education (FPE)**

**What are the goals of FPE:**

- To bring families together to promote wellness and achieve life goals.
- To provide services for people who live with one of the following conditions: Schizophrenia, Schizoaffective Disorder, Bipolar Disorder, Depression with Psychotic Features
- Improve communication and problem solving skills
- Connect with community resources

- Learn about mental illness and treatment
- Identify personal goals and ways to reach them
- Make sense of an often confusing mental health system
- to promote wellness and recovery by supporting families as they work toward their goals

**What to Expect:**

- We meet with you and your loved ones to learn more about your current life and what would help you now.
- We offer these services:
  - > Family Education Workshops give loved ones information about mental illness, its treatment, and practical ways to cope with the life changes brought on by mental illness.
  - > Multifamily Group Therapy provides a safe and supportive place to meet with others who are in similar circumstances.
- During each session we problem solve around health-related issues that affect group members. Groups currently meet on Wednesday evenings.
- Behavioral Family Therapy is for couples and families who want to work more intensively with a therapist on communication and problem solving skills. This approach focuses on education and practicing new skills.

**Meeting Time:**

Group Format; meets twice a month

**Who To Contact:**

Tasha Nienow- (612) 467-1004

**Family Therapy Training Clinic**

**Goals of Family Therapy Training Clinic:**

- Reduce Conflict
- Increase Communication



**What to Expect:**

- Couples Therapy
- Family Therapy

**When:**

Clinic runs from February until June

**Who to Contact:**

Contact Mental Health Provider to coordinate referral

**Front Porch Group****Purpose:**

- To provide information about the Mental Health Homeless Programs
- For veterans to have an increased knowledge of Mental Health and Homeless Programs available
- This group is for veterans only
- Drop-In- No appointment needed

**When:**

Thursdays at 8:00 a.m.- 9:30 a.m.- Room 1J-124

**Who to contact:**

Mental Health Homeless Programs, VA Medical Center – 612-467-1771

Mental Health Homeless Programs Information Only Line – 612-467-1477

**Grief & Loss Support Group****Purpose:**

- An 8 week support and education group for those who have experienced the death of a loved one
- Participants will explore their reactions to loss
- Learn about the grieving process

- Develop strategies for coping
- Feel safe within a trusting and supportive environment.

**When:**

The group will be offered several times in 2015, with dates as follows:

February 3 – March 24

Every Tuesday, from 4:30 pm – 5:30 pm (1J-131)

June 2 – July 21

Every Tuesday, from 4:30 pm – 5:30 pm (1J-131)

October 6 – November 24

Every Wednesday, from 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm (1J-131)

**Location:**

1J-131 (in ARS clinic)  
 Minneapolis VA HCS Medical Center  
 One Veterans Drive  
 Minneapolis, MN 55417

**Who to contact:**

A phone interview is required for registration. There is no charge for participating in the group.

For more information, and to call for registration, please contact:

Amy Wood LICSW 612-629-7614 or Jackie Narjes LICSW 612-467-4171

\*Please note there is a Grief/Loss Support Group at the Ramsey County CBOC that meets February 5-March 26, every Thursday 3:00-4:00 pm.

**Contact Information for Ramsey CBOC Support Group:**

A phone interview is required for participation. There is no charge for participating in this group.

**For more information and to call for registration, please contact:**

Julia Pawlenty LICSW • 612.467.2742

Kim Lester LICSW • 612.629.7787

## **Intensive Outpatient Program-Substance Abuse**

### **Purpose:**

- an abstinence-based, primary outpatient substance use disorder rehabilitation program.
- The IOP is designed for individuals with active substance use problems and who are motivated to commit to sobriety.
- The programs consists of four weeks of outpatient groups.

### **Location:**

The programs runs on Tuesday(s), Wednesday(s),and Thursday(s) with two tracks options: 0900 - 1200 OR 1300 – 1600 each day.

Participants are also expected to attend an orientation session and individual assessment during the first week of IOP. An eight-week aftercare group is offered for individuals who complete the IOP.

You must check-in between 9:00 and 9:30 a.m. at 1J-127 in the Addiction Recovery Services area.

\*Late arrivals will be asked to return the following week\*

**Who to contact:** John Moore, LICSW- 612-467-4783

## **Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) Support Group**

### **Purpose:**

- The LGB Support Group offers a safe and confidential place for transgender veterans to share thoughts and feelings about their experiences
- To explore creative ways to cope with challenges they encounter
- To learn from one another
- To support and be supported by one another.

### **What to Expect:**

Group sessions include a psychoeducational component with topics relevant to LGB veterans.

**Topics include:**

- Coming out
- Family and Friends
- Mental Health issues
- DADT
- LGB History
- Sexual orientation
- Intimate relationships
- Community resources
- Social support
- Personal safety

**When:**

Meetings are each Wednesdays from 10:30 to 12:00 PM

**Who to contact:**

Please talk with healthcare provider for referral.

**MI/SUD Group**

**Purpose:**

- Decrease symptoms
- Increase coping skills
- For individuals diagnosed with MI and Substance Abuse

**Format-Group setting:**

- 10 sessions to be completed

**Who to contact:**

Please communicate with healthcare provider to refer to Dr. Jenna Robison-Andrew (ext. 1463)

## **Mind Body Skills Group**

### **Purpose:**

Help participants deal with life changes, stress, and illness in an intimate and supportive group setting.

### **Goals:**

- Complete 10 weekly group sessions
- Teach mind-body skills
- Help participants develop a deeper level of awareness
- Increase the ability to cope with emotional, physical, and psychological challenges that face us in our daily lives.
- Decrease stress
- Increase coping ability
- Decrease pain (physical or emotional)
- Enhance immune function
- Manage anxiety or Depression more effectively

### **When:**

Wednesdays from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

### **Who to contact:**

Notify your behavioral health provider of your interest. Dr. Beret Skroch, the group facilitator, will contact you via telephone to make arrangements for your participation in the group

If you have questions about the group, you may contact Dr. Beret Skroch at 612-629-7410 as well.

## **Mindfulness Based Practice Group**

### **Goals:**

- Utilize Mindfulness Based Practice interventions to:
- Increase awareness
- Learn new coping

**Format:**

- Drop in group, meets monthly on 2nd Friday of month 10-11am

**When:**

- Drop in group, meets monthly on 2nd Friday of month 10-11am

**Who to contact:**

- Please have healthcare provider contact John Rodman, PhD (612) 467-1993 for referral

## **Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Group (MBSR)**

**Goals:**

- Attend a two hour group session once a week for eight weeks
- Attend an all-day practice session on a weekday of the sixth week of the program in place of the regular group
- Make mindfulness techniques part of your daily life by practicing with CDs and other materials

**Who Benefits: Individuals suffering with:**

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Chronic Pain
- PTSD
- Cancer
- Sleep problems
- And other physical and mental health problems

**What to expect:**

- Willing to practice 45 minutes a day
- Ready to take an active role in your healing process

**How to Enroll:**

- Talk to your doctor, health care provider, or VA case manager. He or she can refer you to the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Program.

For more information about the program, please call Dr. John Rodman at the Minneapolis VAMC.

The phone number is 612-467-1993

**Moral Reconciliation Therapy****Goals:**

- Improve moral functioning
- Reduce criminal recidivism
- Work on developing a positive, productive identity
- Begin to find fulfillment and happiness the right way

**Who benefits:**

- Veterans currently or historically involved in the legal system
- Veterans with a pervasive pattern of criminal behavior
- Veterans with mandated treatment requirements
- Veterans who would like to prevent further legal problems in the future
- Veterans must be able to make a weekly commitment to participate in and attend the group

**What to expect:**

MRT is a systematic Cognitive-Behavioral approach designed to enhance self-image, promote growth of a positive, productive identity, and facilitate the development of higher stages of moral reasoning

Group members advance through the 12 steps on the MRT Freedom Ladder by completing and presenting assignments, providing testimonies, completing community service, and following the rules.

**When:**

The group will be offered on an ongoing basis with rolling admission. When a veteran is referred, 1-2 assessment and orientation sessions will be completed to assess appropriateness for the intervention and communicate group expectations. The group will be held once per week. Veterans will complete the group at their own pace, on average it may take 3-5 months. Sobriety from alcohol and drugs is required.

**Who to contact:**

Please talk to your doctor, health care provider, or VA case manager for referral to program.

## **MST (Military Sexual Trauma) Education Day**

The Minneapolis VA invites male and female veterans with a history of military sexual trauma to attend an EDUCATIONAL CLASS in a supportive environment. The class provides education and support for issues related to sexual trauma that occurred in the military.

The class will provide information on:

- Common experiences and problems
- Effects of trauma on relationships and health
- Treatment options
- What helps with the healing process
- Resources available

**When:**

MST Education Day is conducted several times per year. It is important that you are able to attend the entire day.

**How do I sign up?**

Discuss with your mental health provider, or contact Dr. Linda VanEgeren (VA Military Sexual Trauma Coordinator) at 612-467-1789, if not currently in treatment.



## **Narcotics Anonymous**

### **Goals:**

- To help veterans abstain from drug use
- Gain support and understanding from other individuals coping with past or current drug abuse

### **Where to meet:**

Drop in Group, 1H-106, Friday 6:30pm

### **Who to contact?**

No referral is needed. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact John Moore, LICSW (612) 467-4783

## **Move Group!**

### **Goals:**

To help veterans lose weight and improve their health

### **Who benefits:**

Overweight or Obese Veterans (BMI>25) with a Mental Health diagnosis

### **Format:**

Ongoing Support Group setting

### **Who to contact:**

Please contact Laurie Emde (612) 725-2000 directly for referral and any questions or concerns

## **Moving Forward**

### **Purpose:**

MOVING FORWARD is an educational program. It was developed to help Veterans become more successful in reaching life's goals. Conducted in a classroom setting, it teaches practical problem-solving skills to help people overcome obstacles that often stand in the way of their dreams and goals.

**Goals:**

- Teach problem solving skills
- Reduce stress
- Help set reasonable life goals
- Make better decisions

**How this programs helps you:**

Moving forward is an educational and life coaching program that helps with life transitions that may include:

- finding a job
- deciding on a new career
- Reintegration assistance after deployment
- becoming a parent for the first time
- maintaining good relationships with family and friends
- getting a divorce
- getting married
- coping with negative memories of when you were deployed
- dealing with financial difficulties
- trying to think more optimistically about the future
- handling painful feelings that no one else seems to understand

**What to expect:**

This course consists of four 1-hr sessions and we encourage participation in all four sessions. This is not a drop-in group.

**Who to contact:**

Please contact Jill Vinge, LICSW, at 612-629-7476 or Dr. Mallen at 612-467-5283 with any questions and to sign up for the course.

\*\*The next cohort will be held on Tuesdays at 15:00 and will begin on January 6.\*\*

## **Peer Support Group**

**Purpose:**

Drop in Group run by veterans, for veterans

**Goals:**

- Encourage veterans to share their experiences
- Provide Support to other veterans
- Offer ideas and understanding to fellow veteran
- Increase self-direction
- Improved management of mental health symptoms

**When & Where:**

Mondays @ 1pm Room 1L-109

**Who to contact:**

For Information contact Peer Support: Jeff Peters 612-313-3487  
or Iden Hill 612-467-5257

## **Phoenix Peer Support Group**

**Purpose:**

To meet with other Veterans who are managing significant mental health challenges and abstinence. Also, to help patients achieve abstinence from substance use.

**Goals:**

- Encourage veterans to share their experiences
- Provide Support to other veterans
- Offer ideas and understanding to fellow veteran
- Encourage positive change
- Share effective coping skills with other veterans

**When:**

Meets every 4th Thursday

**Who to contact:**

If interested in this group or have questions, please contact:  
Peer Support-Iden Hill 612-467-5257

## **PPH (Psychiatry Partial Hospital Program)**

**Goals:**

- To provide crisis stabilization,
- Help to improve coping skills
- Assist with medication management

**What to Expect:**

- 3 Week outpatient program
- Meetings will be group based
- Regular attendance is required

**Who to contact:**

Please talk with your VA healthcare provider for referral.

## **Seeking Safety**

**Purpose:**

Seeking Safety is a treatment program designed for people who have experienced trauma and are using substances. It focuses on developing safety, including stopping substance abuse, reducing self-harm, and ending bad relationships. Seeking Safety is an integrated treatment, which means that problems resulting from trauma and substance abuse are worked on at the same time to promote successful recovery.

**Goals:**

- Manage trauma symptoms such as flashbacks, nightmares, and negative feelings.

- Cope with life without the use of substances or other addictive behaviors.
- Take good care of yourself.
- Find safe people who can be supportive to you.
- Free yourself from domestic violence or other current abusive relationships.
- Prevent self-destructive acts.
- Find ways to feel good about yourself and to enjoy life.

**What to Expect:**

- Some topics include Safety Skills, The Relationship between PTSD and Substance Abuse, Healing from Anger, Coping with Triggers, Taking Good Care of Yourself, Healthy Relationships, and Grounding Skills.
- The Seeking Safety group lasts 10 weeks, including one orientation group
- You are not required to be free of substances at the start of treatment, but you will be asked to commit to reducing or eliminating your substance use after learning about and understanding what motivates your decisions to use substances.
- We will talk about the impact of trauma on your current life, but we will NOT discuss the details of your trauma

**Who to contact:**

To participate in a Seeking Safety group, you must be referred by your mental health treatment coordinator/case manager.

**Questions:**

If you have any questions about Seeking Safety, please contact Dr. Dan Silversmith at (612) 467-5171 or Dr. Emily Voller at (612) 467-2125

# **Social Skills Training (SST) for Serious Mental Illness (SMI)**

## **Purpose:**

SST is a group therapy developed for persons with serious mental illness to help them learn and practice specific communication and social skills. It is focused only on acquiring and practicing skills. Group format involves discussing the rationale for a skill, learning steps of the specific skill, seeing group leaders demonstrate the skill, practicing the skill in session, receiving feedback, and refining the skills with the ultimate goal to use the skills in “real world” situations.

## **Goals:**

Increase Social Skills listed below:

Category of Skills to be worked on:

Conflict Management	Friendship and Dating
Conversation	Health Maintenance/ProviderCommunication
Assertiveness	Vocational Work
Basic skills	Coping Skills for Drug & Alcohol Use
Communal Living	

## **What to expect:**

The groups are made up of no more than 10 veterans, who will be referred by their provider(s). Groups are typically led by two SST staff members. The groups meet twice per week, and the full cycle of the group curriculum takes 12 weeks. Veterans who participate will be asked to come to all of the sessions, engage in role plays during the sessions, and complete homework (practice current skill) between sessions.

## **Who can participate?**

Veterans getting care for serious mental illness, including (but not limited to) schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, and bipolar disorder. The veterans do not need to be on medication to be in the group. Potential group members do need to be willing to engage in role plays and practice skills between sessions.

## **Who to contact:**

Generally referrals are made by individual providers. However, we do receive referrals via word of mouth and recommendations from other veterans. To make a referral or if you have any questions, please contact Bridget Hegeman PhD at (612) 725-2000 X2074.

## **SAFE** **(Support and Family Education)**

### **Purpose:**

To provide education about mental health diagnoses and provide resources to friends and family members of veterans who experience a mental health condition.

### **What to expect:**

Different topics will be addressed each week. These topics may include: Family Members, Depression and Suicide and Their Impact on the Family, Do's and Don'ts in Helping Your Family Member, What We Tell Our Children and Other People, PTSD and Its Impact on the Family.

### **Goals:**

- Talk to others in a similar situation
- Support and encourage each other
- Ask questions
- Learn how to care for your loved one and yourself

### **When & Where:**

Workshops meet 5:30 to 7 pm

To attend, check in 10-minutes prior to the workshop at Room 1P-154a.

### **Who to Contact:**

Contact Tasha Nienow, Ph.D., LP, psychologist with the Family Psychoeducation Program (612) 467-1004

## **Transgender Support Group**

### **Purpose:**

The Transgender Support Group offers a safe and confidential place for transgender veterans to share thoughts and feelings about their experiences.

### **Goals:**

- Gain support and education from other transgender veterans
- To explore creative ways to cope with challenges
- To learn from one another

- To support and be supported by one another

**Topics Addressed:**

- Identity development
- Personal safety
- Employment issues
- Medical issues
- Mental health issues
- Sexual orientation
- Emergence and Disclosure
- Body issues
- Families and friends
- Social support
- Intimate relationships
- Impact of social stigma

**When:**

The group meets Mondays from 1:00 to 2:30 PM

**Who to contact:**

Please contact VA Health provider for referral to program

**Trauma Education Class**

**Purpose:**

The Minneapolis VA invites veterans with a history of trauma to attend an educational class in a supportive environment. Significant others are also invited to attend with veteran. The class provides education and support for issues related to trauma. The educational program is especially suited for patients who continue to be impacted by traumatic events and are early in therapy or considering treatment. The focus of this program is to validate the difficulties patients are having as a result of their trauma while offering hope, coping strategies, and encouragement to engage in treatment.



**This class will provide information on:**

- Trauma-Related Symptoms
- Treatment Options
- Restoring Family Roles & Social Relationships
- Coping Strategies

**When:**

The class will meet Tuesday, January 27th from 9:00am to 3:00pm. Other dates to be determined.

**How to sign up? :**

Discuss with your mental health provider

**Veterans Bridge to Recovery (VBR)**

**Purpose:**

The Veterans' Bridge to Recovery program is for veterans with serious mental illness. We help veterans set goals, learn skills, and apply them in the community. Also, to help veterans with serious mental illness define and work toward their personal visions of recovery.

**Goals:**

- Helps veterans learn to set goals and learn skills in the community
- Making friends
- Increasing daily activity
- Getting more comfortable in the community
- Getting healthier (e.g. losing weight, exercise, quitting smoking)
- Being productive (e.g. Volunteering, working, going to school)

**Who can attend:**

- Vets who have a serious mental illness
- Vets who have problems functioning in the community

- Vets who want to make changes in their lives soon

**What to expect:**

- Attend VBR 1-5 times per week
- Meet with a clinician to make a recovery plan
- Connect with other veterans in a positive environment
- Practice skills in the community

**Who to contact for more information:**

Your VA mental health provider can refer you for an informational meeting. You can call (612) 313-3240 for information.

Check out our website: [www.minneapolis.va.gov/services/vbr.asp](http://www.minneapolis.va.gov/services/vbr.asp)

VBR staff will look at your medical record and talk with you and your providers about VBR and/or other helpful resources.

# **Individual Treatment Options**

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## **Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)**

### **Goals:**

- Decrease Avoidance
- Increase Value Oriented Behavior

### **Format:**

- Short-term
- Individual Sessions

### **Who to contact:**

Please talk to healthcare provider about referral

## **Anxiety Intervention Clinic**

### **Goals:**

- Decrease anxiety symptoms
- Reduce avoidance symptoms

### **Format:**

- Individual sessions
- Time-limited

### **Who to contact:**

Please talk to healthcare provider/coordinator for referral

## **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy(CBT)-Insomnia**

### **Goals:**

- Improve sleep
- Decrease insomnia
- Improve overall quality of sleep
- Increase quantity of sleep

**Format:**

- Individual sessions
- 4-6 sessions to complete

**Who to contact:**

Please talk to healthcare provide/coordinator for referral

## **Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT)**

**Goals:**

- To decrease Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) symptoms
- Learn new skills to deal with trauma
- Learn about your PTSD symptoms
- Become aware of your thoughts and feelings
- Learn skills to help challenge maladaptive beliefs and behaviors
- Help understand changes in beliefs that resulted from trauma

**Format:**

- Complete 12, 50 minute individual sessions, with therapist

**Who to contact:**

Please talk with healthcare provider/coordinator for CPT referral

## **Dialectical Behavior Therapy**

**What is DBT?**

- Dialectical means that there is more than one way to look at a situation or behavior, everything is connected to everything else, and change is constant and inevitable for the treatment of individuals who engage in self-harm behaviors
- DBT views behaviors as something that people have been learned in order to cope with emotions
- DBT aims to reduce problem behaviors

- To increase skillful behaviors
- DBT helps people learn how to better understand and value themselves and others
- DBT is an effective treatment for people who have difficulty controlling their emotions and behaviors

### **Who could benefit from DBT?:**

Veterans who:

- Are engaging in self-harm behaviors
- Struggle with handling their emotions
- Have current behaviors that interfere with long-term goals
- Struggle with relationships
- Are confused about themselves and their emotions and behaviors
- Act impulsively

### **What makes DBT different from other treatments?:**

- Balancing change with acceptance/validation
- Learning new behaviors to replace the old behaviors that don't work
- Individual, weekly therapy with a trained DBT therapist
- Weekly skills training group
- 24/7 phone coaching with a skills trainer to help veterans with practicing skills when they need it most
- Using daily diary cards to track behaviors and skills
- Identifying events that started the problem (precipitating events)
- Identify factors that might increase reactions (vulnerability factors), and consequences
- Weekly consultation team meetings for the therapists and skills trainers to provide support for each other and continue learning

## What are the goals of DBT?

- Moving from being out of control to being in control of one's emotions and behaviors
- Reducing, then eliminating life threatening behaviors, behaviors that interfere with treatment, and behaviors that destroy the quality of life
- Learning skills that help people to: Control their attention so they stop worrying about the future or obsessing about the past
- Increase awareness of the "present moment"
- Learn to identify and deal with their emotions
- Develop new relationships
- Improve current relationships
- End relationships that aren't working
- Increase understanding of what emotions are, how they work, and how to have them without feeling overwhelmed
- Tolerate painful emotions without resorting to self-harm or self-destructive behaviors
- Move from emotionally shutting down to experiencing emotions fully
- Build an ordinary life and solve ordinary problems
- Move from feeling incomplete to completeness/connection
- Build a life worth living

## Requirements of DBT:

DBT is a specialized, time-limited, intensive treatment that is not right for everyone. Veterans who are in the program must:

- Commit to attend at least 6 months of weekly individual and group therapy
- Commit to daily journaling
- Be willing to accept help and have interest in learning new ways of coping with life

**Who to contact:**

Talk to your mental health provider to find out more about the program. If you and your provider agree that DBT might be a good idea for you, then please refer to contact information below:

**Contact:**

Laura Meyers, PhD-612-467-3037 to set up an evaluation for the program.

## **Motivational Interviewing**

**Goals:**

- To enhance motivation for any individual dealing with any mental health issue
- To help individual prepare for mental health treatment

**Format:**

- Individual session with therapist
- Meet with therapist for 1-2 sessions

**Who to contact:**

Please contact healthcare provider/coordinator for referral.

## **Move Group!**

**Goals:**

To help veterans lose weight and improve their health

**Who benefits:**

Overweight or Obese Veterans (BMI>25) with a Mental Health diagnosis

**Format:**

Ongoing Support Group setting or veteran can meet with someone individually for support

**Who to contact:**

Please contact the MOVE! Message Line at 612-629-7388 directly for referral and any questions or concerns.



## **Narrative Therapy**

### **Goals:**

- Decrease PTSD symptoms
- Help patients examine and evaluate their approaches to problems
- Uses a narrative approach

### **Format:**

- Individual sessions with therapist
- 12 sessions

### **Who to contact:**

Please contact healthcare provider/coordinator for referral

## **Project STRIVE**

### **Substance Use and Trauma Intervention for Veterans**

Would you like to participate in therapy research at the Minneapolis VA?

We are looking for veterans to participate in 16 sessions of therapy to examine the effectiveness of treatment programs for PTSD and substance use.

### **To be included in Project STRIVE you must:**

- Be a Veteran at least 18 years old
- Have Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Use substances such as alcohol or drugs

You will be compensated up to \$390 for participation in 7 assessment sessions and will receive 16 therapy sessions to address PTSD and substance use. Total participation time is 10 months.

If you are interested, please contact Molly Charlesworth at 612-467-1765.

## **Prolonged Exposure Therapy (PE)**

### **Who is PE for?:**

PE can benefit many veterans that have been exposed to trauma. This would include trauma due to combat or military sexual trauma. PE helps with symptoms such as depression, anxiety, and substance use difficulties.

### **Goals:**

- To decrease thoughts of avoidance, such as thoughts of the traumatic experience
- Reshape negative beliefs that have developed from trauma exposure
- Reduce PTSD symptoms including: Thoughts of anger and guilt
- Decrease depression
- Improve sleeping problems
- Improvement in general health

### **Four Components of PE:**

- Education
- Imaginal Exposure
- In Vivo Exposure
- Breathing Retraining

### **Who to contact:**

Please talk with healthcare provider/coordinator for CPT referral

## **Time Limited Dynamic Psychotherapy**

### **Treatment:**

This therapy is for individuals dealing with different types of interpersonal difficulties such as problems with thinking, emotional regulation, and impulse regulation, which could negatively impact relationships.

**Goals:**

- Increase interpersonal awareness
- Increase functioning

**Format:**

- Individual session with therapist
- 16-20 sessions, generally

**Who to contact:**

Please talk with healthcare provider/coordinator for referral

## **Treatment for Gambling**

**Purpose:**

To help individuals dealing with a gambling addiction seek support and guidance.

**Goals:**

- Decrease and eliminate gambling

**Format:**

- Individual sessions with therapist

**Who to contact:**

Please talk with healthcare provider/coordinator for referral to program.

# **Pain Management & Information Groups**

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# **Chronic Pain Coping Skills Group**

Living with chronic pain can be very challenging! In this group, you will learn self-management skills to help you cope. This is not a substitute for medical treatment, but an opportunity to develop techniques that you can use to help yourself.

## **Group Outline:**

In this group, you will learn skills of:

- Understanding chronic pain
- Pacing activity, exercising
- Relaxation and mental imagery
- Getting better sleep
- Identifying and challenging negative thoughts
- Constructing positive attitudes and beliefs
- Meditation
- Understanding the impact of your chronic pain on your family

## **Who can benefit from this group:**

This group is for any veteran who has chronic pain and who wants to take an active approach to living with the pain. This is a time-limited educational group, not an ongoing support group.

## **Group Schedule:**

The group will meet weekly for 8 weeks.

- Time: Fridays 1:00 – 2:30
- Place: Room 1J116
- Group Leader – Dr. Dixie L. Grace, Staff Psychologist

For more information or to enroll in the group, contact Dr. Grace at 612-629-7410.

# **Sleep Management & Information Groups**

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## **SLEEP Group for Insomnia and Nightmares** **(Sleep Like an Expert: Efficiently and Peacefully)**

### **Purpose:**

This 6-session group is designed to help your patients manage their sleep problems more effectively. They will have the opportunity to learn strategies to improve the quality of their sleep and reduce nightmares. There will also be a pre- and post-group individual meeting for assessment and feedback.

### **Goals:**

- To decrease restlessness
- Improve Sleep
- Increase energy
- Decrease insomnia

### **Who:**

Any veteran who has had problems with insomnia (can also have nightmares, but not required) for at least a month. If the veteran has significant mental health symptoms (including substance use), these need to be managed/treated by mental health professionals prior to referral.

### **When:**

Weekly for 90 minutes

### **Questions:**

Contact Erin Koffel (612) 725-2000 X1593

## **Treatment of Nightmares**

### **Purpose:**

To help individuals suffering from chronic nightmares to decrease nightmares and improve sleep.

### **Goals:**

- Decrease nightmares
- Improve sleep

**Format:**

- Individual session with therapist
- Complete once every 4 weeks for 2 to 4 sessions

**Who to contact:**

Please talk with healthcare provider/coordinator for referral.



# **Specialty Education Groups**

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# **ADAPT: After Deployment Adaptive Parenting Tools**

## **The goals of Adapt:**

- To provide resources and training in effective parenting
- To increase stress reduction
- To train individuals using conflict resolution
- To promote family well-being

## **What to expect:**

- One 2 hour group session, every week for 14 weeks
- For veterans and their partners parenting children
- Three group facilitators

\*You must be registered prior to attending group.

## **To register or find out more information please contact:**

Caroline McCard (612) 467-5088  
Stephanie Faber (612) 313-3261  
Brianna Loop (612) 467-4022

# **Diabetes Education**

## **Goals:**

- Assist Veterans to better control their Diabetes thru education and training

## **Format:**

- Individual and Group sessions are available

## **Who to contact:**

Please talk to healthcare provider/coordinator for referral or contact the Diabetes Education Medical Support Assistant at 612-467- 3585 regarding any questions or concerns

## **Financial Education Class**

### **Goals of Financial Education Class:**

- Improve spending habits
- Reach financial goals

### **What to Expect:**

- Group format for 7 sessions
- Topics include understanding credit
- Managing debt
- Budgeting
- Consumer Skills
- and much more...

### **When:**

Thursdays from 10:30am-12pm

### **Who to Contact:**

Ariana Hart (612)467-1752

## **Parenting Workshop for Women Veterans**

### **Would you like to learn more about:**

- Early childhood growth and development
- Avoiding power struggles
- Positive parenting
- Effective discipline
- Having fun with your children
- Balancing personal and family needs

Then join us for a fun and informative afternoon workshop providing education and support for mothers of young children!

### **Whom should attend?:**

- Women with children from birth to school age
- Women experiencing stress, conflict, communication problems with their children

- Women needing more information about parenting

### **When and where will this be held?**

- Please contact individuals below for scheduled dates

### **How to enroll?:**

- Patients or providers may contact Deadra Dahl, Clinical Nurse Specialist in the Women's Clinic at 612-467- 5850, or Brianna Loop, Social Worker on inpatient psychiatry at 612-467-4022, for further information or to be scheduled for the workshop
- Patients will be called for a brief phone screening prior to enrollment in the workshop

## **Relaxation Skills Training Class**

### **Purpose:**

For veterans dealing with problems including:

- feelings of anxiousness and nervousness,
- trouble calming down enough to get to sleep
- dealing with muscle tension in your shoulders or jaw
- Difficulty relaxing

### **Goals:**

- To teach you how to relax
- How to use relaxation skills to help you stay calm
- How to use relaxation skills to help you get to sleep

### **When:**

Thursdays, 12:30-1:30, on the 1st, 2nd and 4th Thursday s of the month.

### **Where:**

Room 4K109. You do not need an appointment. Please check in 10 minutes before class in room 1P170.

If you receive travel pay, please call 612-629-7410 the day before to register.

**Who to contact:**

Group leader: Dixie L. Grace, PhD., Staff Psychologist. 612-629-7410

## **Tai Chi for Health**

**Goals:**

The class helps veterans learn new practices that promote mindful breathing and moving meditation

**What to Expect:**

This class teaches a simple and adaptable Sun Style program that was developed with the Arthritis Foundation. The program involves gentle movements that can be performed while seated or standing and that can aid with relaxation. This class is suitable for people with no previous Tai Chi experience. Class cycles are held several times each year. Each cycle runs for 8 weeks.

\*Veteran needs to gain medical clearance from Psychiatrist or VA Medical Care Provider before starting class.

**When & Where:**

After receiving medical clearance, interested participants can contact Julia Perry (612-467-1597) for information about when the next Tai Chi for Health Class cycle will begin.

## **Veterans Yoga Program (VYP)**

**Purpose:**

Introduce Veterans to Yoga. All Veterans, no exceptions are invited to participate in the Veterans Yoga Program (VYP). We teach breathing, stretching, and relaxation, YOGA STYLE!

**Goals:**

Strengthen the mind body connection with breathing and movement

**When:**

Tuesdays; 6:30-7:30pm

**Where to meet?**

SCI Multi-Purpose Room

**How to sign up?**

Get a Yoga Consult from your Provider & VYP will contact you!

**Other Questions:**

Please contact Casey Linstad, CTRS: Casey.Linstad@va.gov, 612-629-7618