

## **Effective Chronic Pain Management: Helping Clients Understand and Improve Their Experience with 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave CBT Approaches**

### **Program Description**

Chronic pain not only challenges individuals suffering from it, but often those who are trying to help treat and support them. The challenges increase when symptoms feel overwhelming—in response, individuals and practitioners can both suffer from feelings of frustration and hopelessness. Assessment and treatment also become more complex with comorbid mental health problems, such as depression and anxiety, which can arise from associated grief and loss, fear about the future, and changes in key roles and sense of self.

In this workshop, Deborah Barrett will explore frameworks for therapists and clients to make sense of chronic pain and tools from 3<sup>rd</sup> wave CBT approaches to aid clients to change and accept their experience. Drawing from a “dialectical” approach, Dr. Barrett will highlight cognitive and behavioral strategies that are also rooted in acceptance, mindfulness, and compassion. Dr. Barrett will coach participants on how to help clients cultivate an experimental mindset and incorporate evidence-based strategies for reducing suffering, increasing positive engagement, and improving choice through mindful flexibility. This workshop will include a mix of didactic, experiential exercises, and case examples, with opportunities to consult on challenging cases.

### **Program Objectives**

Upon completion of this workshop, participants should be able to:

1. Describe at least two characteristics of chronic pain and its relationship with emotions and distress.
2. Explain the pain gate control theory and apply it in therapeutic work.
3. Differentiate between CBT and ACT approaches to pain management.
4. Apply at least one dialectical strategy to chronic pain, or sensory dysregulation.
5. Describe the relevance of validation and invalidation when it comes to people with chronic pain and be able to validate the valid
6. Identify and practice with at least one change strategy and one acceptance strategy for working dialectically with clients with chronic pain.

### **Target Audience**

This workshop will be beneficial for clinicians, therapists and counselors, including psychologists, social workers, marriage and family therapists, psychiatric nurses, substance abuse counselors, vocational rehabilitation counselors, and all interested others.

**Contact Hours**

6.0 hours

**Program Agenda**

9:00-10:15 AM	Introduction to chronic pain in context
10:15 AM – 10:30 AM	Break
10:30 AM – 12:00 NOON	Adapting tools from third wave behavioral approaches
12:00 Noon - 1:00 PM	Lunch
1:00 PM – 2:30 PM	Adapting tools from third wave behavioral approaches
2:30 PM – 2:45 PM	Break
2:45 PM – 4:00 PM	Case consultation and small group practices
4:00 AM - 4:30 AM	Further application and wrap-up
4:30 PM	Adjourn

**Faculty**

**Deborah Barrett, PhD, LCSW** is a clinical associate professor with dual appointments in UNC Chapel Hill School of Social Work and UNC School of Medicine in the Department of Psychiatry. She has taught MSW classes on health and mental health, and frequently presents on improving life with chronic pain to diverse professional and lay audiences. In 2016, she began providing individual and group therapy for people with pain through UNC Outpatient Psychiatry. Prior to this she was in private practice. She is committed to providing accessible training in evidence-based practices to local and national audiences—in 2005, she founded the clinical lecture series; in 2012, the clinical institute series; and in 2019 became the Director of Continuing Education at the School of Social Work.