



APAC-DBT Annual Newsletter

ASIA-PACIFIC
ASSOCIATION FOR DBT



March 2026

Dear Members and Friends of the APAC-DBT,

Warm greetings to all our members across the region, and welcome to the second year of the APAC-DBT newsletter. As we begin 2026, we would like to wish you a very happy new year and thank you for being part of this growing Asia-Pacific DBT community.

We are pleased to share several important organisational updates. APAC-DBT is now officially registered as a non-governmental organisation (NGO) in Australia, operating as a company limited by guarantee. In addition, we have successfully established a bank account registered in Australia, strengthening our governance, transparency, and capacity to support future activities across the region.

To better support our expanding work, we have restructured our Executive Committee into three dedicated subcommittees focusing on Events, Publicity, and Membership. This structure allows for clearer roles, more focused planning, and greater opportunities for member involvement. We are also delighted to welcome Mie Takaki as a new subcommittee member supporting the Events Committee.

At present, the Publicity sub-committee headed by Dr. Michelle Tan is seeking to expand its membership. If you are an APAC-DBT member interested in joining this committee to support publicity of APAC-DBT's events (including future newsletter write up and design), or are interested to contribute to this growing organisation in the coming year(s), please email us at admin@apacdbt.org.

More information about the updated Executive Committee structure can be found at: <https://apacdbt.org/about/>

We wrapped up 2025 with a series of successful workshops featuring speakers from across the Asia-Pacific region as well as the United States. These events reflected the depth and diversity of DBT practice and scholarship in our community. This newsletter includes a summary of those workshops, and we extend our heartfelt thanks to all speakers who generously donated their time and expertise to support the dissemination of high-quality DBT across the Asia-Pacific.

Please stay tuned for many more exciting events in 2026. In particular, we are pleased to share that the World DBT Association (WDBTA) is planning the World DBT Association Online Summit, taking place 28–30 October 2026. This will be a full-day, global online event hosted by DBT researchers and clinicians from around the world. Further details will be shared in the coming months.

Thank you once again for your continued support and engagement. We look forward to another year of learning, collaboration, and strengthening DBT practice together across the Asia-Pacific region.

Shian-Ling Keng, Ph.D.
Professor, Department of Psychology
School of Medical and Life Sciences
Sunway University, Malaysia
DBT-Linehan Board of Certification, Certified Clinician™

Chair, Asia-Pacific Association for Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (APAC-DBT)

Newsletter Highlights:

A Message from the Chair

Information on APAC-DBT

Highlights from 2025 Events

Member Article: Mie Takaki (Japan)

Schedule of Events 2026



About the APAC-DBT

Our Mission

The Asia-Pacific Association for DBT (APAC-DBT) is a regional Chapter of the World DBT Association (WDBTA). We share the goals of WDBTA and seek to implement these at our regional level by:

- Promoting training and best practices of DBT in the Asia Pacific, in accordance with up-to-date scientific evidence and generally accepted principles and methods of DBT;
- Supporting dissemination and utilization of DBT in the Asia Pacific;
- Encouraging and enhancing the international cooperation of people working in the spirit of evidence based DBT;
- Fostering the communication, understanding, and integration of research findings, in order to enhance the effectiveness of DBT;
- Encouraging the development of scientific research on DBT and related fields;
- Maintaining treatment integrity and advocating adherence to guidelines for treatment and training in DBT;
- Extending the range of applications of DBT.

Stay Connected

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<https://www.facebook.com/apacdbt>



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/apac-dbt/>



Executive Committee and Sub-Committee Members

APAC-DBT is established as a regional chapter of the World DBT Association (WDBTA). A transitional Board of Directors was formed at the inaugural membership meeting on 4 August 2023, comprising three directors: Sian Jeffrey (Australia), Cathryn Pilcher (Australia), and Kirsten Davis (New Zealand). As of September 2025, APAC-DBT is formally registered as a non-profit, non-governmental association based in Australia.

Please see the website for more information.

A Year of Learning and Collaboration: APAC-DBT's 2025 Online / Regional Events

written by Michelle Tan (Singapore)

In 2025, the Asia-Pacific Association for DBT (APAC-DBT) delivered a diverse series of live, online events designed to strengthen DBT practice, foster regional collaboration, and support the continued growth of culturally responsive, evidence-based care. Led by experienced clinicians, trainers, and researchers from across the globe, several webinars reflected both DBT's foundational principles and reflected both the core foundations of DBT and its ongoing evolution in response to diverse clinical, cultural, and system contexts. Together, they highlighted APAC-DBT's commitment to dissemination, collaboration, and practice excellence across the Asia-Pacific. Below are some key themes and takeaways from the 2025 webinar series.



Validation as the Bedrock of DBT

The series opened with **Validation in DBT: The Fundamentals and the Challenges** (19 March 2025), presented by *Mr Mike Batcheler* (New Zealand). Drawing on decades of experience delivering DBT in public mental health settings, Mike revisited validation as a core acceptance strategy and a cornerstone of effective DBT practice. While familiar to most clinicians, validation was explored as a skill requiring precision, intentionality, and moment-to-moment clinical judgment—particularly in the context of therapy-interfering behaviours and high emotional arousal. The session emphasised common pitfalls, the impact of invalidation (both subtle and overt), and practical strategies for maintaining a validating stance in complex clinical scenarios.

Making Chain Analysis Accessible and Culturally Relevant

Chain analysis emerged as a central theme across several webinars, beginning with a Mandarin-language workshop, **DBT 工作坊：如何轻松掌握链式行为分析** (26 March 2025), presented by *Ms Chen Luo* (China). This session focused on common challenges faced by Chinese clients, who may experience chain analysis as overly self-critical or akin to writing a “self-criticism.” Through clear examples, the workshop highlighted frequent misunderstandings and offered concrete, step-by-step guidance on how therapists can scaffold the process, reduce shame, and support clients to use chain analysis as a compassionate problem-solving tool rather than a self-critical exercise.

This theme was further developed in **Mastering Chain Analysis: Beyond the Basics** (5 June 2025) with *Dr. Sian Jeffrey* (Australia), who provided a deeper clinical dive into both chain and solution analysis. This session focused on therapist skills in managing disengagement, working with “I don’t know” responses, addressing severe emotion dysregulation, and navigating emotional avoidance. Emphasis was placed on identifying effective points to “break the chain” and strengthening client self-efficacy to complete analyses between sessions, with rich clinical examples drawn from complex presentations.

Effective Delivery of DBT Skills Groups With group skills training often being a starting point for many new teams in DBT, this workshop covered the components of this important treatment mode. In *Running an Effective DBT Skills Group* (21 May 2025), *Dr. Shian-Ling Keng* (Malaysia) highlighted DBT skills training as a key mechanism of change underpinning DBT's effectiveness. Drawing on research and extensive clinical experience, she discussed practical considerations for starting and sustaining skills groups, selecting evidence-based curricula, and structuring sessions to maximise engagement and learning. Tips on skills teaching, homework review, and missing links analysis were shared, alongside reflections on adapting skills groups within low-resource and culturally diverse contexts.

Returning to Dialectics

Dialectical philosophy took centre stage in *The "D" in DBT: Teaching Dialectics in Concepts and Practice* (25 June 2025), presented by *Dr. Pamela Buck* (USA). This session revisited dialectics as a foundational pillar of DBT, from the biosocial theory to the core balance of acceptance and change. Dr Buck explored how dialectics are expressed through DBT assumptions, case conceptualisation, and treatment planning, and offered guidance on how to explicitly teach dialectical thinking to clients. The session underscored the importance of grounding clinical decision-making in dialectical principles, particularly when working with complex, multi-diagnostic presentations.

Attending to Neurodiversity in DBT

With growing recognition of neurodiversity worldwide, *Considering Adaptations to DBT for Neurodiversity* (13 August 2025), presented by *Ms. Cathryn Pilcher* (Australia), explored how DBT can be delivered in more neuroaffirmative ways. Key considerations included learning styles, sensory processing differences, attentional control, and environmental factors that may inadvertently create invalidating experiences for neurodiverse clients. The session invited clinicians to reflect on implications for case conceptualisation, treatment adaptations, and systems-level changes to improve accessibility and engagement.

Implementing DBT in Hospital Settings: Lessons from Taiwan

At a systems level, *Implementation & Clinical Experiences of DBT in Mackay Memorial Hospital* (15 October 2025), was delivered in Chinese by *Ms. Shu-Chin Chen* (Chinese Taipei), with live English translation by Dr Sichu Wu. Drawing on nearly two decades of experience, Ms Chen shared the development and sustainability of a comprehensive DBT program in northern Taiwan, including individual therapy, skills groups, case management, and consultation teams. She focused on the importance of team motivation, leadership, and ongoing training, as well as cultural considerations and adaptations within a hospital-based service. Attended by nearly 70 participants from across the Asia-Pacific region, the session exemplified the growing regional interest in high-quality, evidence-based DBT implementation and cross-cultural knowledge exchange.

APAC-DBT presents

華人DBT在台北馬偕 - 經驗分享
IMPLEMENTATION & CLINICAL
EXPERIENCES OF DBT IN MACKAY
MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

陳淑欽 Shu-Chin Chen
馬偕紀念醫院 自殺防治中心 臨床心理師
Clinical Psychologist, Suicide Prevention Center,
MacKay Memorial Hospital (Chinese Taipei)

15 October 2025
10-11:30 AM, 10-11:30 AM CST (UTC/GMT +8)

2.2 一步一步地完成團隊訓練-DBT進階訓練與其他
DBT Intensive Training (& related training)

Part I (Part I, 2010, March)
Part II (Part II, 2010, Oct)
Part III (Part III, 2012, Aug)

On site training in the BRIC, Seattle, USA
Shu-Chin (Aug-Dec, 2011)
Lin C.J. (Nov, 2011)

Shu-Chin supported by Andrew Fruehling (Nov, 2010)

陳淑欽
Shu-Chin Chen
trained for
refugee
coping
Jul-Dec, 2011

2018 - Dr. Alan E. Fruzzetti
DBT for family and adolescents

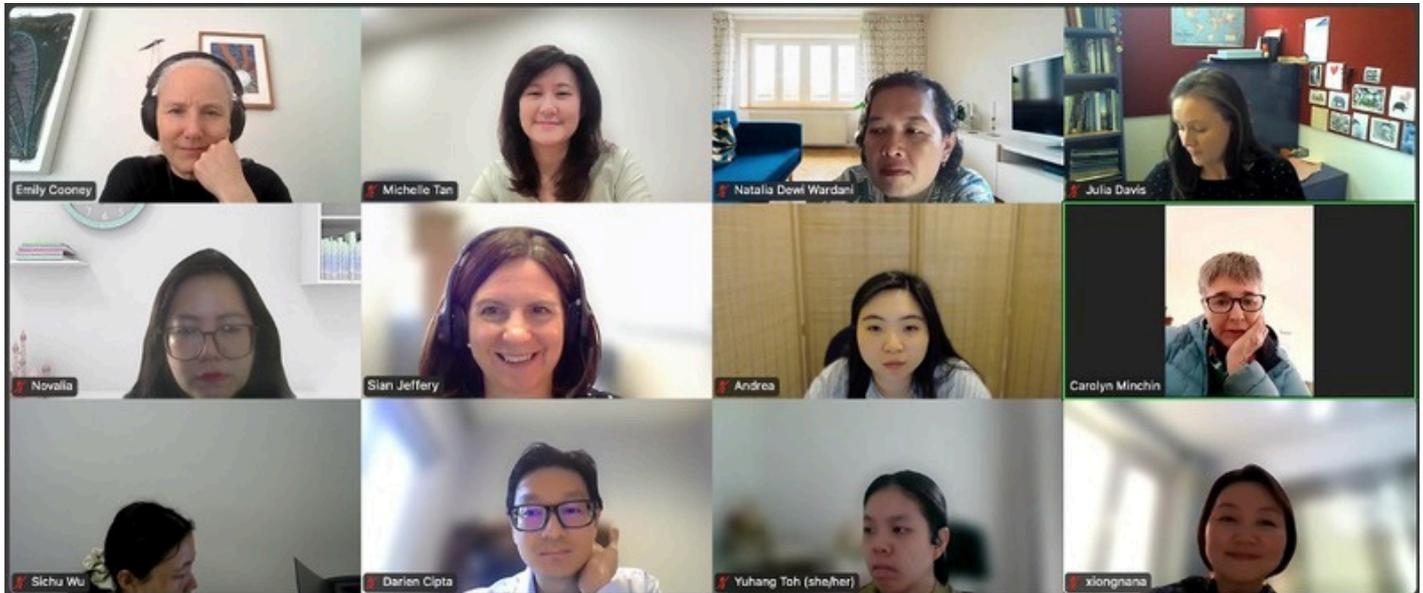
2022.6.12 - Dr. Thomas R. Lynch
Radical Open DBT

All the training material were translated by our core team members.

A SNAPSHOT OF MS CHEN'S PRESENTATION, SHARED WITH PERMISSION

Building Regional Research Collaboration: APAC-DBT Research Forum

In July 2025, APAC-DBT also hosted its inaugural Research Forum, facilitated by *Dr. Emily Cooney* (New Zealand) and *Dr. Michelle Tan* (Singapore). This members-only event brought together 12 researchers from China, Malaysia, Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand, and Singapore, all with a shared interest in personality disorder research. Eight research projects at varying stages of development were presented and discussed using a consultation-team model, fostering open dialogue, shared problem-solving, and the formation of new regional research connections.



RESEARCHERS FROM ACROSS THE ASIA-PACIFIC MET VIA ZOOM TO SHARE AND DISCUSS THEIR WORK

Looking Forward Feedback from participants across these events were highly encouraging, with consistently strong ratings across workshops for overall satisfaction, organisation, teaching clarity, and relevance to clinical practice. Participants particularly valued the opportunity to learn from experienced DBT clinicians across the region and internationally, and appreciated the balance between theoretical foundations and practical clinical insights. Many commented on the generosity of presenters in sharing their expertise and engaging thoughtfully with participants' questions, contributing to a collaborative and supportive learning environment.

At the same time, feedback highlighted a strong appetite for deeper and more applied learning opportunities. Several participants noted that the sessions were rich in content for the available time and expressed interest in longer workshops, follow-up sessions, and opportunities for more in-depth discussion or case-based learning. Topics of particular interest for future events included working with complex clinical presentations (such as PTSD with ADHD, eating disorders, and autism), exposure-based work within DBT, and managing clients experiencing chronic crises. Participants also expressed interest in further exploration of core DBT processes – including dialectics, radical acceptance, problem solving, chain analysis, and case formulation – as well as discussions on adapting DBT for specific clinical populations and diverse cultural contexts. Suggestions also included opportunities for greater regional connection, such as sharing implementation experiences across services, learning about consultation team processes, and exploring alternative formats such as extended workshops or collaborative learning spaces. As you will see in the 2026's line up of events, we have done our best to incorporate these propositions into APAC-DBT's offerings.

Although these live events were not recorded, they offered meaningful opportunities for learning, reflection, and connection across the Asia-Pacific DBT community. Together, they highlight APAC-DBT's ongoing commitment to supporting high-quality clinical practice, thoughtful adaptation, and collaborative research across contexts and cultures – ensuring that DBT continues to meet the needs of diverse individuals and communities across our region.

Translating a Life: Bringing the Spirit of Dr. Linehan to Japan

written by Mie Takaki, DBT-LBC Certified Clinician, Founder of DBT Tokyo (Japan)

My journey into Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) began in 2014 during a Master's practicum in Montreal, Canada. Immersed in a bilingual environment offering multifamily programs in English and French, I witnessed a profound transformation in adolescents and their parents. At the time, I had spent 20 years working for an international child rights NGO, but seeing the "down-to-earth" practicality of DBT—how it personalized complex psychological concepts into actionable life skills—shifted my path entirely. I left my long-standing career, returned to Japan to become a psychologist, and in 2020, I founded DBT Tokyo to bring the full, adherent model of the therapy to my home country.

One of the most significant milestones in this professional journey has been the recent release of the Japanese translation of Dr. Marsha Linehan's memoir, ***Building a Life Worth Living***.

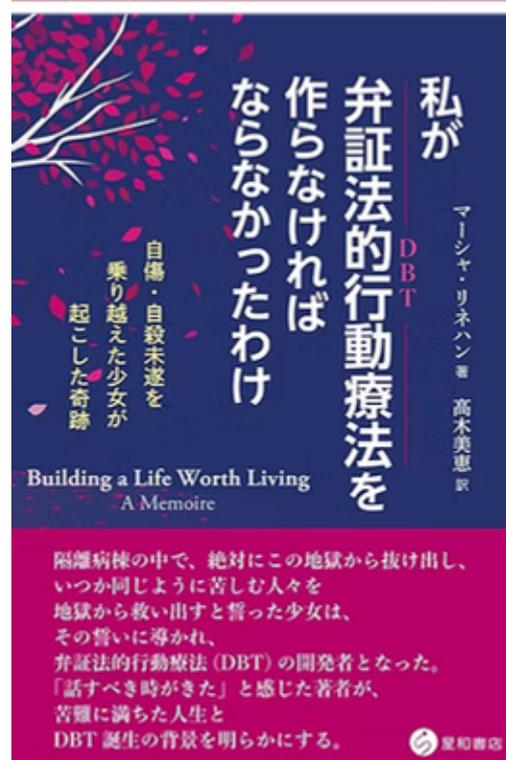
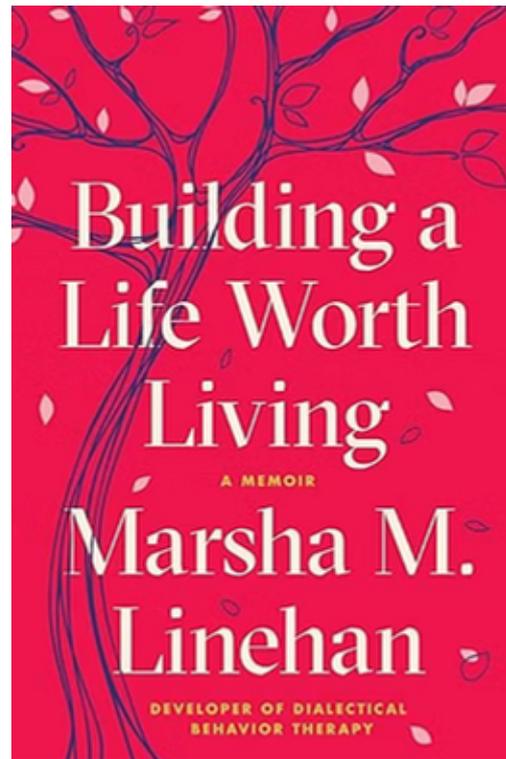
Translating Dr. Linehan's life story was far more than a linguistic exercise. To do it justice, I had to "feel" her private experience in Japanese. As she notes several times in the book, the challenge lies in putting words to something that can only truly be felt outside of language. I found myself constantly reflecting on the personhood of Dr. Linehan: *What kind of Japanese would she speak? How do I capture her unique voice?*

Beyond the linguistics, the project carried significant personal and cultural risks. In a society where seniority, loyalty, and humility are paramount, putting words to Zen, Christianity, and Behavior Therapy felt like a vulnerability. I found myself going in circles wondering: *Would my Zen community of "Shikantaza" (just sitting) accept this interpretation? Would the Catholic community feel I had misrepresented their faith? Would the pioneers of DBT in Japan and the academic community of behaviorism approve of my choice of words?*

Ultimately, the driving question that got me unstuck was: Would this translation resonate with the Japanese clients?

Because the official DBT manual and worksheets are yet to be published in Japanese, this memoir has become a cornerstone of my dream to "demystify" DBT for the Japanese public. Since the book's launch in August 2025, I have seen a steady increase in inquiries from across the country, which I take as a heartening sign that it might be working.

As a DBT-LBC certified clinician, I am committed to ensuring that as DBT grows in the Asia-Pacific region, it maintains its core fidelity while finding its unique cultural rhythm. This book is my contribution to that bridge—a way to ensure that Dr. Linehan's spirit is felt just as clearly in Japan as it is in the USA.



2026 Schedule of Events

World DBT Summit

Get ready for the ultimate global DBT experience! The **World DBT Summit** is bringing together DBT therapists from every corner of the globe for an electrifying 24-hour rolling DBT-a-thon. Expect cutting-edge research from world-leading experts, dynamic workshops and masterclasses from top clinicians, and inspiring stories of how DBT is transforming lives worldwide.

This fully online event will be hosted by *Michaela Swales* and *Alec Miller*, who claim they'll be awake for the full 24 hours — though we're all taking bets on how long they last! Luckily for them (and you), every session will be recorded so you can dive in whenever it suits your schedule.

Because the Summit follows the sun, start times vary by time zone. Proceedings kick off in the early morning of Thursday 29 October 2026 (New Zealand time) — that's 1 am China Standard Time, with a full day of energising content continuing as NZ heads to sleep and China stays wide awake. Wherever you are — from Beijing to Seattle — you'll have access to the Summit live or on-demand.

As the event circles the globe, you'll be joining DBT therapists in different regions in real time, creating a truly international, round-the-clock celebration of DBT.

Stay tuned to WDBTA and APAC-DBT social channels for updates — more excitement is on the way!

SAVE THE DATE:
Online and across international time zones
28 to 30 October



Members-Only Events



Following the success of last year's inaugural Research Forum, the next **APAC-DBT Research Forum** will be hosted by *Emily Cooney (New Zealand)* and *Michelle Tan (Singapore)* in July 2026. This is a space for researchers and clinician-researchers to share works in progress, receive collegial feedback, and build connections for future collaboration. Further details and registration information will be shared with members in the coming months.

Enjoyed reading these articles?

The APAC-DBT and its initiatives are fully volunteer-run. We welcome all contributions from members for future content - do contact us via email if you are interested to share about your / your team's work, and have expertise in writing, design, organizing events or other skills.

Upcoming APAC-DBT Training Workshops

First Workshop of 2026:

The poster features a Polaroid-style photo of Annie McCall on the left. To the right, the text reads: 'APAC-DBT presents TARGETING SHAME IN DBT'. Below the title, it lists 'Annie McCall, United States' and the date '30 April 2026'. It also provides time slots for four cities: Jakarta (7 to 8:30 AM), Perth/Beijing (8 to 9:30 AM), Tokyo/Seoul (9 to 10:30 AM), and Sydney (10 to 11:30 AM). At the bottom, there is a sign-up link: 'sign up at https://apacdbt.org'. The background is a soft gradient of pink and blue with decorative elements like a star and circles.

Shame is a pervasive source of misery for clients in DBT, and yet it can be difficult to identify and even harder to treat. In this 90-minute webinar, we will look at how shame presents in the therapy room, in clients' lives, and on the chain to problem behaviors. We will explore shame's relationship with other emotions, like anger, guilt, disgust, and sadness. Finally, we will apply specific DBT strategies and skills to targeting shame in Stage 1 DBT before treating historical trauma in Stage 2.

Registration and Other Details:

- Workshops are conducted in a fully online format, to ensure that these can be made available to all members. The
- timing of each session is determined by the speaker's schedule and time zone. More
- details about each session will be sent out to members closer to these dates - do ensure that you are on our mailing list!

Dr. Annie McCall, MA, LMHC is a U.S.-based DBT provider, trainer, and consultant. As part of her training in DBT, Annie was a skills trainer and individual therapist on two research studies led by treatment developer Marsha Linehan, Ph.D. at the University of Washington. Annie has worked closely with Melanie Harned, Ph.D. in the development and training of the DBT Prolonged Exposure protocol, including providing individual therapy in the original treatment development study. She co-founded Youth and Family DBT of Seattle, which offered multi-family DBT skills groups and parent coaching workshops from 2007-2016. Annie was in the first class of Linehan Board-certified DBT therapists, and is a certified PE therapist and supervisor. She continues to work closely with Dr. Harned, providing training and consultation in the DBT PE protocol and related topics through Harned Consulting, LLC. Annie is currently the DBT Program Director at Psychwire, and is a featured presenter in Psychwire's "DBT Foundational Training" and "Applied DBT Skills for Anger and Shame."

All are welcome to register. Workshops are free for APAC-DBT members, and chargeable for non-members.

Upcoming APAC-DBT Training Workshops



May 2026
**Application and
Adaptation of DBT
Skills-Training Group
in China**

Chun Wang & Sichu Wu
(China)



July 2026
**DBT for Patients
with Disorders of
Intellectual
Development**

Jan Glasenapp
(Germany)



August 2026
**Effective Phone
Coaching in DBT**

Alexander Chapman
(Canada)



September 2026
**DBT for Trauma: An
Introduction to the DBT
Prolonged Exposure for
PTSD**

Melanie Harned
(United States)



November 2026
**Making Skills Relevant: Enhancing
Skills Training to Increase
Acquisition, Strengthening and
Generalization**

Mike Batcheler
(New Zealand)
