

# Talking Therapies

## Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)

### What is Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)?

This style of therapy involves exploring the thoughts, feelings and behaviours that lead to problems (such as anxiety, depression or stress). These are then modified in order to reduce the problem to a more manageable level. CBT has been shown in research to be an effective therapy in treating depression and anxiety as well as phobias OCD and trauma. It is recommended by the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE).

### What to expect from therapy

During the first few sessions your difficulties are discussed and it will become clearer during this time whether CBT will be helpful for you. You and your therapist will create a treatment plan, outlining what treatment methods will be used and roughly how long treatment will last. Each session will last about 50 minutes. Sessions usually take place at the same time and place weekly or fortnightly.

You will be asked to complete weekly questionnaires about your difficulties. These will help to monitor your progress, guide treatment and identify problem areas.

Every session, your therapist will write a session plan with you to ensure that everything that is important will be covered in a structured way.

Treatment will involve a regular review of any risks that have been identified with you. At the end of treatment you and your therapist create a plan to help keep you on track, help prevent relapse and a plan should you relapse.

### How to make the most of therapy

- Please turn up 5 minutes early to fill in the questionnaires. If you prefer, you can take a copy of the questionnaires with you each week and complete them before you come to therapy.
- You will understand yourself and address your problems more quickly if you are willing to complete in between session work to the best of your ability. Research demonstrates clients who carry out homework get better faster and stay better for longer.
- It is important to clarify anything you don't understand during the session so you don't go away feeling unsure about anything. Your therapist will do their best to ensure that this doesn't happen.
- Your therapy will encourage you to make treatment goals as clear as possible in order that you are sure they have been achieved. This helps learning and builds confidence.'
- You are encouraged to bring your own tape recorder or notebook to make a record of what was covered in the session. This can be useful as it can be difficult to remember all the content of the session at times.

Methods used in CBT include; detailed assessments to understand how problems have developed and are maintained, keeping diaries of thoughts, emotions and behaviours, monitoring and scheduling activities, real life experiments to test out alternative ways of thinking and behaving, problem solving, restructuring thoughts.

### Things to bring to the every session

- Water or soft drink
- Reading glasses if you need them
- Paper and note pad or tape recorder
- A ring binder or pocket file to keep worksheets in.

### The patient therapist working relationship

The therapist comes to the therapy sessions with knowledge and tools to treat problems relating to anxiety or depression. You come to therapy knowing about you and the difficulties that you have. You and your therapist work together to understand your difficulties much better, and to find out what tools will work.

For successful treatment, there has to be honesty and openness in the relationship. Your therapist will not have a hidden agenda and will be working with you to achieve your goals. The therapy will encourage you to be open and honest about your problems. This is to help you get the most you can from treatment. Remember this relationship is confidential and your therapist's role is a non-judgemental one. You will get the most out of treatment if you come to therapy with an open mind and a willingness to change the way you think and behave.

### Further information on CBT can be found at the following websites:

[www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mentalhealthinfoforall/treatments/cbt.aspx](http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mentalhealthinfoforall/treatments/cbt.aspx)

[www.patient.co.uk/showdoc/27000424/](http://www.patient.co.uk/showdoc/27000424/)