

Introduction to CBT based Guided Self Help (GSH)

What is 'Cognitive Behavioural Therapy' (CBT)?

CBT is a type of therapy that teaches people to manage their problems through making changes to the way they think and behave. CBT is very commonly used to treat difficulties such as depression and anxiety. There is a large amount of research that suggests CBT is very effective for helping people recover from their symptoms. Continued practice of the techniques taught can also support people to stay well and prevent relapse.

What can I expect?

At every session your PWP (Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner) will discuss the questionnaires you have been sent to monitor your symptoms. You will agree on goals for therapy which will help future sessions remain focussed on your needs.

Throughout therapy you will be asked to complete self-help assignments in your own time. In all CBT the change generally happens outside of the treatment sessions – as you learn to become your own therapist.

How can I make the most of my treatment?

All CBT will require a person to practice the techniques they have learned. Think of this like medication; if your Doctor prescribes medication but you do not take it, it will not work. Similarly with CBT, if you attend but do not practice the techniques, very little will change in your wellbeing. Typically, the more a person makes time to practice the techniques, the quicker they will start see improvements in their symptoms.

My symptoms

Often, depression, anxiety and / or stress can feel very overwhelming and it can be hard to know where to start with trying to feel better. In CBT, a person's difficulties are broken down in to the situations that trigger them to feel this way, their thoughts, their physical symptoms, their emotions and how this causes them to behave, or do things differently. In this way, we can more clearly see the areas that need to be changed to start feeling better.

Problem Statement Summary

It is important to think about what are the most important parts for you to work on in treatment. To do this, we recommend that you complete a 'Problem Statement Summary'. This is a short paragraph that captures the symptoms that you would most like to work on and change within your treatment. This will be shared with your Practitioner so they can understand what is important for you to achieve through treatment. Consider the thoughts, physical sensations, emotions and changes to your behaviour that you would like to improve and complete the following;

My main problem is;

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(For example, 'feeling low', 'worrying' or 'panic attacks')

This is worse when;

.....

.....

The thoughts that go through my head are;

.....

.....

My body feels;

.....

Emotionally I feel;

.....

My behaviour has changed, I have been avoiding / doing more;

.....

.....

Goals

Now you are clearer on what the problem is you want to change, it can be helpful to think about how you would like things to be different by the end of treatment. To do this it can be helpful to make goals 'SMART' this means;

Specific – what do you want to achieve? Where will this be? Who with?

Measurable – How will you know it's completed?

Achievable – Is this goal attainable in the time you have available?

Realistic – Do you have everything necessary to complete the goal? Does it require time or money? Is it manageable when taking in to account your depression / anxiety?

Time boundaried – When do you want to have completed the goal by?

My Goals:

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