



Mind Blue Print: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

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ABSTRACT

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is "problem-focused" and "action-oriented", meaning it is used to treat specific problems related to a diagnosed mental disorder and the therapist's role is to assist the client in finding and practicing effective strategies to address the identified goals and decrease symptoms of the disorder. CBT is based on the belief that thought distortions and maladaptive behaviours play a role in the development and maintenance of psychological disorders, and that symptoms and associated distress can be reduced by teaching new information-processing skills and coping mechanisms.

KEYWORDS

Problem Solving, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Learning Skills

INTRODUCTION

Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) is a psychosocial intervention that is the most widely used evidence-based practice for treating mental disorders. Guided by empirical research, CBT focuses on the development of personal coping strategies that target solving current problems and changing unhelpful patterns in cognitions (e.g., thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes), behaviours, and emotional regulation. It was originally designed to treat depression, and is now used for a number of mental health conditions.

The CBT model is based on a combination of the basic principles from behavioural and cognitive psychology

USES FOR CBT

CBT has been shown to be an effective way of treating a number of different mental health conditions. In addition to depression or anxiety disorders, CBT can also help people with:

- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

- Panic Disorder
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Phobias
- Eating Disorders – Such As Anorexia And Bulimia
- Sleep Problems – Such As Insomnia
- Problems Related To Alcohol Misuse
- CBT Is Also Sometimes Used To Treat People With Long-Term Health Conditions, Such as:

Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)

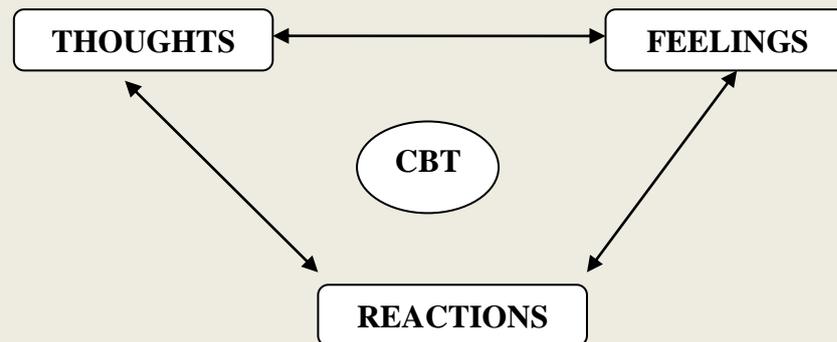
Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS)

Cognitive behavioural therapy involves in three processes

1. Identifying negative thoughts and especially the ones that have the potential to cause harm to self and/or others often, these fears and perception are mere assumptions having no rationality of any kind. The service of the therapist during this stage is almost always inevitable since the first step is the most crucial.



STEP INVOLVED COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY



2. Challenging your negative thoughts is where you actually being to be evaluate your perception. It involves questioning practically, analyzing positive beliefs and testing reality. A number of experiments and counselling session may be conducted to make the mind believe that negative thought are baseless.

3. Finally, replacing negative thought with more realistic and positive ones seals the therapeutic approach. While the therapist may help come up with rational and accurate thought; it is the affected individual that must derive positive thoughts so that his or her anxiety levels come to a normalcy.

THE IMPORTANCE OF NEGATIVE THOUGHTS

CBT is based on a model or theory that it's not events themselves that upset us, but the meanings we give them. If our thoughts are too negative, it can block us seeing things or doing things that don't fit, that disconfirm, what we believe is true. In

other words, we continue to hold on to the same old thoughts and fail to learn anything new.

WHERE DO THESE NEGATIVE THOUGHTS COME FROM?

Beck suggested that these thinking patterns are set up in childhood, and become automatic and relatively fixed. So, a child who didn't get much open affection from their parents but was praised for school work might come to think, "I have to do well all the time. If I don't, people will reject me." Such a rule for living (known as a **dysfunctional assumption**) may do well for the person a lot of the time and help them to work hard.

But if something happens that's beyond their control and they experience failure, then the dysfunctional thought pattern may be triggered. The person may then begin to have **automatic thoughts** like, "I've completely failed. No one will like me. I can't face them."

Cognitive-behavioural therapy acts to help the person understand that this is what's going on. It helps him or her to step outside



their automatic thoughts and test them out. CBT would encourage the depressed woman mentioned earlier to examine real-life experiences to see what happens to her, or to others, in similar situations. Then, in the light of a more realistic perspective, she may be able to take the chance of testing out what other people think, by revealing something of her difficulties to friends.

Clearly, negative things can and do happen. But when we are in a disturbed state of mind, we may be basing our predictions and interpretations on a biased view of the situation, making the difficulty that we face seem much worse. CBT helps people to correct these misinterpretations.

HOW DOES COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY WORK?

How cognitive behavioural therapy works is complex. There are several possible theories about how it works, and clients often have their own views. Perhaps there is no one explanation. But CBT probably works in a number of ways at the same time. Some it shares with other therapies, some are specific to CBT. The following illustrates the ways in which CBT can work.

LEARNING COPING SKILLS

CBT tries to teach people skills for dealing with their problems. Someone with anxiety may learn that avoiding situations helps to fan their fears.

Confronting fears in a gradual and manageable way helps give the person faith in their own ability to cope. Someone who is depressed may learn to record their thoughts and look at them more realistically. This helps them to break the downward spiral of their mood. Someone with long-standing problems in relating to other people may learn to check out their assumptions about other people's motivation, rather than always assuming the worst.

CHANGING BEHAVIORS AND BELIEFS

A new strategy for coping can lead to more lasting changes to basic attitudes and ways of behaving. The anxious client may learn to avoid avoiding things! He or she may also find that anxiety is not as dangerous as they assumed. Someone who's depressed may come to see themselves as an ordinary member of the human race, rather than inferior and fatally flawed. Even more basically, they may come to have a different attitude to their thoughts – that thoughts are just thoughts, and nothing more.

A NEW FORM OF RELATIONSHIP

One-to-one CBT brings the client into a kind of relationship they may not have had before. The 'collaborative' style means that they are actively involved in changing. The therapist seeks their views and reactions,



which then shape the way the therapy progresses. The person may be able to reveal very personal matters, and to feel relieved, because no-one judges them. He or she arrives at decisions in an adult way, as issues are opened up and explained. Each individual is free to make his or her own way, without being directed. Some people will value this experience as the most important aspect of therapy.

SOLVING LIFE PROBLEMS

The methods of CBT may be useful because the client solves problems that may have been long-standing and stuck. Someone anxious may have been in a repetitive and boring job, lacking the confidence to change. A depressed person may have felt too inadequate to meet new people and improve their social life. Someone stuck in an unsatisfactory relationship may find new ways of resolving disputes. CBT may teach someone a new approach to dealing with problems that have their basis in an emotional disturbance.

CBT CAN BE AN EFFECTIVE THERAPY FOR THE FOLLOWING PROBLEMS:

- Anger Management
- Anxiety And Panic Attacks
- Child And Adolescent Problems
- Chronic Fatigue Syndrome
- Chronic Pain

- Depression
- Drug Or Alcohol Problems
- Eating Problems
- General Health Problems
- Habits, Such As Facial Tics
- Mood Swings
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
- Phobias
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Sexual And Relationship Problems
- Sleep Problems



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