

## Cognitive Behaviour Therapy for you

Cognitive Behaviour Therapy is an evidence-based psychological approach (talking therapy) that has been developed and widely used over the past 50 or so years. It is based on some of the principles research and academic studies have highlighted as being important in understanding human psychology, including learning, emotional processing and cognitive functioning and biases. Scientific trials and clinical practice have shown CBT to be effective for a wide range of problems you or your loved ones may experience including:

- Agoraphobia and Panic Attacks
- Anxiety and Stress
- Bipolar Disorder
- Chronic Fatigue Syndrome
- Depression and other mood disorders
- Eating problems
- Habit problems (e.g., tics)
- Low Self-esteem
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Pain
- Phobias
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Psychosis (schizophrenia)
- Sleep difficulties
- Social Phobia and Shyness
- Unexplained physical symptoms

CBT can be helpful for children, adolescents and adults of any age. The government's National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) specifically recommends the use of CBT for anxiety disorders (including panic attacks and PTSD), depression, OCD, psychosis and bipolar disorder.

## Choosing your CBT therapist:

A good starting point could be to talk to your GP. CBT is available within the NHS for certain difficulties although there may be a wait before you can access therapy. You may want to consider private therapy instead. As well as finding someone with whom you can form an effective working relationship it is important to ensure your therapist is properly trained in CBT. The British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies (BABCP) is the lead organisation for CBT and accredits therapists who demonstrate a high level of training and supervision for their clinical work. A directory of accredited therapists is available from [www.cbtreceiver.com](http://www.cbtreceiver.com).

Hillside Psychological Services Ltd take referrals directly from members of the public, and from GPs, insurance providers, solicitors, employers, psychiatrists, etc.

Please see our website for more details or contact us

Lead therapist: **Dr Heather Bennett**  
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# Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) and Eye-Movement Desensitisation & Reprocessing (EMDR)

## What are they and how can they help you?

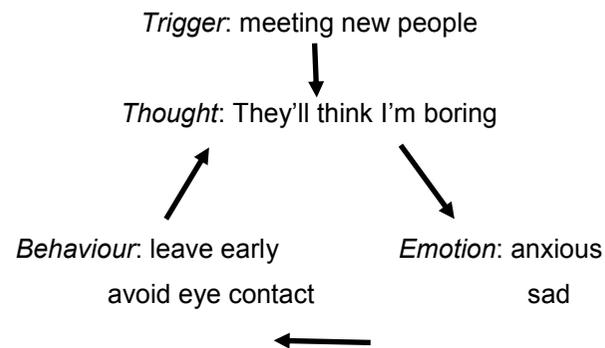
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## What happens in CBT?

### Assessment and Formulation:-

When you first meet your therapist you will talk about how your difficulties affect you in the here-and-now. The focus will be on issues that cause you distress and/or interfere with your day-to-day functioning. In particular you will work together to identify and understand how patterns of thoughts, feelings and behaviours are likely to be maintaining your difficulties. For example, it might be that anxiety has led you to avoid certain situations, which leads to you feeling safer and more comfortable in the short-term, but in the long-term actually makes it harder for you to re-enter these situations. Your therapist might draw out some of the patterns you identify, for example:



You and your therapist will also think about how your problems might have developed over time, along with any other factors from your background that might be helpful in understanding why things are difficult for you now. We will, in addition, identify your strengths and resources that are likely to be helpful in your recovery. We will also agree on some goals and how many sessions are likely to be needed to overcome your difficulties.

## What happens in CBT?

### Therapy sessions:-

You and your therapist will work through a treatment plan you draw up together. The nature of this will depend on your particular difficulties. For example, in depression this might involve increasing your activity levels, finding helpful ways to challenge negative thoughts, learning skills such as mindfulness to break unhelpful cycles of ruminating about past events or worrying about the future, and learning to be more compassionate towards yourself. For anxiety problems there is likely to be some element of “exposure” within therapy, for instance, putting yourself in situations that you have found difficult in order to learn more helpful ways of thinking and acting within the situation. This is only done in a graduated way and at a pace that you feel is manageable. The emphasis in any therapy will be for you to learn new strategies to help you in your recovery and to manage any setbacks that arise, in order for you to effectively become your own therapist when therapy ends.

You will review your progress each time you meet with your therapist and you will usually need to use the time between therapy sessions to try out new strategies to build on the work done in therapy. At the start of therapy it is usually most helpful to meet with your therapist on a weekly or fortnightly basis as you will be learning new skills, which might need fine-tuning to make optimal progress, as with any new skill. As time goes on you and your therapist might agree that you have longer gaps between sessions as you are consolidating your progress.

CBT is not for everyone and it is not always easy. You may need to consider carefully and realistically what else is going on in your life, who is around to support you and whether you have the time and motivation to put into overcoming your difficulties at this time. It is never too late to enter therapy and learn how to overcome your difficulties.

## Eye-Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing for you

EMDR was developed in the 1980’s as a psychological approach to help people process distressing memories. It is now recommended by NICE, along with CBT, for use in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, where “flashbacks” of traumatic events are common. EMDR can also be useful in any disorder where an individual is struggling with intrusive memories that are linked with strong emotions and/or negative beliefs about themselves.

As the name suggests, eye movements are used to help clients process memories by helping them to activate the brain’s natural healing capacity. While it is not fully understood how EMDR works it seems that eye movements may occupy the part of the brain that responds emotionally to the memory, blocking it from being processed in a helpful way. It has also been suggested that EMDR may work in a similar way to the REM (Rapid Eye Movement) phases that occur during normal sleep patterns that are essential for us to feel rested.

EMDR can be particularly useful for people who find it especially difficult to talk about their distressing experiences as well as those who do not benefit from more traditional CBT. For some people EMDR may work more quickly than CBT.



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