



LET'S TALK THERAPY

There are many types of therapy out there but what's the difference and how can we know if there's one that could be helpful for us? Well, here's a breakdown of some of the main sorts of therapy support you may come across:

COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY (CBT)

Tell me more about this....

CBT is a talking therapy that uses lots of tools to help you identify and challenge negative thought patterns and behaviour. It works on the principle that our thoughts, feelings and behaviours all impact each other so our feelings and thought processes can go on to affect our actions. That means that by challenging and reframing our thoughts we can see an impact on how we feel and react to situations.

We can engage in CBT in one-on-one work with a CBT therapist, in group settings and via CBT apps or self-help workbooks. However you engage in CBT, you will commonly explore some negative thought patterns, create small manageable goals, learn new tools and change and challenge those thought patterns overtime. Sometimes powerful emotions and issues such as anxiety can feel overwhelming and unmanageable and CBT helps you to break these down into smaller parts, enabling you to feel more in control.

Most sessions last 30 mins to an hour and during that time you will explore some of the issues you are facing and then be given activities to complete during the time in-between sessions.

How can this help?

CBT is frequently used for treating anxiety disorders, insomnia, panic attacks, anger, depression, phobias, self-harm, stress and substance dependency- although it can also be helpful for other issues such as relationship issues.

DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY (DBT)

Tell me more about this....

DBT is very similar to CBT but draws on other work and theories to understand how we talk about our struggles and how we can be mindful in response to them. It can be helpful for people who are struggling with overwhelming emotions to help regulate how they feel, cope with stress and use mindfulness techniques to live in the moment and ground themselves. DBT is also an effective talking therapy around harmful behaviours such as self-harm and eating disorders because it teaches distress tolerance techniques. These techniques can help us to self-soothe, distract ourselves when we need to and enable us to cope with the strong emotions we face.

DBT can help us to accept and change the situations we are struggling with, learn healthier ways of coping and better understand the issues we face. It is most commonly delivered as a 'high-intensity' therapy which means it involves, one-to-one work with therapists as well as group work with others. Alternatively, some digital apps and self-help workbooks seem to present DBT tools as well, however this is unlikely to be considered delivery of the therapy in its entirety.



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How can this help?

In the same way as CBT, DBT can be used to treat a range of issues, however it is very effective in helping support people around self-harm, borderline personality disorder (BPD), depression, disordered eating and substance dependence.

EYE MOVEMENT DESENSITISATION AND REPROCESSING THERAPY (EMDR)

Tell me more about this....

EMDR is a psychotherapy that helps you reflect on and process past experiences and trauma that are impacting your wellbeing and mental health. It helps the brain re-experience and process traumatic experiences, while reducing the distress that brings, allowing us time to heal. Treatment involves time spent talking with the therapist to identify some of the memories and experiences that you may be struggling with, and then uses a combination of talking and side to side eye movements (bilateral stimulation), which helps you to view these experiences differently. Ultimately this therapy helps you to reframe negative memories in a way that no longer causes you distress

Sessions can include eye movement, tapping or listening to sounds through headphones.

How can this help?

EDMR is primarily used in the treatment of trauma, especially post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). However, it can also be used in a variety of ways to help treat other mental health difficulties that seem linked to past and traumatic experiences and to ease somatic symptoms (such as muscle tension).

SHORT TERM PSYCHODYNAMIC PSYCHOTHERAPY (STPP)

Tell me more about this....

Psychodynamic therapy is a type of talking therapy which helps you to understand how your current thoughts, feelings and behaviours are shaped by your early life and past experiences. Some of the things we experience in our early years and childhood can impact us later in life especially around the way we behave or react to things and this can cause us distress or difficulty as we get older. Psychodynamic psychotherapy helps us to explore unhelpful patterns in our lives, revisit childhood experiences, examine current relationships and experiences and identify where behaviours may have originated and how we can develop healthier ways of living and responding to challenges.

This type of therapy is done in one-to-one, in person settings and usually begins with an initial assessment over 3-4 sessions and then ongoing short-term treatment of 6-12 months may be offered.

How can this help?

Psychodynamic Psychotherapy can be used to help with a range of emotional problems and conditions such as depression, anxiety, trauma, relationship issues, personality and eating disorders.



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ART THERAPY

Tell me more about this....

Art Therapy uses creative methods to express, identify, explore and communicate difficulties we are experiencing. Delivered by art psychotherapists in a group or one to one context, sessions can help you share thoughts and feelings that are too difficult to put into words.

These sessions can provide a safe space to better understand yourself and the issues you are finding difficult whilst giving you the chance to connect with others if you choose to. During sessions you work alongside an art therapist to explore the issues you are facing that are expressed creatively and physically, and then put things in place to help resolve problems and lessen difficult emotions. New types of creative therapies are also now widely available such as dance, drama and music therapy.

How can this help?

Art therapy can be used to help support a variety of issues but is very effective if you struggle to talk about your feelings or like to use creativity to explore how you feel. It is often used as a tool to grow self-awareness, understand conflict and manage overwhelming feelings.

COUNSELLING

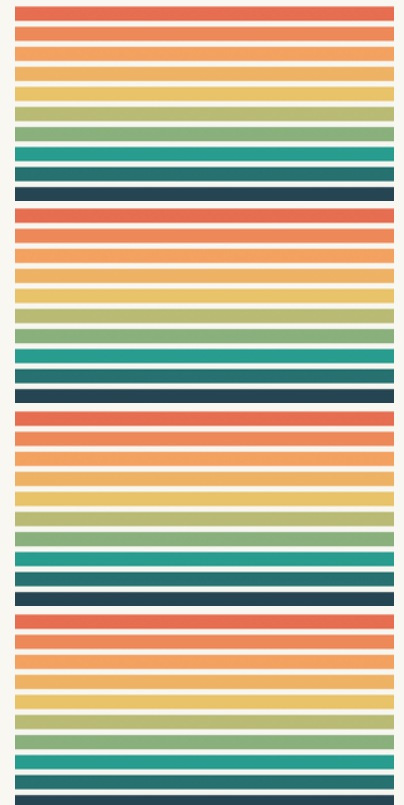
Tell me more about this....

Counselling is a one-to-one talking space, where you can safely talk about your feelings and thoughts in a confidential space. The counsellor will help you gain a better understanding of your thoughts, emotions and experiences, and although they won't advise you or tell you what to do, they help you explore different ways of thinking and responding. Counselling is about empowering you to find your own solutions in a safe environment with no criticism or judgement.

Sessions usually last 50-60 minutes and take place once a week over a long period of time (as long as is needed to reflect on the issue).

How can this help?

Counselling can provide a powerful space for you to outwardly process some of the challenges you are facing and explore helpful ways you can respond to those situations, feelings and behaviours. It is often used to help with difficult emotions such as anger, bereavement or issues such as anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, identity or relational issues.





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BEHAVIOURAL THERAPIES

Tell me more about this....

Behavioural therapies are talking therapies that draw on behaviourist theory and techniques to help individuals make changes in their lives. Exposure therapy is a form behavioural therapy which helps you overcome your fears and the limits they are putting on your life. Often when something scares us we choose to avoid it, however this can make our anxiety worse long term. Exposure therapy helps us to slowly confront the things that scare us in a safe, controlled environment one small step at a time. Alternatively Behavioural Activation therapy can help us take steps towards enjoying life and being motivated to make small, positive changes. Throughout the therapy we can be provided problem-solving skills and get help tackling problems and making changes to our behaviours over time.

How can this help?

Exposure therapy can be a helpful tool in anxiety disorders such as social anxiety, panic attacks, PTSD, OCD and phobias. Behavioural Activation can help individuals who need to make changes/solve problems in their lives and those struggling with depression.

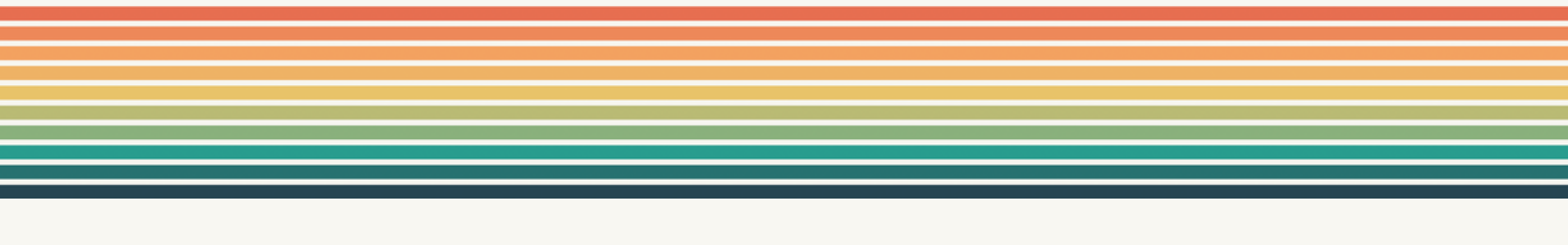
ANIMAL ASSISTED AND ECO THERAPIES

Tell me more about this....

Therapies taking place with trained therapists but alongside animals or while doing something in nature can help us by focussing on the activity we doing instead of on us and by being out in green environments! Animal assisted therapy can include a wide range of animals, often horses, dogs, cats, guinea pigs and sometimes even birds and fish. Being in the company of animals can make us feel more relaxed and more able to talk things through, while also giving us a real boost of happiness and provide a great focus for us while we explore how we're feeling. Eco-therapies often take place while doing gardening or nature based activities, helping us explore and appreciate the scenery or be around other people. Sessions often take place outside of therapy rooms and therapy sessions making us feel less pressured.

How can this help?

Animal assisted therapy is used to support people around many issues but is frequently used in treating anxiety, depression, low self-esteem and processing trauma. Eco-therapies can be used for many different struggles, and often do not focus on the difficulty but instead on completing the shared activity.





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INTERPERSONAL THERAPY (IPT)

Tell me more about this....

Interpersonal therapies can help individuals by focussing on the relationships they have with family, partners and friends as well as attempting to strengthen these in the face of mental health difficulties. The aim is to improve the relationships between the different individuals, to reduce distress for those taking part in the therapy and support them during difficult transitions, losses and struggles with mood. This therapy focusses on current relationships; however it does not focus on the conflicts. Instead, it recognises spaces where relationships may be improved and aims to help individuals in both one-on-one and group therapy spaces with individuals in their lives.

How can this help?

Interpersonal Therapy is often delivered over a longer period of around 16-20 sessions, and can help individuals struggling with mood disorders, such as depression, as well as helping individuals with eating disorders and addictions.

MINDFULNESS-BASED COGNITIVE THERAPY (MBCT)

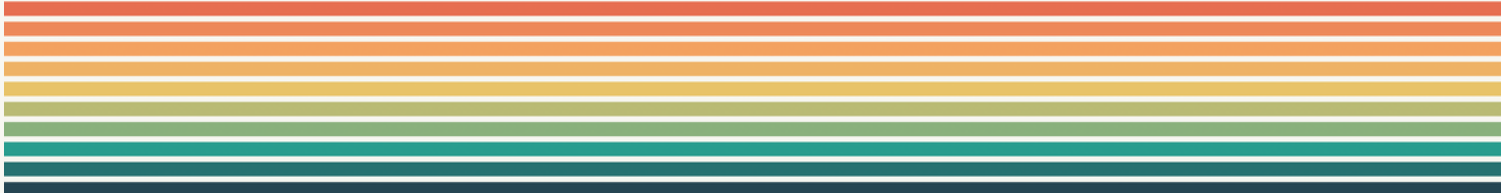
Tell me more about this....

Mindfulness- based cognitive therapies are a range of new therapies that build onto CBT, but adding in additional tools and mindful concepts that support individuals. They can help us focus on thoughts and feeling in the moment, bringing in meditative and grounding techniques that can help us manage these. This type of therapy is a specific model delivered as MBCT, as well as including Acceptance-Commitment Therapy and Mindfulness-based stress or pain reduction training.

This type of therapy is often delivered in set, course-like sessions over a period of 6-10 weeks, where each week focusses on a set component. They may be delivered in one-on-one, group and digital or self-help forms, but all involve guided meditations and skills to practise between each session.

How can this help?

This therapy was initially developed to help individuals struggling with recurring depression, however it has also begun to be used in response to stress, anxiety and OCD.





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HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

The best place to start is by talking to a local GP as they will know what therapy is available in your area (both free and paid for). Across the UK, the NHS offers short term counselling and CBT, and a GP will be able to advise you the best ways to access other forms of therapies we've listed in your specific area. Sometimes this may be through specialised NHS services, or through private and charitable organisations in your area. More and more schools also have access to some counselling and therapeutic services and school pastoral teams may be able to help you access these via CAMHs and third sector organisations. Speaking to your GP can feel scary, but they are well equipped to help you find the best support in your area.

TO help you prepare for speaking to the GP, we'd suggest checking out YoungMinds (<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/your-guide-to-support/how-to-speak-to-your-gp/>) and Mind (<https://www.mind.org.uk/for-young-people/how-to-get-help-and-support/talking-to-your-doctor/>) as well as using tools such as Doc Ready (<http://www.docready.org/#/home>).

Alternatively here's some helpful websites:

Hub of Hope (www.hubofhope.co.uk) – helps you identify local services (both NHS and wider) for different mental health struggles.

Other private therapists can be found on Therapy Directories for the organisations they are registered with, such as The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy