

Cognitive-behavioral therapy



Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is a type of therapy that builds strategies for coping with negative thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. It is one of the most well-researched and effective types of therapy available.

CBT is based on the core principle that many psychological problems are due, in part, to faulty or unhelpful ways of thinking and behaving, but these patterns of thought and action can be changed.



PRINCIPLES

CBT can be done in group or individual sessions with a licensed therapist. During these sessions, participants work to:

- Recognize distorted or unhelpful thoughts and emotional responses
- Identify destructive or unhealthy behaviors
- Learn skills to replace or modify these thoughts, emotions, and actions

While CBT is best initiated with a skilled psychotherapist, over time, the goal is for clients to gain coping skills that allow them to identify and change their own problematic thinking, emotional responses, and actions.

COMMON STRATEGIES

The exact strategy used in CBT sessions is individualized for each patient. Here are some common techniques and goals:

- Compare distorted thought patterns with reality.
- Understand the source of behavior and motivation.
- Use problem-solving skills to address difficult situations.
- Gain confidence in one's abilities.
- Learn to face fears instead of avoiding them.
- Learn to relax and calm body and mind.
- Practice role-playing to prepare for tough interactions.

WHEN CBT MIGHT BE HELPFUL

CBT can be helpful in addressing a wide range of psychological conditions.

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Substance abuse
- Addiction
- Marital problems
- Eating disorders
- Severe mental illness
- Obsessive-compulsive disorder



GETTING STARTED

- Talk to your doctor. They can refer you to a CBT licensed therapist in your area.
- Call your insurance company to find out your coverage and recommended providers.
- Ask friends and family if they have a therapist to recommend.
- If you are in crisis and need help right away, don't wait—call 911 or 1-800-273-TALK for immediate support.