



Which
Type of
Therapy

is Right
For Me?

The Consulting Clinic
www.theconsultingclinic.ie

Which Type of Therapy is Right For Me?

People often seek therapy to help create change, reduce suffering and improve wellbeing. When looking for the most effective therapy it is important to look for a Psychologist that offers evidence based treatments – backed by science and proven to work.

Below are a few different approaches to therapy with information on what each therapy is useful for.

Cognitive Behaviour Therapy

The main focus of CBT is to address and work with unhelpful thoughts and behaviours. In contrast to other therapies, Cognitive Behaviour Therapy focuses on the 'here and now' problems. It is a short-term therapy with the average duration of treatment being around 16 sessions. Sessions are interactive and collaborative. The psychologist and client work together to identify and solve problems. Clients take an active part in the therapy and will be given work to complete in between sessions to consolidate the work carried out in the session. The work is based on the premise that changing negative or maladaptive thinking can facilitate changes in behaviour. Thinking patterns are challenged to help you move away from unhelpful thought patterns such as catastrophising and move toward more rational, healthy thinking.

Evidence for Cognitive Behaviour Therapy

Cognitive Behaviour Therapy is evidence based which means that it has been clinically proven to work. Research has shown Cognitive Behaviour Therapy to be highly effective and is the treatment of choice for a number of mental health problems as indicated in the government guidelines (NICE guidelines).

Cognitive Behaviour Therapy is recommended for anxiety, depression, posttraumatic stress, obsessive-compulsive disorder, eating disorders, phobias and anger.

Mindfulness therapy

Mindfulness-based approaches are intended to teach people practical skills that can help with physical and psychological health problems and on-going life challenges. The two main approaches that have been developed in recent years are Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) and have evidence based. Mindfulness is delivered in an 8-week group format but can also be delivered individually.

How can mindfulness help?

Mindfulness teaches you to clear your mind and let go of racing thoughts. It helps to find a new perspective to problems you've been struggling with, allowing you to find alternatives and healthier ways of responding to problems.

Mindfulness increases awareness of what is going on in the present moment, allowing you to acknowledge and attend to things as they are happening, rather than letting them build up until they become overwhelming.

Mindfulness can bring calmness and help you to develop a deeper connection to yourself and those around you. This in turn leads to numerous health benefits including improving sleep, concentration and energy levels, lowering blood pressure, improving stomach and digestive problems.

Mindfulness is recommended for recurrent depression, stress reduction, the management of pain and illness and has benefits in overall wellbeing.

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy is a third wave behavioural therapy that uses acceptance and mindfulness skills and commitment to behaviour change to develop psychological flexibility and helps clarify and direct values-guided behaviour. The aim of ACT is to maximise human potential for a rich, full and meaningful life.

ACT differs from traditional cognitive behaviour therapy in that instead of teaching people to control their thoughts, feelings, actions and other private events, ACT teaches us to notice, accept and embrace them while moving in the direction of your values. ACT teaches you to let go of 'debating' with thoughts. It does not attempt to directly change or stop unwanted thoughts or feelings (as in cognitive behaviour therapy) but to notice whatever is arising while moving towards your values in life. Thus, Mindfulness and Values are key components to ACT.

The core conception of ACT is that psychological suffering is usually caused by experiential avoidance and cognitive entanglement. Accepting thoughts and detaching from them reduces human suffering. For example, if someone is getting caught up thinking, "I'm a bad person" they might be instructed to say "I am having the thought that I'm a bad person". This effectively separates the person from the cognition, thereby reducing its negative charge.

What will therapy look like?

During ACT therapy you will work collaboratively with your psychologist in a 50- minute session. Clients will work towards letting go of past unworkable solutions such as avoidance, suppression and control and work towards making healthy contact with thoughts, feelings, memories, and physical sensations that have been feared and avoided. Additionally, clients will develop greater clarity about their personal values and commit to behaviour change. Therapy will consist of teaching skills, experiential exercises, building awareness and commitment to change.

Evidence for ACT

ACT is an evidence-based therapy with over 60 randomised control trials. It has shown evidence for effectiveness in randomized control trials for a variety of problems including anxiety, depression, self- harm, eating disorders, work place stress, substance use and pain management.

Schema Therapy

Schema Therapy is an integrative approach to treatment that combines cognitive-behavioural therapy, interpersonal and psychoanalytic therapies into one model. Schema Therapy was developed by Dr. Jeff Young when he researched how people have long-standing patterns in thinking, feeling and behaving /coping that play out in relationships over the years. These patterns, he named 'schemas'.

The schemas that are identified in therapy and worked on are long standing, self- defeating patterns that typically develop in childhood. These patterns consist of negative thoughts and feelings that get repeated over the years and pose obstacles for getting one's needs met. Some examples of schema beliefs are "People will leave me," "I'm unlovable," "I'm a failure," "something bad is going to happen," "I will never get my needs met" and so on.

Schema therapy works on bringing awareness to these schemas and unhelpful ways of coping when the schemas are triggered in relationships. Schema therapy helps the person break from these patterns and to develop healthier thoughts, feelings and relationships. Therapy is weekly.

Psychodynamic therapy

Psychodynamic therapy is a psychological treatment that can help people with emotional and relationship difficulties. One of the main ideas in Psychodynamic therapy is that when something is very painful we often try to ignore it, push it away and build up defenses to 'protect' ourselves from the memory. However, some experiences in the past can continue into adulthood and impact on the way we feel and behave which in turn can lead to relationship difficulties. An example would be if someone was rejected by a parent at a young age, they may have pushed the pain away but as an adult they either withdraw from relationships or enter into (unconsciously) unhealthy relationships with a high chance of getting rejected.

Psychodynamic therapy aims to increase self awareness bringing the unconscious mind to consciousness, helping people to become aware and understand deep rooted feelings of their past in order to resolve them.

Who can benefit from psychodynamic therapy?

Psychodynamic therapy can help with a wide range of problems including anxiety, trauma, eating problems, low self-esteem, grief and relationship difficulties.

Length of therapy sessions

Psychodynamic psychotherapy usually involves regular, weekly, 50-minute appointments. If you have a more straightforward problem, you may only need a few weeks or months of therapy. If your problems are more complicated – or long-standing – you may have to carry on for several months or longer.

Couples therapy

Couples therapy is a way of resolving issues that couples have not been able to solve on their own. Therapy allows couples who are having difficulty relating to have the space and time to work through their problems and conflicts with the help of a professional. In the safe context of therapy, You can openly discuss issues relating to painful feelings.

Therapy helps identify unhelpful patterns and learn strategies to resolve problematic patterns of behaviour.

Therapy gives couples the opportunity to discuss and resolve problems that can cause conflict or unhappiness in relationships. These could include:

Poor communication, stress, affairs, anger, uncertainty about commitment, change and life transitions, sexual difficulties, conflict, illness, bereavement, starting a family, anxiety, stress, jealousy, separation and divorce, addictions, fertility difficulties and depression.

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Therapy will help you to evaluate your relationship and to find a way to address potentially difficult topics.

Still not sure what therapy is right for you?

Contact the Consulting Clinic for more information:

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This guide is for the purpose of sharing information and does not replace therapy.

If you require further information or if you wish to book an appointment contact the clinic.

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