

# Features of a cognitive behavioural approach to counselling



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In order to answer this question effectively I will first discuss what cognitive behaviour therapy is and its key features. Then I will elaborate on a couple of other approaches to counselling and explain why it is different.

Cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) can help you to change how you think (“Cognitive”) and what you do (“Behaviour”). These changes can help you to feel better. Unlike some of the other talking treatments, it focuses on the “here and now” problems and difficulties. Instead of focussing on the causes of your distress or symptoms in the past, it looks for ways to improve your state of mind now. (Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2010). The name cognitive behavioural is used in different ways to designate cognitive and behavioural therapy. It also refers to psychoanalysis based upon a combination of essential cognitive and behavioural research. Cognitive behavioural therapy is commonly used to counsel people with a wide range of disorders such as depression, phobias and anxiety.

Cognitive behaviour therapy has become progressively popular in the past years, with professional and mental health consumers (BABCP, 2010). It is usually used for short-term periods of time and it focuses more on helping clients deal with very definite problems. Since cognitive behavioural therapy is basically a short term treatment alternative, it is more affordable than other therapeutic alternatives.

During the course of counselling, individuals learn how to recognise and change negative or destructive thought patterns that have a negative influence on individual behaviour. The underlying perception behind cognitive behavioural approach to counselling is that our thoughts and

feelings play an essential role in how we portray our behaviour. For example an individual who always has thoughts on plane crashes and air disasters may find themselves avoiding air travel. The fundamental objective of cognitive behavioural therapy is to counsel and teach patients who cannot control all aspects of life around them.

The following are key features of a cognitive behavioural approach.

Cognitive behavioural therapy is mainly based on the cognitive form of emotional response on our behaviours and thoughts, and not external surroundings such as events, people and situations. The key benefit of this fact is that it helps individuals to perform and feel good even if the circumstance does not change around them.

The approach is considered to be one of the most rapid and quick forms of therapy for curing psychological disorders. The usual number of regular sessions that patients use across all types and approaches related to cognitive behaviour therapy is only 16 (Horn & Ippen, 2006). Other types of therapy such as psychoanalysis can take a longer duration equivalent to one year.

What makes the cognitive behavioural approach to be briefer and more time limited is because of its highly informative temperament and the fact that it formulates the use of coursework. The official ending of the therapy is determined by the decision of the client and therapist. Thus, cognitive behavioural therapy is not as much of an open-ended process unlike other approaches.

Some other forms of therapies believe that the major motive why individuals progress in therapy is because of the affirmative relationship between the client and the therapist. Therapists, who believe in the cognitive behavioural approach, focus on furnishing their client with self psychotherapy skills and therefore the client learns to be more independent. With these self counselling skills, the clients will automatically change as they have learnt how to think differently.

A vital aspect of thinking is based on facts. For example, in most cases, people upset themselves about things when, in fact the real situation is very different from what they actually think. If people knew the real fact then they would not waste as much time upsetting themselves.

The inductive method was adopted in the cognitive behavioural approach in order to encourage people to clearly distinguish assumptions and myths from practicalities and reality of life. This greatly helps individuals to admit the reality and thrust aside imaginary negative thoughts.

The cognitive behavioural approach is a joint effort between the client and the therapist. This is because the therapist's task is to teach, listen and learn whilst the client's task is to be able to express their concerns, and show a determination to absorb what they learn from the therapist. The therapist makes attempts to know more about the thoughts and feelings of the client and also plays a fundamental role in helping their clients achieve the targeted goals in life.

The client has to undertake homework in the form of implementing and putting into action the techniques and skills that they are taught during the <https://assignbuster.com/features-of-a-cognitive-behavioural-approach-to-counselling/>

therapy sessions. Without practising the skills and techniques, the clients will not be able to overcome their problem.

As this approach is a directive and structured approach to counselling then a specific agenda is set out for each and every session. The techniques taught are aligned with the client's goals. Therapists do not tell their clients what their goals should be or what they should stand for. The approach is directive in a manner that it demonstrates to the clients how to behave and think in ways to achieve what they are fond of getting.

There are many ways in which the cognitive behavioural approach differs from other forms of counselling. Sandburg, (2004) said that the cognitive behavioural approach primarily differs from other forms of counselling in terms of emphasis on understanding, identifying and changing the underlying attitude about one selves thinking and thoughts. In cognitive behaviour therapy the initial approaches emphasize on behavioural features of coping (e. g. leaving or avoiding the situation and interruption etc) instead of ' thinking' one's way out of a situation.

The person-centred therapy differs from the cognitive behavioural approach to counselling as this is an approach that focuses on putting much of the treatment responsibility on the client while the therapist takes a non-directive role. It is greatly associated with the objective of human potential movement, as it defines human nature to be inherently good. Person-centred therapy emphasizes that human behaviour is inspired by a drive to fulfil ones goals.

Person-centred therapy focuses on a person's strength rather than their weakness. In this case the therapist tries to create a room between real self and ideal self. This created room helps the client discover a further understanding of who they are and also develop a greater self-worth esteem which results in increased capacity to experience and articulate feelings at the time they occur.