



(R)evolution Psychotherapy

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy: A Simple Guide

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is a practical, collaborative approach that helps you explore how your thoughts, feelings, and behaviours are connected. It's based on the idea that sometimes our minds develop patterns—like self-criticism, worry, or avoidance—that may have helped us cope in the past but now get in the way of how we want to live (Beck, 2011). CBT offers tools to gently notice these patterns, understand where they come from, and experiment with new ways of thinking and responding.

What makes CBT unique is its focus on the present and on empowering you to become your own therapist over time. You and your therapist work together to identify thoughts that feel automatic or overwhelming and explore how they affect your emotions and actions. For example, if you often think, "I'm not good enough," CBT helps you slow down and ask: "Where did that belief come from? Is it true? What else might be possible?" (Dobson & Dozois, 2019). This process isn't about forcing positivity—it's about creating space for more balanced, compassionate perspectives.

CBT is also action-oriented. That means you might try small experiments between sessions—like practicing a new coping skill, challenging a fear, or tracking your mood. These aren't homework assignments in the traditional sense; they're invitations to explore what works for you in real life. You're always in charge of what you try, and your therapist is there to support you, not to judge or push (Westbrook et al., 2011).

A person-centred approach to CBT means that your therapist honours your pace, your values, and your lived experience. You're not treated like a diagnosis or a problem to be fixed. Instead, your strengths, insights, and goals shape the direction of therapy. This kind of respectful, collaborative relationship is key to making CBT feel safe and meaningful (Gilbert, 2010).

CBT can be especially helpful for concerns like anxiety, depression, trauma responses, and low self-esteem. But it's not just about reducing symptoms—it's about helping you reconnect with what matters to you. Many people find that CBT supports them in building confidence, setting boundaries, and responding to challenges with more flexibility and self-kindness (Hofmann et al., 2012).

In short, CBT is a supportive space where you can learn to understand your inner world with curiosity rather than judgment. It offers practical tools, but it also respects your wisdom and

autonomy. With time, CBT can help you feel more grounded, more empowered, and more connected to the life you want to lead.

References

Beck, J. S. (2011). *Cognitive behavior therapy: Basics and beyond* (2nd ed.). Guilford Press.

Dobson, K. S., & Dozois, D. J. A. (2019). *Handbook of cognitive-behavioral therapies* (4th ed.). Guilford Press.

Gilbert, P. (2010). *Compassion focused therapy: Distinctive features*. Routledge.

Hofmann, S. G., Asnaani, A., Vonk, I. J., Sawyer, A. T., & Fang, A. (2012). The efficacy of cognitive behavioral therapy: A review of meta-analyses. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 36(5), 427–440.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10608-012-9476-1>

Westbrook, D., Kennerley, H., & Kirk, J. (2011). *An introduction to cognitive behaviour therapy: Skills and applications* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.