

Appendix 1

Information Handout, Preparation Guide and Daily Thought Record

What is CBC?

Cognitive Behavioural Counselling (CBC) is often referred to as one of the talking therapies. This is to distinguish it from medication-based treatment, but ‘talking’ is only part of the process, important though this is – it also very much involves carrying out ‘homework’ assignments between sessions, designed to overcome problems and achieve valued goals.

Often described as Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, the CBC approach has a proven evidence base to treat a wide range of mental health problems in adults and children. CBC looks at how certain ways of thinking about problems do not help, can actually make the problems worse, and even create problems where none really existed. These unhelpful ways of thinking can then cause us to be unnecessarily very distressed and to act in self-defeating ways.

The counsellor and client work closely together to change these unhelpful and distressing ways of thinking, feeling and acting, in order to overcome and achieve desired goals.

What Can CBC/ CBT Help with?

The large body of research, which shows CBC/ CBT works effectively and efficiently, has been carefully reviewed by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). NICE provides independent, evidence-based guidance for the NHS on the most effective ways to treat disease and ill-health, including mental health. NICE recommends CBT in the treatment of the following conditions:

- anxiety disorders (including panic attacks and post-traumatic stress disorder)
- depression
- obsessive–compulsive disorder
- schizophrenia and psychosis
- bipolar disorder

There is also good evidence that CBT is helpful in treating many other conditions, including:

- chronic fatigue
- behavioural difficulties in children
- anxiety disorders in children
- chronic pain
- physical symptoms without a medical diagnosis
- sleep difficulties
- anger management

How Does CBC Work in Practice?

CBC/ CBT can be offered in individual sessions with a counsellor or group sessions with other clients led by a counsellor as part of a group. The number of CBC sessions you need depends on the difficulty you need help with. Often this will be between five and 20 weekly sessions lasting on average 50 minutes but can be shorter or longer according to need. CBC is mainly concerned with difficulties in the present rather than the past, except where past experiences have a direct connection to the present problem.

On first meeting your counsellor, you will discuss the problem you want help with, discuss the CBC approach and what is involved and then between you make a decision whether this approach is appropriate. If you decide to go ahead, you will direct your counsellor where you want to go, what problems you want to overcome and what goals you want to achieve.

In her turn the counsellor will guide you as to how to get there, offering concrete steps, worked out in session, and given to you in the form of handouts and worksheets for you to work on between sessions. It is quite hard work for you and the counsellor, both during the sessions but also between sessions, when various assignments will be suggested for you to carry out. Please remember: CBC has an excellent evidence-based track record of really working, but only if the treatment plan is followed. Your counsellor needs your commitment!

Good Luck!

Preparation Guide

Dear

This Preparation Guide and Worksheet is designed to help you to start to unravel a problem you might be experiencing and for which you are seeking help. These steps will help you and your counsellor to understand the problem better, help you decide if CBC is an approach which could help, and start to prepare you for it. Try to describe this problem in *general* terms – the kind of thing that typically happens. Use the steps to help you fill in the Preparation Worksheet.

After you have completed the Preparation Worksheet, your counsellor will invite you to carry out a between-session exercise which will also help to show whether CBC is appropriate for you. For this exercise you can use the Daily Thought Record (DTR) to record your feelings and thoughts. Please follow the steps provided.

Preparation Steps

- Step 1. On the Preparation Worksheet, write down an account of the main problem you have come to CBC for help with. Describe it briefly, in general terms, in your own words and in your own way.
- Step 2. Write down the disturbed feeling (like very angry or very anxious) you typically have when you are faced with this type of problem, and the probably unhelpful way you typically behave or have an impulse to behave (like lashing out in anger or running away in anxiety) when so faced.
- Step 3. Write down the kind of adverse (negative) event that typically happens or you think might happen (like failing at something) when you experience these feelings.
- Step 4. Write down how you would like to feel (like a bit annoyed and concerned) and behave when faced with this type of adverse event.
- Step 5. Write down any immediate very negative 'hot' thoughts that might pop into your head (like 'I've screwed this up' or 'this is awful') when faced with this problem and which probably makes you feel and behave worse. Then write down an alternative, more realistic way of thinking (like 'could have done better but it's not so bad') that would lead to how you would like to feel and behave in reaction to this type of problem.

Step 1

Box A1.1		
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td>Account of the Problem in General Terms</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">This is my account of the problem I am experiencing, in general terms</td> </tr> </table>	Account of the Problem in General Terms	This is my account of the problem I am experiencing, in general terms
Account of the Problem in General Terms		
This is my account of the problem I am experiencing, in general terms		

Step 2

Box A1.2		
Key Aspects of the Problem and Goal		
		Problem Emotion/Behaviour This is how I feel and behave when faced with this type of problem

Step 3

Box A1.3		
Key Aspects of the Problem and Goal		
Adverse Event This is the kind of thing that happens or might happen when I experience this problem		

Step 4

Box A1.4		
Key Aspects of the Problem and Goal		
		Emotional/Behavioural Goal This is how I would like to feel and behave when facing this type of problem

Step 5

Box A1.5		
Key Aspects of the Problem and Goal		
	Biased Belief This is what I usually think about this kind of event that probably makes me feel and behave worse	
	Alternative Belief This is an alternative way of thinking that should lead to how I would like to feel and behave	

Your completed Preparation Worksheet should have all the boxes filled in as shown below. Notice the connection between the beliefs and the consequent emotions and behaviours – the B–C (belief–consequent emotion) connection.

Completed Preparation Worksheet (Steps 1 to 5 Review and Summary)

Box A1.6

Account of the Problem in General Terms		
Step 1: This is my account of the problem I am experiencing, in general terms		
Key Aspects of the Problem and Goal		
Step 3: Adverse Event This is the kind of thing that happens or might happen when I experience this problem	Step 5: Biased Belief This is what I usually think about this kind of event that probably makes me feel and behave worse	Step 2: Emotional/Behavioural Problem This is how I feel and behave when faced with this type of problem
	Step 5: Alternative Belief This is an alternative way of thinking that should lead to how I would like to feel and behave	Step 4: Emotional/Behavioural Goal This is how I would like to feel and behave when facing this type of problem

Preparation Worksheet

Name.....

Date.....

Account of the Problem in General Terms		
Key Aspects of the Problem and Goal		
Adverse Event	Biased Beliefs	Problem Emotion/Behaviour
	Alternative Beliefs	Emotional/Behavioural Goal

Thought-monitoring Steps

- Step 6. Between counselling sessions, try to notice each time you experience that typical disturbed feeling you wrote down on the Preparation Worksheet. This feeling may be triggered by a real event, a physical sensation, or simply during a period of worry or rumination. You can also set a time to bring the disturbed feeling to mind on purpose, in order to practise this thought-monitoring exercise.
- Step 7. While you are noticing the disturbed feeling, try to notice any negative, disturbing thoughts you might be having at the same time.
- Step 8. On the Daily Thought Record (DTR), write down the feeling in box 1, and the thoughts in box 2. Also rate the intensity of the feeling on a scale 0 to 10, where 0 = neutral and 10 = the worst ever experienced. Also note the date and time in box 3.
- Step 9. You can if you wish also make a brief note of the adverse event (box 3), choose an alternative feeling and behaviour you would prefer (box 4) and an alternative way of thinking that would lead to your preference (box 5).

Daily Thought Record (DTR)

Adverse Event 3	Beliefs/NATs 2	Emotional Problem 1
	Alternative Belief 5	Emotional Goal 4