



Best Life Counseling

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What is CBT?

CBT stands for Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. It is a form of talk therapy shown to be effective for many psychological issues such as depression, anxiety, addiction, marital issues, eating disorders, OCD, and schizophrenia. In many studies, CBT has been demonstrated to be as effective as psychiatric medications. It helps individuals learn to challenge the thoughts they have, recognizing that every thought is not necessarily true or helpful. In CBT, the emphasis is on understanding why you think and react as you do, and then working to change it to be more productive and self-supportive. The goal of CBT is to help you feel and function better now and in the future, however, it is informed by your history so some discussion about your past is necessary.

CBT is based on the following assumptions:

1. Psychological problems are based, in part, on unhelpful thoughts (such as the thought that one is incompetent; focusing on the negative aspects in every situation; expecting the worst to happen).
2. Unhelpful thoughts were *learned* as a way to cope with hurt, disappointment, abuse or neglect. As such, thought patterns *can be unlearned*.
3. Unhelpful thoughts lead to behavior that negatively impacts one's life. Once a person learns to think differently, he/she will act differently and, therefore, have different life outcomes.

CBT treatment involves changing the way one thinks. Strategies to do this might include:

- Learning to recognize one's negative, limiting, and/or distorted thinking through building self-awareness
- Changing one's thoughts by re-writing them (using CBT 4-column model)
- Building empathy skills through mindfulness, inquiry, and curiosity
- Using problem-solving skills to identify more helpful ways of acting
- Role playing scenarios to practice skills
- Implementing relaxation techniques so that one acts rather than reacts

