

A guide to the different types of therapy

There are many different types of therapies that people in the UK can benefit from. In this document you'll find information about the different types of therapies available to you and how they differ in their approach and effectiveness.



Online or face-to-face

Therapy delivered online is a different experience compared to in person therapy, but it has been shown to be just as effective. Which one is right for you will come down to personal choice. There may be more opportunity to observe body posture in a face to face environment, while online therapy is easier to access and typically provides more flexibility.

There are many different types of therapy available, but which works best for you will depend entirely on your own life, experiences and way of thinking.

The types of therapy

In the UK, the most prevalent types of therapy include:

- **Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)**
A practical therapy system based on understanding the relationship between thoughts, feelings, behaviours and physical sensations
- **Cognitive analytical therapy (CAT)**
Assessing how a person thinks, feels and acts and how past events and relationships may affect this
- **Psychodynamic (psychoanalytic) psychotherapy**
Analysing the unconscious thoughts you may have developed during childhood and how they are impacting your current life and behaviours
- **Humanistic therapies**
Therapy with a focus on self-development and growth, looking mainly towards self-exploration
- **Interpersonal psychotherapy (IPT)**
A relationship-focused therapy that helps people with relationship difficulties or poor interpersonal skills, which may be contributing to negative wellbeing or depression
- **Family and couple (systemic) therapy**
Based on how your 'family' (which doesn't have to be genetic) can impact wellbeing. This generally involves clients as groups such as couples, families, carers, teams and businesses
- **Dialectical behaviour therapy (DBT)**
A type of talking therapy based on CBT but adapted for people who feel emotions very intensely
- **Acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT)**
An action-oriented approach to psychotherapy that stems from CBT. Clients learn to stop avoiding, denying, and struggling with their inner emotions and, instead, accept that these deeper feelings are appropriate responses to certain situations that should not prevent them from moving forward in their lives
- **Mindfulness**
A concept that describes conscious awareness of our present moment. This includes openness and non-judgement about the experience. It is often coupled with other types of therapy, like CBT, DBT and ACT
- **Compassion-focused therapy (CFT)**
Aims to help promote mental and emotional healing by encouraging people in treatment to be compassionate toward themselves and other people
- **Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR)**
A psychotherapy treatment that was originally designed to alleviate the distress associated with traumatic memories through bilateral stimulation

Which type of therapy is right for me

With many options available, it's best to speak to a therapist before determining which therapy might work for you. A professional will guide you towards a route that suits you and is matched to your needs. This may be a single type of therapy such as CBT, or an integrative therapy approach that brings multiple techniques from a range of therapy types into your sessions.

For those who have a diagnosed condition, the NICE guidelines can be consulted to see which types of therapy are considered most effective for a specific condition. It's important to mention that there is no 'one size fits all' approach when it comes to mental health. Therapy approaches are continuously developed,

evaluated, refined/changed and re-evaluated in different groups of people for different presentations. When choosing to start therapy it's important to look for a therapist you feel you can trust and then allow them to introduce the right therapy choices, in collaboration with you.

We hope this document has given you a helpful overview of the different types of therapies available.

Please consult with your GP or another health professional if you have any specific questions or would like more information.

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