

Response to the COVID-19 situation from a Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) perspective.

Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) is a psychological therapy which involves a range of techniques and strategies to help address unhelpful thinking and behaviour which can increase feelings of anxiety, depression and other psychological issues. There is over 30 years of evidence, from thousands of scientific trials that CBT is a leading, evidence-based treatment which is effective for anxiety, depression and other psychological problems. In these unprecedented times of concern and impact from the effects of COVID-19 around the world, some CBT advice includes:

- **Normal to feel worry:** Feeling concern, anxiety and worry over the impacts and spread of COVID-19 is an understandable and normal response.
- **Pleasant events:** It is very important to do things you enjoy, there is evidence that pleasant events are helpful in improving mood. Brainstorm the activities that you enjoy that you can do at home and engage in them every day, for example listening to music, watching favourite movies, engage in exercise at home, cook a nice meal and savour the food in the moment, read a book, play board games, arrange social events with friends and family via internet programs such as Skype, Zoom, or WhatsApp, telephone contact with family and friends. Savour enjoyable experiences by anticipating them, enjoying them in the moment, and reflecting upon them afterwards. This website has ideas for pleasant events: <http://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself/Depression>.
- **General self-care:** Set regular times to go to bed and wake up, exercise at home, eat a balanced diet with regular meal times and avoid excessive alcohol and caffeine. Tips on self-care can be found at: <http://psychology.org.au/getmedia/38073179-4701-48bd-afd9-988c560ee2f9/20APS-IS-COVID-19-P1.pdf>. This article has information on anxiety over shopping: <http://theconversation.com/psychology-can-explain-why-coronavirus-drives-us-to-panic-buy-it-also-provides-tips-on-how-to-stop-134032>.
- **Problem solving:** This technique can be helpful in solving problems that you are able to address, for example you may be experiencing procrastination while trying to work from home, although you may not be as productive as it takes time to adjust to any new situation. The following may help: (1) identify the problem (e.g., getting distracted by tasks around the house), (2) generate potential solutions (e.g., designate a certain amount of time to work before rewarding self by taking a break), (3) decide on a solution (e.g., set a timer for 30 minutes to work, then take a break), (4) plan the chosen solution, (5) carry out the solution, (6) evaluate the result. This may be a useful strategy for feelings of difficulty staying at home, for example planning how to solve the problem like thinking of projects and activities you want to achieve and enjoy while at home and not able to go out.
- **Ways to deal with worry and rumination:**
It is normal to worry and be focusing more on health at this time, however try setting aside a 15-20 minute “worry time” at the same time each day. Set a limit on the amount of information you are reading on the internet, for example you might choose to set a limit of 30 minutes per day. Think about the best time to do this, for example reading worrying news straight before bedtime may lead to interference with sleep. To get accurate information on COVID-19 see the WHO website: <http://who.int>. These websites have CBT resources on managing anxiety, worry <http://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/For-Clinicians/Generalised-Anxiety-and-Worry>
http://www.abct.org/Information/index.cfm?m=mInformation&fa=fs_ANXIETY
and anxiety about health:
<http://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself/Health-Anxiety>
http://www.abct.org/Information/index.cfm?m=mInformation&fa=fs_HEALTH_ANXIETY

The British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Therapy (BABCP) has a useful podcast on dealing with anxiety over coronavirus: <http://letstalkaboutcbt.libsyn.com/coping-with-anxiety-about-coronavirus>.

- **Meditation and mindfulness techniques:** May be useful in reducing worry and improving general wellbeing, and there are many resources available on the internet. Try downloading some mindfulness tracks from the internet and listening to them before bedtime. Mindfulness practices can be found in the e-book version of: Williams, M., & Penman, D. (2011). *Mindfulness: a practical guide to finding peace in a frantic world*, <http://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/mindfulness-meditation-downloads/> and the e-book version of Teasdale, J., Williams, M., & Segal, Z. (2014). *The mindful way workbook: An 8-week program to free yourself from depression and emotional distress*. New York: Guilford Press.
- **Challenging unhelpful thoughts and behaviours with CBT:**
There are various internet-based CBT programs, websites and self-help books available as e-books which may be helpful. This list is not a complete list and does not represent an endorsement of these materials, it is provided as an example of some of many resources.

Resources for children and teenagers:

- This article has advice about how to talk to children about COVID-19: <http://bps.org.uk/news-and-policy/talking-children-about-coronavirus>; www.brave-online.com/beating-stress-and-worries-about-coronavirus-covid-19/
- Information booklet explaining coronavirus for children: <http://mindheart.co/descargables>
- A list of CBT e-books for children: <http://reading-well.org.uk/children>
- A list of CBT e-books for teenagers: <http://reading-well.org.uk/books/books-on-prescription/young-people-mental-health>
- Youth Beyond Blue: <http://youthbeyondblue.com/>
- Online therapy for children and teenagers with stress and anxiety in Australia: <http://www.brave-online.com/>
- Online therapy for obsessive-compulsive symptoms in children and teenagers: <http://ocdnotme.com.au>
- US: The National Child Traumatic Stress Network - <http://www.nctsn.org/>
- ReachOut has online support and resources to help teenagers and their parents: <http://au.reachout.com/>
- Cathy Creswell & Lucy Willetts (2007). *Overcoming Your Child's Fears and Worries*. Constable & Robinson.
- Ron Rapee, Ann Wignall, Sue Spence and Heidi Lyneham (2008). *Helping Your Anxious Child: A Step-by-Step Guide for Parents*, 2nd edition. New Harbinger Publications.

UK based

- British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Therapies: <http://babcp.com>
- Find a CBT therapist in the UK: <http://cbtregisteruk.com/Default.aspx>.
- Anxiety UK: <http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/>
- NICE: <http://nice.org.uk>
- No Panic: <http://www.nopanic.org.uk/>
- OCD-UK: <http://www.ocduk.org>
- OCD Action: <http://www.ocdaction.org.uk>
- Depression alliance: <http://www.depressionalliance.org>
- MindEd: <http://minded.org.uk>

US and Canadian based

- American Association for Behavior Therapy (ABCT): <http://abct.org>
- Find a CBT therapist in the US: <http://www.findcbt.org/FAT/>
- Canadian Association for Cognitive and Behavioural Therapies (CACBT): <http://cacbt.ca>
- Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAA): <http://adaa.org>
- Anxiety Canada: <http://anxietycanada.com>
- International OCD Foundation (IOCDF): <http://iocdf.org>
- PsyberGuide: <http://psyberguide.org>

Australian based

- Australian Association for Cognitive and Behaviour Therapy (AACBT): <http://aacbt.org>
- Anxiety online: <http://anxietyonline.org.au>
- Mindspot Clinic: <http://mindspot.org.au>
- The Centre for Clinical Interventions: <http://cci.health.wa.gov.au>
- Beyond Blue: <http://beyondblue.org.au>
- Virtual clinic: <http://virtualclinic.org.au>
- Mood Gym: <http://moodgym.anu.edu.au>

Italy based

- Associazione Italiana di Analisi e Modificazione del Comportamento e Terapia Comportamentale e Cognitiva (AIAMC) <http://aiamc.it>
- A list of CBT therapists, many are able to help online <http://aiamc.it/cerca-psicoterapeuta/>
- A blog with a lot of information about CBT and the most common psychological problems <http://aiamc.it/category/blog/>

French based:

- Information on COVID-19 for French people can be found at: <http://www.gouvernement.fr/info-coronavirus>
- There are numerous self-help books on CBT for anxiety and depression which are listed on the website of the French CBT association - <http://www.aftcc.org/bibliographie>
- "l'atelier du praticien" series, which can be found at : <http://www.dunod.com/collection/ateliers-du-praticien>
- "les cahier du praticien" series which can be found at : <http://www.deboecksuperieur.com/collection/les-cahiers-du-praticien>

German based

- German CBT associations: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Verhaltenstherapie (DGVT) e.V., <http://dgv.de> Deutscher Fachverband für Verhaltenstherapie, <http://www.verhaltenstherapie.de>
- CBT therapist search of German federal association of medical and psychological practitioners <http://www.kbv.de/html/arztuche.php>
- Stiftung Deutsche Depressionshilfe: <http://deutsche-depressionshilfe.de>
- Suicide prevention: <http://8leben.psychenet.de>
- Network for mental health: <http://psychenet.de>
- Crisis line "Telefonseelsorge" <http://telefonseelsorge.de>, phone 0800/111 0 111 or 0800/111 0 222 or 116 123
- App for suicide prevention „Krisenkompass“: android.krisen-kompass.app or ios.krisen-kompass.app
- App for meditation and mindfulness-based stress reduction: <http://7mind.de/>
- Online offer for guided meditation: <http://www.mindfulife.de/>
- Online therapy: <http://minddoc.de>

- Self-help manuals for depression, OCD and alcohol use disorders: <http://clinical-neuropsychology.de/interventionen/>
- German language self-help books (available as e-books):
 - Hautzinger, M. (2018). *Ratgeber Depression: Informationen für Betroffene und Angehörige*. Hogrefe Verlag.
 - Heinrichs, N. (2007). *Ratgeber Panikstörung und Agoraphobie*. Hogrefe Verlag.
 - Hoyer, J., Beesdo-Baum, K., & Becker, E. S. (2016). *Ratgeber Generalisierte Angststörung: Informationen für Betroffene und Angehörige*. 2., aktualisierte Auflage. Hogrefe Verlag.
 - Reinecker, H. (2017). *Ratgeber Zwangsstörungen: Informationen für Betroffene und Angehörige*. 2., aktualisierte Auflage. Hogrefe Verlag.

Spanish based:

Information on Spanish language resources, and where to find CBT therapists in South America and Spanish speaking countries who offer online or telephone CBT:

- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1t2EZECu06TEkIYQmsRXEXiym3EC7JJNY/view?usp=drivesdk>
- <http://api.cpsp.io/public/documents/1584932291087-recomendaciones-psicologicas-para-afrontar-la-pandemia.pdf>
- <http://www.vivesinansiedad.com>
- http://www.academia.edu/6117301/Adios_Ansiedad_David_Burns
- <http://api.cpsp.io/public/documents/1584934751104-coronavirus-guia-psicovida10.pdf>
- <http://api.cpsp.io/public/documents/1584682467463-libro-de-prevencion-del-coronavirus-es.pdf>
- <http://api.cpsp.io/public/documents/1584663560691-afrontamiento-psicologico-covid19.pdf>
- https://www.copmadrid.org/web/img_db/comunicados/2020/recomendaciones-dirigidas-a-la-poblacion-para-un-afrontamiento-eficaz-ante-el-malestar-psicologico-generado-por-el-brote-de-coronavirus-covid-19-5e6782284ec74.pdf
- <https://site.cfp.org.br/nota-orientativa-asaos-psicologasos-trabalho-voluntario-e-publicidade-em-psicologia-diante-do-coronavirus-covid-19/>

Middle East based:

- IDRACC: idracc@idracc.org

Asia based:

- **China** – CBT resources and therapists: <http://cbtchina.com.cn>
- **Korea** – Korean Psychological Association: <http://koreanpsychology.or.kr>, Korean Society of Traumatic Stress Studies: <http://kstss.kr>
- **Malaysia** - Malaysian Society of Clinical Psychology: <http://mscp.my>; Malaysian Mental Health Association – <http://mmha.org.my>; Malaysian Psychiatric Association: <http://psychiatry-malaysia.org>; My Psychology: psychotherapy service <http://mypsychology.my> has a list of all sources of help for mental health in Malaysia including a list of CBT self-help e-books in Malaysian.
- **Singapore** - Singapore Association of Mental Health: <http://samhealth.org.sg>; Institute of Mental Health: <http://imh.com.sg>
- **Indonesia** - Get Happy Indonesia: <http://mhinnovation.net>; Indonesia Mental Health Care Foundation: <http://kitabisa.com>
- **Thailand** - Psychiatric Association of Thailand: <http://www.omicsonline.org/societies/psychiatric-association-of-thailand/>; Thai Clinical

Psychologist Association: <http://thaiclincpsy.org>; Bangkok Counselling Service: <http://bangkokcounsellingservice.com>

CBT Associations:

The World Confederation of CBT (WCCBT): <http://wccbt.org>. The WCCBT is a world organisation representing CBT and board members consist of representatives from:

- Asian Cognitive and Behaviour Therapy Association (ACBTA): <http://asiancbt.weebly.com>
- Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies (ABCT): <http://abct.org>
- Australian Association for Cognitive and Behaviour Therapy (AACBT): <http://aacbt.org.au>
- European Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Therapies (EABCT): <http://eabct.eu>
- International Association for Cognitive Psychotherapy (IACP): <http://the-iacp.com>
- Asociacion Latinoamericana de Analisis, Modificacion del Comportamiento y Terapia Cognitiva Conductua (ALAMOC): <http://alamoc-web.org>

Check with the websites of CBT associations and local health providers for therapists who are conducting CBT in alternative formats i.e., internet and telephone. For CBT therapists, the Standing Committee on Psychology & Health and the Project Group on eHealth website has useful information: <http://ehealth.efpa.eu/>

Self-help books:

Many self-help books are available in an online format. This is not a complete list, some include:

- NHS Reading Well (formerly Books on Prescription) <http://reading-well.org.uk>: This website contains a list of evidence-based CBT books for anxiety and depression. The list for adults: http://tra-resources.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/entries/document/2810/RWMH_Overview_of_the_titles.pdf
- The Overcoming series: There are numerous self-help books on CBT listed on the website: <http://overcoming.co.uk>

An example of CBT self-help books for adults (search the internet for e-book versions):

- Abramowitz, J.S. (2018). *Getting over OCD: A 10-step workbook for taking back your life, 2nd ed.* New York: Guilford Press.
- Antony, M.M., & Norton, P.J. (2009). *The anti-anxiety workbook: Proven strategies to overcome worry, panic, phobias, and obsessions.* New York: Guilford Press.
- Asmundson, G.J.G., & Taylor, S. (2005). *It's not all in your head: How worrying about your health could be making you sick – and what you can do about it.* New York: Guilford Press.
- Challacombe, F., Oldfield, V.B., & Salkovskis, P. (2011). *Break free from OCD: Overcoming obsessive compulsive disorder with CBT.* London, UK: Vermilion.
- Clark, D.A., & Beck, A.T. (2012). *The anxiety and worry workbook: The cognitive-behavioral solution.* New York: Guilford Press.
- Gilbert, P. (2009). *Overcoming depression: A self-help guide using cognitive-behavioural techniques.* London, UK: Little Brown Book Group.
- Greenberger, D., & Padesky, C.A. (2016). *Mind over mood, 2nd ed.* New York: Guilford Press.
- Kennerley, H. (2014). *Overcoming anxiety: A self-help guide using cognitive-behavioural techniques, 2nd edition.* London, UK: Little Brown Book Group.
- Owens, K.M.B., & Antony, M.M. (2011). *Overcoming health anxiety: Letting go of your fear of illness.* Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications.
- Manicavasagar, V., & Silove, D. (2017). *Overcoming panic: A self-help guide using cognitive-behavioural techniques, 2nd edition.* London, UK: Little Brown Book Group.
- Meares, K., & Freeston, M. (2015). *Overcoming worry and generalised anxiety disorder, 2nd edition.* London, UK: Little Brown Book Group.

- Myles, P., & Shafran, R. (2015). *The CBT handbook: A comprehensive guide to using CBT to overcome depression, anxiety, stress, low self-esteem and anger*. London, UK: Little Brown Book Group.
- Robichaud, M.R., & Buhr, K. (2018). *The Worry Workbook: CBT skills to overcome worry and anxiety by facing the fear of uncertainty*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications.
- Veale, D., & Wilson, R. (2009). *Overcoming health anxiety: A self-help guide using cognitive-behavioural techniques*. London, UK: Little Brown Book Group.

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