

# **Belfast Cbt Services**

## **Cbt for Depression**

Depression is one of the most frequent psychological illnesses to effect our communities today. Research tells us that up to 70% of adults will at some point experience depression to such a degree that it will affect their life. It is said that up to 50% of those people who attend GP surgeries have depressive symptoms and about 5% of these will go on to have serious depressive illness.

In my private practice over the years I have heard clients describe depression as “hell on earth” so much pain and misery are they experiencing. No one really can imagine what its like until it comes to their own door.

Depression affects people differently and there are rarely two cases the same, the main symptoms are

Mood changes-Feelings of persistent sadness, of being down in the dumps, hopelessness and helplessness. Anxiety, irritability and agitation are common.

Cognitive changes-These include, lack of concentration. Confused thinking, indecision and forgetfulness. Thoughts become irrational & negative resulting in feelings of low confidence and self esteem. There is very little joy to experience and the past and present are littered with supposed mistakes and failure, often there is little hope of things changing in the future!

Biological Changes-Sleep, appetite, weight, sex drive can be affected and clients often complain of aches and pains, fatigue and of slowness of thinking and movement.

Behavioural-These symptoms affect the clients motivation to carry out activities due to lack of interest and drive, and avoidance of work and social contact can play a part. Life becomes one gigantic struggle with overwhelming sadness and crying common.

Psychotherapy Cognitive behavioural therapy has been the most extensively evaluated therapy for mild to moderate depression, and has been shown to be as effective as medication but superior to medication in the prevention of relapse. For more serious depressive illnesses which are chronic and have recurred over a number of years Schema Therapy is the treatment of choice due to underlying characteristics in the clients personality which makes them prone and vulnerable to depression.

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