

# UNDERSTANDING PSYCHOTHERAPY

*Psychotherapy – or talk therapy – is an effective tool for treating depression, anxiety, trauma, alcohol or drug use and all types of mental illness. It can also help people work through relationship problems, stress, life changes and other crises.*

*Psychotherapy is often the first-line treatment for emotional and psychological struggles.*

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**There are many types of psychotherapy. Here are three common types:**

### **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy**

**(CBT):** This is the most common type of psychotherapy. CBT takes many forms. Examples include dialectical behavioral therapy, mindfulness-based therapy, and acceptance and commitment therapy. Each form treats specific symptoms or disorders.

- CBT's goal is to help people change how they think about themselves and their symptoms. This leads to changes in behavior and control of emotions.
- CBT is often used for a limited time. It usually lasts between 5 and 20 sessions, depending on the form of CBT needed.

### **Psychodynamic Psychotherapy**

**(PP):** This helps people understand the psychological and emotional factors that lead to their problematic symptoms or behaviors. The therapist leads the person to see symptoms that they were not aware of. This helps the person find solutions and reduce the symptoms that brought them to seek treatment.

- PP differs from CBT in several important ways. PP often lasts longer than CBT. PP may involve meeting with a therapist more than once a week. The treatment focuses on the person's background

and experiences, going beyond the current behaviors and symptoms alone.

- PP also explores the person's relationship with the therapist. This helps the person better understand how to regulate their emotions and behavior.
- Research shows that PP may be better than CBT for people with complex problems, multiple diagnoses or personality disorders. The benefits of treatment may last longer than the benefits from CBT.

**Psychoanalysis:** This is the original talk therapy developed by Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis. It is not as common as CBT or PP.

It may be used to help people with certain symptoms or if other types of therapy are not helping.

- It is a lot like PP, but the person meets with a therapist three to five days a week and lies on the couch facing away from the therapist.
- The goal is to treat symptoms through better self-understanding. The relationship with the therapist is the main tool to help reach this goal.