



PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERVENTIONS IN PSYCHIATRY

Psychological interventions are now an important treatment modality in Psychiatry being widely used over several diagnoses. Counseling or Talk therapy has also gained attention and popularity amongst people due to the increased stress in daily life nowadays. Pharmacotherapy is always needed in severe cases often in conjunction with Psychotherapy. Psychological interventions maybe used even alone in mild to moderate cases safely and effectively. Psychotherapy targets perceptions, cognitions, personality aspects which help in prevention of relapse hence making it an important treatment tool to achieve a significant long-term benefit. Many formats and types of Psychological interventions are now available and used in different settings over various diagnoses. Broadly, the entire objective is to allow the patient to identify his thought processes, behaviors triggering his emotions and then given a toolbox to deal with the situation in a better manner.



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Psychological interventions are actions, activities, therapies carried out, other than use of medication, focused on psychological or social factors which results in improvements in symptoms, quality of life, functioning and social inclusions when used as treatment for mental health conditions.

Psychological interventions are mainly in the form of psychotherapy or talk therapy which may be used alone or with medication to treat mental disorders.

Benefits of psychological interventions

There is relatively large amount of evidence suggesting sufficient benefits of psychological interventions on mental health outcomes in low and middle income countries

To understand thought processes, behaviors, emotions which contribute to illnesses and learn to modify them.

To understand and identify daily life issues, events which contribute to the problem and how to solve them (eg childhood traumas, death, divorce).

To learn healthy coping mechanisms and problem solving skill.

To improve self-esteem and overall mental wellbeing.

To improve inter-personal interactions and solve conflicts.

Scope of psychological interventions

These may be used to treat a wide range of mental health disorders like Depression, Bipolar Affective Disorder, Anxiety Disorder, Phobias, Eating Disorders, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Schizophrenia, Panic Disorder, Substance Dependence Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder etc.

Formats of psychological interventions

Individual Therapy; which involves only the patient and the Therapist.

Group Therapy; where two or more patients participate at the same time and can share personal experiences with the group.

Marital/Couple Therapy; where partners work on better communication skills and learn behavioral changes to improve their relationship.

Family Therapy; here family members are given better coping skills to deal with the patient and learn how to support the patient.



Main types of psychological interventions

Usually after assessment of the case, the Therapist decides which approach to use.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy; in which faulty perceptions and behaviors are identified and substituted with balanced and healthy ones. Commonly used in Depression, Anxiety, OCD, Chronic physical illness, Addictions etc.

Psychodynamic Therapy; It involves talking about unresolved, unconscious conflicts stemming from childhood traumas and manage these feelings.

Inter-Personal Therapy; It aims to improve communication skills and increase self-confidence. It focuses on interaction one has with friends and family.

Dialectical Behavioral Therapy; It comes from the idea of bringing two opposites in therapy- acceptance and change. It focuses on inter-personal effectiveness, mindfulness, distress tolerance and emotional regulation.

Supportive Therapy; Here the Therapist guides and supports the patient through daily life issues and helps in managing emotions and behaviors and improving self-esteem.

Other Therapies; Hypnotherapy, Muscle Relaxation Therapy, Breathing Techniques, Biofeedback, Mindfulness Training, Music Therapy, Art Therapy, Pet Therapy etc.

Golden rules for effective results

1. **Be committed.**
2. **Be honest and open.**
3. **Identify triggers and maintain a journal.**
4. **Reset a life work balance.**
5. **Set a realistic pace.**
6. **Reset priorities.**
7. **Always communicate.**
8. **Focus on positives.**
9. **Don't expect instant results.**
10. **Make it your life style.**

PSYCHOTHERAPY TARGETS PERCEPTIONS, COGNITIONS, PERSONALITY ASPECTS WHICH HELP IN PREVENTION OF RELAPSE



What to expect

- ★ Most sessions are 45-50 minutes
- ★ Therapist usually starts with history taking, asking many questions about the patients concerns and problems and a detailed evaluation.
- ★ Treatment, which involves setting goals, a time line, choosing a type of Therapy and then working through these.