Cognitive therapy for social anxiety disorder

Social anxiety disorder is common and remarkably persistent in the absence of treatment. It frequently leads to occupational and educational underachievement. Interpersonal relationships are impaired. Dissatisfaction with the way that life is progressing often triggers depressive episodes and there is a heightened risk of alcohol and drug abuse.

Clark and Wells (1995) proposed a cognitive model that aims to explain why social anxiety disorder is so persistent. A distinctive form of cognitive therapy that targets the maintenance processes classified in the model was developed. Randomised controlled trials in the UK, Germany and Sweden have demonstrated that the new treatment is highly effective. Between 60% and 80% of patients recover, with many others showing worthwhile benefits. Comparisons with other active treatments have established that cognitive therapy is superior to: two forms of group CBT, exposure therapy, interpersonal psychotherapy, psychodynamic psychotherapy, SSRIs, medication-focused treatment is usual, and placebo medication. Such a comprehensive demonstration of differential effectiveness is extremely rare in psychotherapy. The NICE (2013) Guideline on the assessment and treatment of social anxiety disorder recommends individual CBT (which includes Clark & Wells’ cognitive therapy) as the first choice treatment.

The workshop provides a comprehensive practical guide to cognitive therapy for social anxiety disorder. It starts with an overview of the cognitive model, focusing on its treatment implications. Each of the steps in treatment is then described and illustrated with case material and videos of treatment sessions. Guidance on the use of the most appropriate measures for identifying therapy targets and monitoring progress is also provided.

Learning objectives

- Identify key processes in maintaining social anxiety disorder
- Develop an individual version of the cognitive model with their patients and
- Identify appropriate therapeutic techniques
Professor David M Clark  
University of Oxford

Wednesday 23 May 2018  
09:30-16:30  
Venue: Local to Reading

Implications for everyday clinical practice of CBT: Recent research shows that there is a strong relationship between the competence with which the specific techniques of cognitive therapy are implemented and the outcomes that the patients achieve when being treated for social anxiety disorder. This workshop is therefore likely to be extremely helpful in facilitating clinicians’ work with individuals who suffer from social anxiety disorder.

About the Presenter  
David M Clark is well known for his cognitive therapy research. With colleagues, he has developed new and highly effective forms of cognitive therapies for panic disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, and social anxiety disorder. In all three instances, the treatments are recommended as first choice interventions in the relevant NICE Clinical Guidelines.

Reading list  


For further information contact the Charlie Waller Institute:  
cwi@reading.ac.uk  
Tel: 0118 378 7537  
http://www.reading.ac.uk/charliewaller

Cost of 1 day workshop:  
£130 including lunch