

CPT Cognitive Processing Therapy

What Is it?

CPT is a short-term, evidence-based, therapy that helps individuals recover from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

How Does it Work?

CPT teaches people to recognize the negative thoughts that are created by trauma. These thoughts are called “stuck points” in CPT because they keep people stuck and get in the way of recovery from PTSD. By definition, stuck points are less than 100% accurate. CPT works by teaching people how to think through their stuck points and consider new, more flexible perspectives.

What is the Focus?

CPT is a recovery-focused treatment. Research shows that individuals who complete CPT develop a noticeable improvement in PTSD symptoms such as intrusive and recurrent memories of the trauma, avoidance of trauma-related stimuli, numbing and/or negative changes in mood or cognitions pertaining to the trauma, and changes in reactivity and arousal. CPT is successful with individuals presenting with a wide range of co-occurring conditions, including depression, substance abuse, personality disorders, and traumatic brain injury. In addition to improving PTSD symptoms, CPT helps with symptoms of depression, hopelessness, guilt, anger, dissociation, occupational function, social/leisure involvement, intimacy/sexual concerns, and suicidal thoughts.

Counseling Sessions Help Individuals to:

- Learn about PTSD
- Identify negative thoughts and feelings
- Learn skills to evaluate their thinking in ways that promote and maintain recovery
- Consider alternate views of the trauma, yourself, and the world
- Address themes of safety, trust, power/control, esteem, and intimacy
- Recover in weekly or bi-weekly sessions with homework (sessions are 50-60 minutes)

Goals Include:

REFLECT: Improve your understanding about PTSD; examine the impact of the trauma on thoughts and feelings; and decrease avoidance and emotional numbing

REDEFINE: Learn skills to evaluate thinking; and consider alternative viewpoints of the trauma, oneself, and the world

RECOVER: Reduce your level of distress related to your memories of the trauma; reduce feelings of anxiety, anger, guilt, and shame; and improve day-to-day living

For More Information:

Contact your Advocate or our Behavioral Health Therapists:

Jody Sweeney, LCSW
JJS5B@virginia.edu
434-297-7190

Arminda Perch, MBA, MSW*
AP5YBW@virginia.edu
434-297-5839

Also visit:

- www.cptforptsd.com
- <https://www.apa.org/ptsd-guideline/treatments/>



UVA Health
Population Health Department