

IPT moves through three main stages

ASSESSMENT

You and your therapist will begin to explore and understand the relationships that are associated with your symptoms, so that you can both agree on the main areas that therapy will focus on. You will also be encouraged to think about what you would like to achieve during the therapy.

MIDDLE PHASE

During the middle phase of therapy you will be exploring the weekly experiences which are associated with the depressive symptoms and the main interpersonal area that you have chosen to focus on. Various strategies are chosen and applied so that you can begin to consider alternative responses to alleviate the depressive symptoms and work on resolving the area of interpersonal difficulty.

ENDING PHASE

Ending therapy can sometimes be quite difficult. Your therapist will help you to explore your feelings around ending the therapy and will also help you to think about any problems that may arise in the future, so that you are prepared and know how to manage things if you were to experience difficulties again.

Length and frequency of treatment

IPT usually takes place over 16 sessions within twenty weeks. Sessions last between fifty minutes to an hour.

Use of Medication

IPT is often used alongside medications such as anti-depressants. For some people this might be more helpful than receiving either treatment in isolation. Your therapist will discuss medication with you during your assessment.

Finding out more about IPT

You can find more information about IPT on the internet from the IPT-UK network site: www.iptuk.org

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Inter Personal Therapy (IPT)



What is IPT?

IPT is a time-limited and focused therapy to treat moderate to severe depression. It concentrates on interpersonal problems: changes in life that cause distress with the self and others; difficulties with another person; grief and loss; difficulty in beginning and maintaining relationships. These are understood to be the key factors in the development and maintenance of depression. IPT addresses these issues in order to bring about positive change and improvements in both depressive symptoms and day to day living.

In your sessions, you will learn all about how you may react in situations you find difficult, and have help to recognise any aspects that may not be working well for you. You can learn positive ways to react differently so that you can feel better.

IPT is recognised as an effective therapy for depression by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE). There are many research studies which have highlighted just how effective and beneficial IPT has been for patients.



www.italk.org.uk

IPT usually focuses on one of these four interpersonal issues

Changes in life that can cause distress with the self and others:

Life changes all the time. As it does, it throws up new challenges, such as when we have a child or lose a job. These changes, whether wished for or not, can leave us feeling unable to cope with the demands of the new situation and what is expected of us.

Difficulties with another person:

No relationship is perfect, but sometimes a significant relationship at home or at work can become very stuck in disagreements or arguments, and is a source of tension and distress.

Grief and loss:

It is natural to feel sad following the loss of a significant person in our life. Sometimes, however, it can be very difficult to adjust to life without that person and we may then put our life on hold, unable to carry on with our normal activities and with our relationships.

Difficulty in beginning and maintaining relationships:

Sometimes relationships are difficult because of what is missing, for example not having enough people around us or not feeling as close to others as we would like.

Not having someone to turn to for company or support can be very stressful and can leave us feeling alone and overwhelmed by the demands of life.

Source: "Interpersonal Therapy- What skills can a service user expect their therapists to have?" - Alessandra Lemma, Anthony D. Roth and Stephen Pilling- Research Department of Clinical, Educational and Health Psychology- University College London.

