



Breaking negative habits

Video transcript: clip from *All in the Mind – Cognitive Behavioural Therapy*, first broadcast on Radio 4 on 14 Jul 2009

CLAUDIA HAMMOND:

We ask exactly what cognitive behavioural therapy is.

Jan Scott is Professor of Psychological Medicine at Newcastle University.

PROF JAN SCOTT:

One of the things we often look at with people is we try to identify right at the start the sort of key problem areas that an individual has.

So, for example, somebody who is feeling very depressed, we might well want to look at their views of themselves.

Do they have a positive self-image? Can they cope effectively with relationships? And what are the day-to-day things that they're struggling to do?

So the therapy might first of all start by taking those very simple day-to-day things.

Can we help them look at how they're interacting with other people and help them not to assume the worst about interactions?

CLAUDIA HAMMOND:

So that's the cognitive part – it's the changing people's thoughts and beliefs and getting people to look at those.

What about the behavioural bit of CBT?

PROF JAN SCOTT:

Well the behavioural bits kind of fall into two components.

One is the sorts of experiments we might get people to do to help them look at their underlying beliefs about the world.

It might actually involve behavioural things in terms of activities where you might rather than avoid certain situations that people are concerned about, we might actually get them to experiment by going into those situations and trying them out.

The second bit is obviously about basic day-to-day coping.

Sometimes helping people just simply start to organise a day-to-day agenda of what they are going to do and what they're not going to do, and making sure they've got some space and time for positive things as well as the basic things we all have to undertake, can be very important to putting together the package.

So it's part experiment, it's part sort of coping skills, time management type issues.