Advanced Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Complex Anxiety Disorders: Facilitator Pack

THE TALKING THERAPIES UK FACILITATOR PACKS



Advanced Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Complex Anxiety Disorders: Facilitator Pack

Teaching the course to a group

A facilitator pack · 7 sessions · for trainers

TALKING THERAPIES UK

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First edition, 2026.

This pack accompanies the course “Advanced Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Complex Anxiety Disorders” on Talking Therapies UK Training & CPD and its course book. It is drawn from the course and is kept current with it: whenever the course changes, the pack is set again.

Revision 3. This printing was set on 9 November 2026 from the course as it stood that day.

A note on teaching from this pack. It supports qualified trainers and supervisors teaching within their competence. Running the course from it does not award the course’s CPD certificate, which participants gain by completing the course online.

Set in Poppins and Roboto, the Talking Therapies UK typefaces.

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How to use this pack

This pack is for trainers and supervisors who teach the Talking Therapies UK course “Advanced Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Complex Anxiety Disorders” to a group: a session for each of its 7 modules, with timed plans, the points to draw out, group activities and discussion questions, the course’s assessment with answers, an attendance register and an evaluation form.

Part 1 sets out the course and how to plan it. Part 2 has a timed plan for each session, built from the course’s own modules, lessons and practice tasks; read it with the module it teaches. Part 3 holds the course’s assessment with its answers, an attendance register and an evaluation form.

What this pack covers

- Plan the course as 7 sessions
- Follow a timed plan for each session
- Draw out each lesson’s key points
- Run each lesson’s practice task as a group activity
- Check understanding with the course’s own questions
- Keep a register and gather evaluations

PART 1

Planning the course

What the course covers, who it is for, and how to run it.

CHAPTER 1

About Advanced Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Complex Anxiety Disorders

This advanced thirty-hour CPD programme provides a rigorous, evidence-based masterclass in the treatment of complex anxiety disorders, designed specifically for qualified psychologists and senior clinicians seeking to refine their clinical mastery. The curriculum moves beyond introductory principles to examine the epistemological foundations of cognitive behavioural therapy, focusing on information-processing models, fear structures, and transdiagnostic maintenance mechanisms that sustain chronic distress. Learners will develop sophisticated assessment and formulation architecture skills, mastering rigorous clinical interviewing techniques and the collaborative construction of idiographic formulation maps for presentations characterised by severe comorbidities and treatment resistance. A central component of the training involves deconstructing cognitive architecture and metacognition, equipping practitioners with advanced techniques to identify and modify deep-seated negative automatic thoughts, dysfunctional assumptions, core beliefs, and entrenched metacognitive styles. The programme places significant emphasis on maximising inhibitory learning, detailing the design, implementation, and evaluation of advanced behavioural experiments and exposure hierarchies grounded in contemporary inhibitory learning theory rather than relying on mere habituation. Specific modules address the management of physiological arousal and panic phenomena through targeted interoceptive exposure protocols and physiological downregulation strategies, ensuring clinicians can safely navigate somatic symptoms. Furthermore, the course integrates third-wave approaches, including acceptance and commitment frameworks, to enhance psychological flexibility and reduce experiential avoidance. Through a combination of didactic rigour, systematic skills practice, and reflective clinical supervision models, this training guarantees the absolute integration of these advanced interventions into private or institutional practice, enabling professionals to deliver nuanced, outcome-informed care for the most challenging anxiety presentations.

By the end of the course, participants will be able to

- Critically appraise contemporary cognitive behavioural models of anxiety disorders, integrating transdiagnostic mechanisms with disorder-specific maintenance cycles.
- Conduct exhaustive, formulation-driven clinical assessments that differentiate between primary anxiety presentations, subtle avoidance patterns, and complex psychiatric comorbidities.
- Construct individualised, empirically supported cognitive conceptualisations that map out idiosyncratic triggers, core beliefs, and maintaining safety behaviours.
- Implement advanced cognitive restructuring techniques targeting deep-seated core schemas, cognitive rigidity, and metacognitive beliefs maintaining chronic apprehension.
- Design and execute sophisticated behavioural experiments and interoceptive exposure protocols designed to violate threat expectancies and enhance inhibitory learning.
- Integrate third-wave principles, including mindfulness and acceptance strategies, to address experiential avoidance and promote psychological flexibility in treatment-refractory cases.

- Systematically manage therapeutic ruptures, alliance strains, and client ambivalence throughout intensive exposure-based interventions.
- Utilise validated psychometric tools and continuous feedback loops to evaluate clinical progress, adjust formulation hypotheses, and ensure measurable therapeutic outcomes.

Who it is for

The course is pitched at experienced practitioners working with complex presentations, who already use the approach in their practice.

At a glance

- 7 sessions of about 210 minutes, one for each of the course's modules.
- The online course is accredited for 30 hours of CPD.
- Each participant needs the course book, or access to the online course, for reading between sessions.

CHAPTER 2

Planning the sessions

Run one session for each module, a week or a fortnight apart, so that participants can read the module and try its practice task between sessions. The sessions can also be run as a block over two or three days.

OVERVIEW

The course at a glance

Session	Module	Lessons	Time
1	Epistemological Foundations and Transdiagnostic Conceptualisation	5	210 minutes
2	Advanced Assessment and Formulation Architecture	5	210 minutes
3	Deconstructing Cognitive Architecture and Metacognition	5	210 minutes
4	Maximising Inhibitory Learning through Behavioural Experiments	6	210 minutes
5	Interoceptive Exposure and Somatic Regulation	5	210 minutes
6	Third-Wave Integrations: Acceptance and Mindfulness in Anxiety	5	210 minutes
7	Navigating Comorbidity, Resistance, and Relapse Prevention	5	210 minutes

The group

- Six to sixteen participants: enough for small-group work, few enough for everyone to contribute.
- Agree ground rules at the first session: confidentiality, respect for different experience, and how participants will speak about their own clients (with nothing that could identify them).
- Ask before the course about access needs, and send any reading a week ahead.

What you need

- A copy of this pack, and the course book or the online course for each participant.
- A flipchart or whiteboard, and space for groups of three or four to work.
- Printed copies of the attendance register and the evaluation form in Part 3, which you may copy for the groups you run.

Keeping it safe

Training about psychological difficulties can bring up participants' own experience. Say at the start that anyone may step out, have someone available to talk to afterwards, and know where to point a participant who is struggling: their GP, their own supervisor or employee assistance programme, or Samaritans on 116 123.