

LIGHTBULB SESSION 1

COURSE WORKBOOK





Welcome to the Lightbulb Course where you can learn strategies for managing symptoms of trauma.

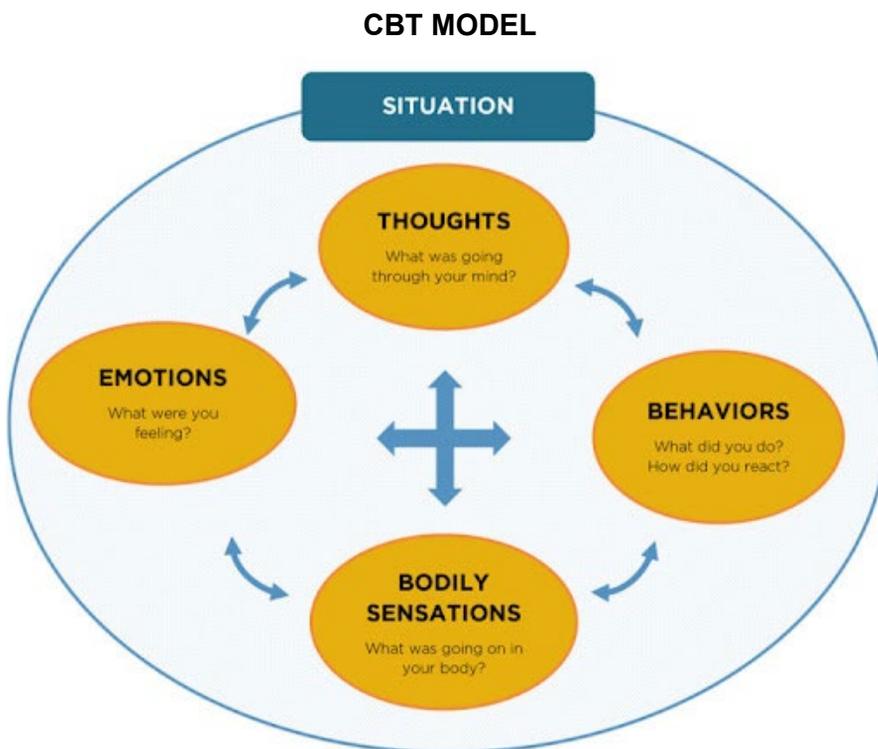
At a Glance

The Lightbulb Course is the first intervention offered to people who have experienced a trauma and who continue to experience symptoms after this frightening event. These symptoms may include avoidance, nightmares, difficulty concentrating and intrusive thoughts and images.

This is a 5-week educational group based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy principles and techniques to help overcome symptoms of trauma. The course is based on the here and now. People attending are discouraged from talking about or disclosed details of their personal trauma as this maybe upsetting for them or others.

Session 1: Making Sense of Trauma

The Lightbulb group is a 5-week psycho educational group based on the principles of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. It focuses on techniques to help you overcome trauma.





So, let's have a think:



Task 1.

How does trauma affect you?

What symptoms or difficulties are you experiencing just now (write a note of them below)...

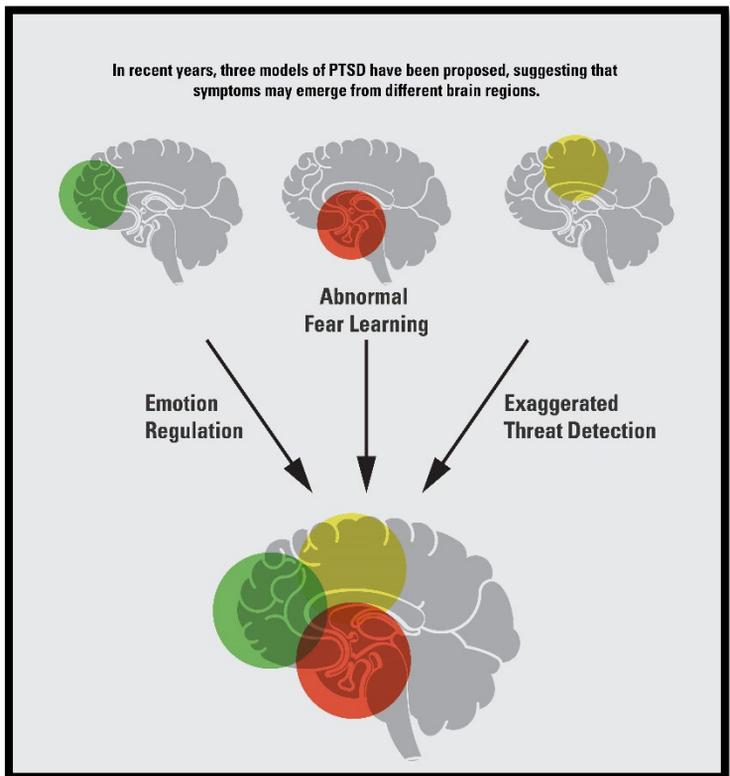
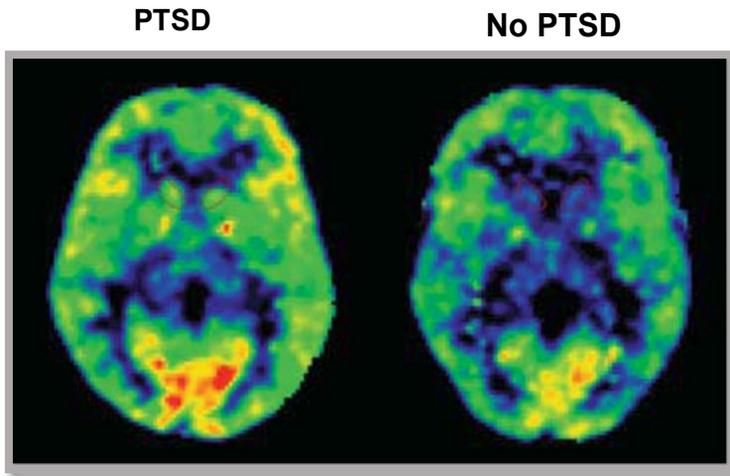
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) can happen to anyone of any age. Any situation that a person finds traumatic can cause PTSD. It is estimated that 1 in 3 people who have a traumatic experience will develop PTSD. After experiencing a traumatic event its natural to have upsetting thoughts and distress after it, but some people go on to develop symptoms of PTSD.

Symptoms of PTSD include:

1. Re-experiencing/ memories of the incident/s.
2. Hyperarousal – changes to the body.
3. Avoidance – both physical and cognitive (avoiding thinking about it).
4. Persistent changes in mood and thinking.

Changes to the brain can also take place:

Note the changes to the yellow and red areas between the brain with PTSD and the one without.

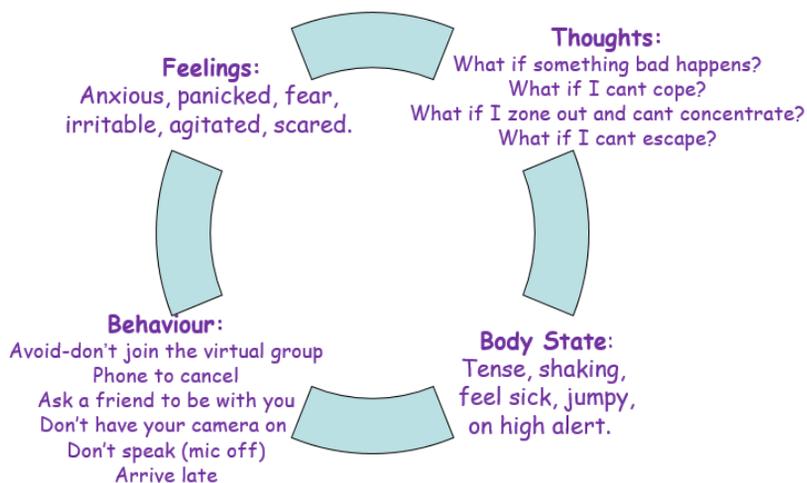




The Cognitive Behavioural Therapy vicious circle of PTSD:

Trauma CBT Vicious Circle

Example of a Trauma Vicious Circle Situation: Joining the virtual group today



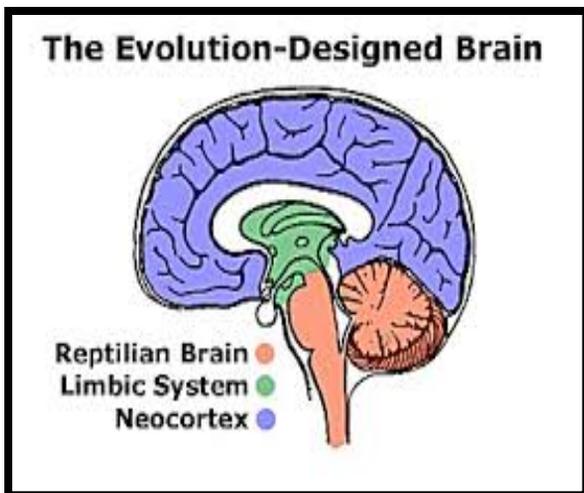
What keeps trauma symptoms going?

Association: when you start to become anxious or scared in one setting, you often start reacting in the same way in similar places

Anticipation: if you have been anxious or fearful in some situations, it's natural to worry about it happening again. Worrying about things ahead of time can make things worse.

Avoidance: not facing up to things that make you feel anxious or threatened. If you keep avoiding your fears you are unlikely to overcome them.

We all have an internal alarm system that is there to help us survive!



Humans have a neocortex and this is where we do all our thinking, processing and higher functioning tasks like making memories.

The neocortex shuts down when our alarm system is on and therefore our reaction is more instinctive (like an animal) and involves less thinking.

We have our fight/flight/freeze system which is automatic and prepares us for action when we sense a threat. We prepare to fight the danger, run away from it or play dead and freeze until the danger passes.

We can't survive without it – it's inbuilt!



When we fight the emotion is anger and we attack. Potential outcomes are that we insult, blame or mistreat.

When we flight the emotion is denial and we hide. Potential outcomes are to avoid, omit or sabotage.

When we freeze, the emotion is that we shut down and we comply. The outcomes may be that we justify and rationalise.

The fight or flight response is normal and helpful when we are faced with an immediate physical danger or threat but it can also be triggered by a false alarm where there is no "real" threat.

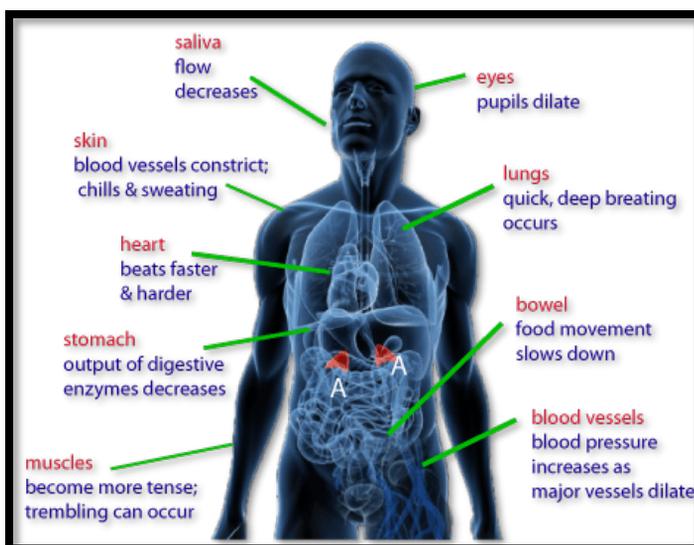
Sometimes our alarms are too sensitive but we can work together to get control of your alarm system.

When is fight/flight unhelpful?

- If you live under a constant sense of threat and worry about things that others would regard as insignificant
- If you cannot get rid of it even though you try
- If it negatively impacts your day-to-day life
- If it's getting worse



Physical symptoms of fight and flight:



Task 2:

What changes do you notice in your body when you feel anxious or scared?

In what situations do these changes happen:

Jot down what you think:





How to manage the physical symptoms of trauma?

When we feel anxious, stress or panic our breathing becomes irregular, shallow and rapid.

Side effects may be chest pain, breathlessness, choking feeling, blurred vision, tinnitus, sweating and feeling dizzy, light-headed and weak.

You breathe in more oxygen than your body needs and you lose the balance between oxygen and carbon dioxide. This is called Hyperventilation.

We want to slow our breathing down – to signal that we are not in danger and are in control.

Controlled breathing is slower and deeper than normal breathing and happens in our stomach rather than our chest.

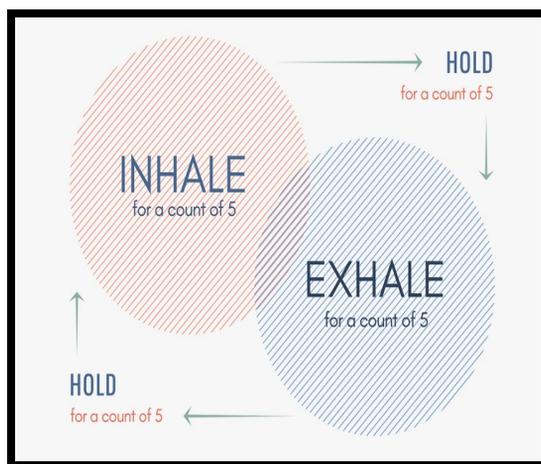
So, let's try it:

- Place one hand on your chest, and one on your stomach
- Imagine a balloon in your stomach
- Breathe in slowly for a count of 5 (you should notice when you breathe in, your stomach should move out slightly as if the balloon was inflating)
- Hold your breath for a count of 5
- Breathe out slowly for a count of 5 (you should notice when you breathe out your stomach should move in slightly as if balloon was deflating)



Tips for practice:

- Focus on your breathing – counting to 5 or saying the word “relax” to yourself.
- Practice controlled breathing many times before using it to control the symptoms of anxiety – you may find it takes many attempts before you are able to breathe calmly when you feel panicky.
- It is a good idea to practice this technique when you do not feel anxious so that you can use it easily when you do experience anxiety.



Apps...

“5-minute relaxation”

A combination of vocal guidance, soothing music and relaxing sounds



Set the app to automatically guide you to sleep



“Breathe to relax”



Relaxation on our website: <http://wellbeing-glasgow.org.uk/audio-resources/>

Task 3.



What have you learned today? Note down **3 key points**.



There is no miracle cure.

Managing trauma takes time and hard work!

It is important that you **practice** the new skills taught in the group.

Many small steps can lead to a big change.

All our sessions will end with setting some homework tasks.



This week:

- ✓ Become aware of your own trauma vicious cycle of CBT. Start to identify your own thoughts, feelings, body symptoms and behaviours. We have added some “5-area” worksheets to the following pages that you can fill out online.
- ✓ Practice diaphragmatic (balloon) breathing over the next week – as often as you can. Ideally every hour on the hour if possible.



Five Areas Formulation

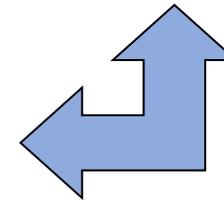
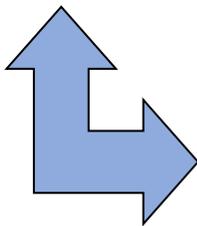
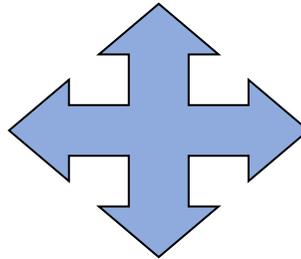
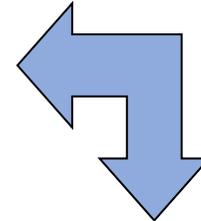
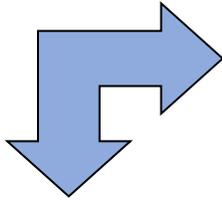
Situation
Where? When? Who? What happened? How?

Thoughts & Images (Automatic Thoughts)
What went through my mind at the time? What is the worst I thought could happen? How much did I believe that at the time from 0-100%?
What does this situation mean about me/the world/other people?

Emotions/Mood
What emotion did I feel at the time? How intense was that feeling from 0-100%?

Physical Sensations/Bodily Changes
What did I notice change in my body? Where did I notice this?

Behaviours/Safety Behaviours
What did I do or not do? What helped me cope and get through this?
What automatic reactions did I have? What would other people have seen me doing?





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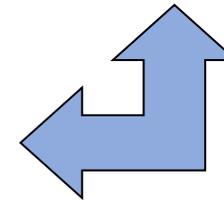
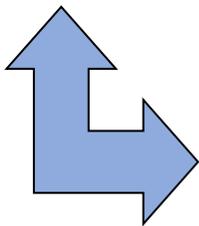
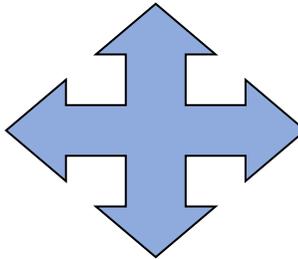
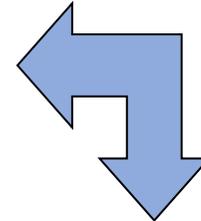
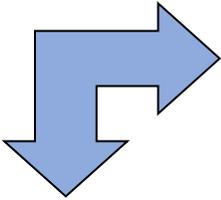
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MY NOTES