

Psychological Treatment: Applications

Brief description of course content (according to the programme's verification report)

Clinical applications; clinical disorders in adults; cognitive behavioural assessment and treatment of anxiety disorders; cognitive behavioural assessment and treatment of depressive disorders; cognitive behavioural assessment and treatment of schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders; assessment and intervention programmes in other areas of clinical psychology and health psychology.

Learning outcomes

The Psychology degree verification document specifies that the educational objectives to be attained in this subject, expressed as a result of learning, are the following:

- Basic knowledge acquisition on how to conduct clinical programmes, applied to the main psychopathological disorders in adults.
- Theoretical-practical knowledge acquisition in order to apply the assessment techniques to different disorders.
- Theoretical-practical knowledge acquisition in order to apply cognitive behavioural treatments to different disorders.

In addition, the specific objectives to attain upon finishing the subject are the following (expressed in terms of “Knowledge”, “Skills” and “Attitudes/Values”):

Knowledge (To know)

- To know about the differential efficacy of the main psychological and pharmacological treatments applied to the clinical problems compiled in the subject.
- To know about the objectives and assessment techniques applied to the clinical problems compiled in the subject.
- To know about and understand the function of the psychoeducation stage in clinical interventions, as well as the different stages (assessment, implementation and measurement) of the complex therapeutic process.
- To know about the different programmes and intervention techniques applied to the clinical problems compiled in the subject.
- To know other applications in different fields of clinical psychology and health psychology.

Skills (Know how)

- To know how to perform an assessment process and functional analysis, and how to select and apply the most suitable therapeutic techniques to reach the proposed objectives, as well as measuring their achievement.
- To learn patient communication skills so the necessary therapeutic alliance is established in order to carry out the therapeutic process.

- To know how to self-apply the different assessment and therapeutic intervention techniques to understand first-hand any possible difficulties and problem-solving during their use.
- To know how to apply some of the most relevant clinical techniques on colleagues in similar situations.
- To know how to design intervention programmes in different fields of clinical psychology and health psychology.

Attitudes and values (Knowing how to be)

- To develop and maintain the ability to work cooperatively in groups, resolving any problems which arise.
- To develop and maintain an attitude of acceptance and adaptation to colleagues with disabilities.
- To develop and maintain the motivation for good therapeutic work.
- To develop and maintain a critical attitude to the different therapeutic interventions based on empirical evidence.
- To develop and maintain respect and deontological compliance in clinical practice.

Planned learning activities

Theory Syllabus

PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SUBJECT (theory and practical exercises)

- **Elena Miró Morales.** University Lecturer. In charge of group M1.
- **Tomás Jesús Carrasco Giménez.** University Lecturer. In charge of group M2.
- **M^a Pilar Martínez Narváez-Cabeza de Vaca.** University Lecturer. In charge of groups T1 and T2.

THEORETICAL SYLLABUS

Topics 1 and 2 common to emotional disorders.

Topic 1. Applying cognitive behavioural assessment to emotional disorders. Common and differential characteristics: the phenomenon of comorbidity. Assessment objectives for differential diagnosis and behavioural assessment applied to emotional disorders. Assessment techniques applied to emotional disorders: general and specific interviews; general and specific self-reporting; general and specific self-recording; natural and analogous observations. How do we make assessments? The therapeutic process and the therapist's skills.

Topic 2. Applying cognitive restructuring to emotional disorders. Objective of cognitive restructuring. Process: how to assess emotions, triggers and thoughts. Learning to differentiate between irrational thoughts, distortions, beliefs and evaluative inferences. How to reach irrational beliefs and irrational evaluative inferences. Predominant beliefs

in anxiety and depressive disorders. Debate and specific aspects applied to the different disorders.

Block I: Cognitive behavioural applications for anxiety disorders.

Topic 3. Differential efficacy of cognitive behavioural and pharmacological treatments applied to anxiety disorders. Common and specific characteristics of patients with anxiety disorders. General and specific aspects of psychoeducation.

Topic 4. Applications of relaxation-based treatments: For which anxiety disorders and patients are they recommended? When is it advisable to use one relaxation technique over another? Relaxation or meditation? Contributions of therapies based on mindfulness.

Topic 5. Applications of exposure techniques in anxiety disorders. Exposure hierarchy of items in specific phobias and agoraphobia. Exposure to worry in generalised anxiety disorder. Practising social skills and exposure to interpersonal situations in social phobia. Exposure response prevention for obsessive compulsive disorder. Interoceptive exposure for panic disorders. Imaginal exposure in post-traumatic stress disorder. Cognitive restructuring and exposure: reality testing.

Block II: Cognitive behavioural applications for depressive disorders:

Topic 6. Differential efficacy of the main psychological and pharmacological treatments applied to depressive disorders. Characteristics of patients with depressive disorders. Assessment of suicide risk and interventions. Cognitive behavioural programmes applied to depression: psychoeducation; specific aspects of cognitive restructuring; assigning useful and pleasant gradual tasks; increase in self-esteem and assertiveness. Preventing depression recurring.

Block III: Cognitive behavioural applications of schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders.

Topic 7. Differential efficacy of the main psychological and pharmacological treatments applied to serious mental disorders. Characteristics of patients with schizophrenia: positive and negative symptoms. Stages of the disease. Assessment of psychosocial functioning. Treating schizophrenia: psychoeducation; cognitive behavioural therapy; training in social skills; improving personal autonomy skills. Family intervention in schizophrenia: caring for the carer.

Block IV: Assessment and intervention programmes in other fields of clinical psychology and health psychology.

Topic 8. Cognitive behavioural programmes of coping with stress applied to health problems. Conceptualisation of stress: situations, responses and assessing situations and resources. Is stress always harmful? Can stress make people ill? Cognitive behavioural strategies applied to stress-related health problems.

Practical Syllabus

- **GROUPS M1, T1 AND T2:**

WORKSHOPS

Two types of workshops are proposed, with practical exercises which are a cross-section of the different theoretical blocks above. Specifically, the “Therapist’s skills” workshop will equip students with the basic skills required to perform clinical interviews, to know how to give psychoeducational information to patients with different disorders and to solve problems which may arise in the clinic. Likewise, the “Social skills, assertiveness and self-esteem” workshop will provide practical knowledge on intervention techniques used in the different disorders studied.

- **The therapist’s skills**

Contents

Analysis and development of the communication skills, attitudes and values required to establish the therapeutic alliance. Observation and development of non-verbal communication, of active listening skills, empathy, confrontation and immediacy skills, and knowing how to give psychoeducational information. Promotion of the ethical values and attitudes present in our deontological code.

Work method

Attendance of group classes where the above skills will be explained and training will be given. Preparation and individual work with the appropriate materials. Analysis of clinical scenarios/situations. Completion of behavioural essays in small groups. Feedback from classmates and teaching staff in practical sessions. Address difficulties.

- **Social skills, assertiveness and self-esteem**

Contents

To learn about our basic assertive rights. To learn to love oneself or to boost self-esteem. To learn to express positive emotions. To learn to identify our personal boundaries and defend them. To learn to make requests and reject them. To learn to express negative emotions: request for behavioural change. To learn to face criticism.

Work method

Attendance of group classes where the above skills will be explained and training will be given. Preparation and individual work with the appropriate materials. Design and implementation in groups of assertiveness/self-esteem sessions, through behaviour essays. Practical sessions with feedback from classmates and teaching staff. Self-application of everyday life skills: homework and use of self-recording. Address difficulties.

PRACTICAL CASE RESOLUTION

Students will be provided with practical cases on some of the main clinical conditions studied. Their assessment process and intervention will be illustrated and discussed. This selection of practical exercises is linked to the timing of teaching the theoretical syllabus.

- **GROUP M2:**

Wherever possible, practical exercises will be in person and attendance obligatory (minimum attendance to attain a pass will be 90% of the sessions carried out). They will consist of modelling different actions related to the treatment techniques studied in this subject, in a simulated consultation scenario through role plays. Assessment will be made according to attendance (between 90 and 100%) and student participation in the sessions. Where necessary, the practical exercises will consist of presenting and analysing the application of techniques to clinical cases through on-line classes. The attendance requirements and assessment procedure will be the same.