

## **Psychology**

Critically discuss the key principles and therapeutic techniques that underpin CBT-based approaches to treating addiction. To what extent have CBT-based approaches shown enhanced therapeutic effectiveness in addiction compared to other therapeutic approaches?

In a seminal text, West (2005) describes the state of addiction as ultimately a distortion of motivation. Such a motivational account would appear to provide an appropriate explanation on the increasing ubiquity of cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) interventions in mental healthcare provision (Beck et al, 1993; Butler et al, 2006) and the according medicalisation of such services (Drake, Wallach & McGovern, 2005; Marlatt & Donovan, 2008; Hofmann, 2012). In substance-use addiction specifically, however, CBT approaches are noteworthy for being both appealing (Carroll, 1996), empirically supported (McKee et al., 2007; McGill & Ray, 2009; Hides, Samet & Lubman, 2010), and increasingly appropriate (Marlatt, 1996; NICE, 2007; Carroll et al., 2012). In a treatment manual for cocaine addiction, Carroll (1996) delineates the philosophical grounding of CBT from its therapeutic antecedents. CBT is distinguished from dominant disease-model and abstinence-based 12-step ideologies for much of the past (Bill, 1976; Marlatt, 1996; Ouimette, Finney & Moos, 1997), cognitive therapy (CT) (Leahy, 1996; Alford & Beck, 1997) and additional behavioural interventions, such as community reinforcement therapy (Budney & Higgins, 1998; Meyers & Miller, 2001).

Addiction is of course a broad construct, and West's (2005) definition of addiction as motivation distortion may suggest the appropriateness of the inclusion of the behavioural addictions (Orford, 2001) in any comprehensive inquiry. The focus of this essay however, being on the effectiveness or otherwise of CBT and CBT-based approaches in treating addiction, necessitates exclusion of further analysis of behavioural addictions. By focusing on addictions in terms of substance abuse, it is the hope of the author that greater understanding on the effectiveness of CBT or otherwise will be better facilitated. In substance addiction, the gap between research knowledge and clinical practice is reportedly formidable (Carroll & Rounsaville, 2007, p. 2), and the current essay will attempt to aid efforts in clarifying such a gap.

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