

Contact us

To find out more, speak to your care co-ordinator or ask to speak to the Psychological Therapies Services Manager in your area.

For information on Trust services

www.awp.nhs.uk

PALS

To make a comment, raise a concern or make a complaint, please contact the Trust's Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS).

Tel: 01225 362900

Free phone: 0800 073 1778

Email: awp.pals@nhs.net

Other formats and languages

If you need this information in other formats (such as large print, Braille) or in another language, please call the PALS number.

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Avon and Wiltshire
Mental Health Partnership

NHS Trust

Narrative Therapy

This is one of a series of information leaflets on psychological therapies for service users. The therapy is described, what it involves, and the kinds of problem it may be helpful for.

you matter, we care

What is narrative therapy?

Narrative therapy is an approach to counselling which focuses on the stories of people's lives.

It helps people to find ways to change their relationships to the problems or difficulties they are facing. It assumes that people have many skills and abilities that will help them to reduce the influence of problems.

In narrative therapy:

- Problems are seen as separate to people.
- Those seeking therapy are treated as experts in their own lives.
- People are seen as being active in response to life's difficulties.
- Ideas of 'normal' and 'abnormal' are put aside and diversity is celebrated.
- Each conversation can take many rich and creative directions – there is no one 'correct' direction.
- Work may involve linking the person with others who may be supportive.
- Letter writing may be used as an effective part of therapy.
- An approach is used that is mindful of how society's ideas about gender, religion, race, family, culture, age, and sexuality influence people's experiences of life.

Who is narrative therapy suitable for?

People find narrative therapy helpful when dealing with a whole range of problems.

They might seek help for dealing with:

- sadness
- anger
- panic
- fear
- loss
- distress caused by voices, visions or paranoia
- eating difficulties
- ongoing effects of abuse
- other types of trauma.

What does it involve?

In narrative therapy, problems are defined and described by the person seeking help as opposed to being defined, described or diagnosed by an 'expert'.

With a focus on the person's intentions, hopes, dreams, values, commitments, skills and knowledge, narrative therapy is recovery focused and can be helpful for those feeling stuck in moving forward with their lives.

Where can I find further information?

'What is narrative therapy? An easy to read introduction'
By Alice Morgan ISBN: 9780957792906. The first chapter of this book can be downloaded for free at
www.dulwichcentre.com.au