

Couples Counselling For Depression (CCfD)

Client Information Leaflet

Relationship problems can be a source of stress that can trigger an episode of depression in a vulnerable person. Depression can itself make a relationship more difficult for both partners. Recent research shows that making relationship problems the focus of treatment can often lead to the depression and the relationship improving.

The assessment phase of treatment lasts for four sessions. In the first session we will talk jointly about the difficulties you are facing as a couple and also about the history of your relationship. At the end of the discussion your counsellor will book an individual session with each of you in order to find out more about you as individuals. This will be followed by a further joint session where your counsellor will give you feedback from the first three enabling you jointly to work on a plan to improve the relationship.

What Does Couples Therapy for Depression Involve?

Typically, the couple therapist aims to help you and your partner understand the issues relating to depression that seem to be troubling you. Together, you will decide on new ways to relate to each other, gaining a greater understanding along the way of your own and your partner's behaviour and emotions. Talking openly with your partner about problems for the first time can be difficult.

Your Therapist will aim to capture an overall picture of what you and your partner are finding difficult in your relationship with regard to depression, and how this is affecting you both. Although your Therapist will need to gather relevant information about you and your life, most of the time you will be expected to take the lead.

Sometimes the Therapist may suggest ways for your partner and you to improve your communication and this will involve some 'homework'. Mostly however, they will be interested in helping the two of you have a conversation so that you find your own ways to understand and resolve the problems you are experiencing.

Length and Frequency of Therapy

You each will have an initial assessment with a Psychological Well-being Practitioner followed by an individual telephone conversation with a Couples Therapist. Depending upon the outcome of these appointments you and your partner may be offered further joint and individual meetings.

For therapy to be effective, a commitment to engage on a weekly basis for up to a maximum of 20 sessions over a period of 6 months is recommended.