

Interpersonal Psychotherapy

Interpersonal Psychotherapy (IPT) is a time limited therapy that has been demonstrated to be effective in treating a range of problems including depression and bulimia. IPT addresses a person's depression or presenting problem by addressing their relationships, and therefore does not focus on beliefs or childhood issues. However skills such as communicating with others, assertiveness, managing emotions and problem solving are important skills that will help with resolving interpersonal problems. Research has highlighted a link between the quality of our relationships, problems in our relationships and our mood.

The aim of IPT is to help you resolve the problem area(s) most relevant to your depression or presenting problem. Interpersonal problems are conceptualised as being in one or more of four problem areas:

1. **Grief** – The death of someone that was close to you or that has influenced your life, and the death continues to affect you. The loss of other things such as jobs or relationships are addressed as a role transition.
2. **Role Transition** – Difficulties arising from transitions in life such as changing jobs, unemployment, moving countries, relationships ending and retirement. One important transition is moving from 'unwell' to 'well'.
3. **Interpersonal Disputes** – This involves conflict between you and another person(s) that is either overt (obvious) or covert (not obvious to both parties). The dispute may result from communication problems or unrealistic expectations from either party.
4. **Interpersonal Sensitivity (Loneliness and Social Isolation)** – This refers to difficulty forming or maintaining fulfilling personal relationships, and/or having longstanding feelings of loneliness and social isolation.

