

## **WHAT IS COGNITIVE PROCESSING THERAPY (CPT)**

Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) is an evidenced-based manualized treatment protocol that has been found effective for the treatment of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other symptoms following traumatic events. It focuses on how the traumatic event is construed and coped with by a person who is trying to regain a sense of mastery and control in his or her life.

Typically conducted as a 12 session protocol with a recommended follow-up session around 30 days after the end of treatment, it helps to consider the overall therapy in terms of phases of treatment.

The first phase consists of assessing the appropriateness of the individual for CPT (PTSD diagnosis, treatment priorities, etc.)

In CPT, cognitive therapy techniques are used to focus on faulty thought related to traumatic events.

Processing the trauma involves identifying and allowing for natural emotions related to the trauma as well as identifying those thoughts that are preventing recovery. These inaccurate statements are referred to as “stuck points” because they tend to keep the individuals “stuck” in the trauma and prohibit the recovery to normal functioning.

This cognitive restructuring process continues with exploring the impact of the trauma on beliefs around safety, trust, power and control, self-esteem, and intimacy.

Finally, a review of the therapeutic journey and planning for the future including relapse prevention marks the conclusion of the therapy.