

# Compassion Focused Therapy and Compassionate Mind Training

**Compassion focused therapy** is derived from the evolutionary model of social mentality therapy (Gilbert 1989, 1995, 2005a,b, 2007). It offers *ways of focusing* your therapy on the development of self-soothing, self-supportiveness and nurturance. CFT applies to all aspect of the therapy including the tone and manner of the therapeutic relationships the formulation and various of the intervention strategies. It is a therapy focus rather than new school and utilises much wisdom for Western and Eastern approaches to helping people change.

**Compassionate mind training** refers to *the specific ways/techniques we can use to help us* experience compassion, and develop the various aspects of compassion for self and others (Gilbert & Irons, 2005)

## Process and stages of CFT and CMT

The therapist will build their therapeutic relationship and share the 'story.' They will then outline their ways of working with a short explanation of the model. The therapists can then discuss with the client how they feel about working in this way.

### *Shared formulation*

- Validation of fears, painful experiences, threat sensitivities
- Make sense of safety behaviours/strategies and core beliefs
- Identify critic or inner bully as safety strategy (i.e. functions)
- Explain the three circles model and how thoughts, memories and images affect the brain

### *It's not your fault focus*

We are evolved beings with built-in self protection and resource systems

- Working with anger, and submissive to shame

- Distinguish taking responsibility from condemning and blaming

### *Development of compassion for self*

- Through the therapeutic relationship

Mindfulness with re-focusing of attention, behaviour, thoughts and feelings

Use letter writing and imagery (of self and others)

Orientating to compassionate self-identity

Visualise, practice, and rehearse compassionate focus on self, goals and future.