



Arts Psychotherapies and Mentalization Based Treatment (MBT)

Information for patients



What is mentalization?

Mentalizing means you are able to reflect upon and understand your own state of mind and the states of minds of others. This involves recognising and making sense of emotions, beliefs, needs and desires. Difficulties with mentalizing can often lead to misunderstandings (usually negative) and our ability to build meaningful and sustainable relationships.

What is MBT?

Mentalization Based Treatment (MBT) is an evidenced-based psychological treatment for people diagnosed with Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder (also known as Borderline Personality Disorder) as well as other difficulties related to emotional instability, with the benefits continuing in the years following therapy. MBT focuses on developing the ability to mentalize and improving emotional resilience. Improving mentalization can help us to understand ourselves and others better and therefore reduce misunderstandings and conflicts.

What can I expect from Mentalization Based Arts Psychotherapy?

As a group we will explore and discuss moments of mentalizing and non-mentalizing using examples from within the group as well as outside the group. In the group we actively use art materials or musical instruments, as well as talking, as a way of connecting with each other, which can feel less intense and reduce the risk of non-mentalizing. As a group we can practice and develop our mentalizing skills and understanding, and think about how this influences our behaviour and relationships.

What does Arts Psychotherapy based MBT involve?

- Assessment – to assess if MBT may meet your needs and whether you wish to continue with this pathway (2 sessions max)
- Formulation – to build an outline of your challenges & strengths (3 sessions max)
- Introduction to Arts Psychotherapy based MBT: 10-week group sessions which focuses on developing understanding of mentalizing, emotions, attachment and relationships
- Arts Psychotherapy based MBT Group: This involves attending a weekly group for up to 12 months. Each session is 90 minutes and is where we practice mentalizing together.

Where can I access MBT Art Psychotherapy?

Mentalization Based Arts Psychotherapies are currently offered to people receiving Community Mental Health Teams care in Edinburgh. You can request assistance via professionals involved in your care, such as your CPN, psychiatrist, support worker, or other members of the CMHT. For further information about the mentalization based arts therapies available in Edinburgh please contact: Admin.ArtsTherapies@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk and specify MBT Art Psychotherapy.