

SPRING (Guided Self-help for PTSD)

Spring is an internet-based, trauma-focused cognitive behavioural therapy guided self-help programme to treat PTSD of mild to moderate severity and was developed by the Traumatic Stress Research Group at Cardiff University. Treatment with Spring involves an initial meeting with a therapist for about an hour to access suitability then a further 1-hour session to describe the eight-step/module programme.

The initial meeting is then followed by four further, fortnightly sessions of 30 minutes each. These are undertaken via the internet or telephone according to client preference. Each session is accompanied by homework to guide the client through the steps at the appropriate pace. At each session, the therapist reviews progress and guides the client through the programme. The aim of the guidance is to offer continued support, monitoring, motivation and problem solving. I have highlighted the steps below.

- **Step 1: Learning About My PTSD – Psychoeducation about PTSD illustrated by four actors describing their experience of PTSD to four different types of traumatic event.**
- **Step 2: Grounding Myself - Explanation of grounding and its uses along with descriptions and demonstrations of grounding exercises.**
- **Step 3: Managing My Anxiety – Education around relaxation with learning through videos of a controlled breathing technique, deep muscular relaxation and relaxation through imagery.**
- **Step 4: Reclaiming My Life – Behavioural re-activation to help individuals return to previously undertaken/new activities.**
- **Step 5: Coming to Terms with My Trauma – Provides rationale for imaginal exposure, narratives of the four video characters are provided. The therapist helps the client to begin writing a narrative, which they complete remotely and read every day for at least 30 minutes.**
- **Step 6: Changing My Thoughts – Cognitive techniques to address PTSD symptoms.**
- **Step 7: Overcoming My Avoidance – Graded real life exposure work.**
- **Step 8: Keeping Myself Well – This session reinforces what has been learnt during the programme, provides relapse prevention measures and guidance on what to do if symptoms return.**