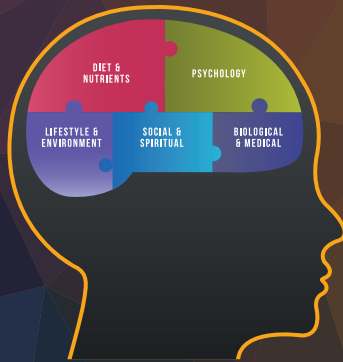


Personalised Integrative Therapy



For Depression & Anxiety

Participant Handouts
Principles & Basics



Personalised Integrative Therapy (PI Therapy) for depression and anxiety

BACKGROUND, PRINCIPLES AND BASICS MODULE

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Personalised Integrative (PI) Therapy

How PI Therapy Differs from Standard Treatments

Psychological Therapy and pharmacological medications are the most popular treatments for mental health disorders. These interventions have strong scientific support in reducing the suffering associated with many mental health disorders. Popular psychological therapies include Cognitive-Behaviour Therapy (CBT), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), Interpersonal Therapy (IPT), Schema-Focused Therapy, Mindfulness therapies, relaxation therapies, and psychodynamic therapy. The aim of most of these treatments is to modify unhelpful thoughts, beliefs, memories, and emotional coping strategies that can affect mood.

Pharmacological medications are also commonly used to treat mental health disorders. These medications include antidepressants such as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) and mood stabilisers. While we are still not totally certain how these medications work, it is most commonly believed that these medications modify specific neurotransmitters (brain chemicals) and hormones that can affect mood.

Although psychological and pharmaceutical interventions are helpful for many people, they are far from perfect. In fact, they are equivalent in their efficacy and only 30 percent of adults will experience substantial benefit. Another 30 percent report moderate benefit, and the remaining 40 percent experience no benefit at all.

PI Therapy aims to increase treatment success by utilising a multi-targeted approach. PI Therapy can include both psychological and pharmacological interventions as part of the treatment. However, PI Therapy strives to improve mental health by supporting changes in several areas. As shown in figure on the next page, PI Therapy promotes changes in psychological skills, diet, nutritional status, lifestyle, environment, social connections, spiritual health, and biological/ medical status. PI Therapy is a treatment for depression and anxiety that adopts an integrative or 'holistic' approach to mental health care. As outlined below, it is based on several guiding principles.

Principles of PI Therapy

Multi-targeted approach

Rather than targeting just one area (e.g., medication or psychological skills), PI Therapy aims to improve mental health by promoting changes in several different areas. It is believed that multiple, small changes in different areas are more effective, and often easier to achieve, than a dramatic change in a single area.

Changes are 'personalised'

In PI Therapy the targeted areas of change, and the intensity of changes, are unique to each person. They are influenced by the areas in most need of change, the skills required to change, a person's motivation to change, barriers to change, and an individual's previous experience at change.

Treat causes not symptoms

Diagnostic labels such as major depressive disorder, panic disorder, and post-traumatic stress disorder are not so important in PI Therapy. The key is to identify an individual's unique causes of mental health problems. Having a diagnosis does not tell us anything about the unique factors that might be affecting someone's mood. Rather, efforts should focus on identifying and treating causes.

Stepped-care approach

In PI Therapy the intensity of interventions may increase over time (see figure on the next page). If sufficient mental health improvement is not obtained after foundational changes, more intensive interventions are introduced. For example, dietary changes, exercise, and psychological interventions will become more comprehensive over time if adequate mood improvements do not occur. If, at the end of this program, full symptom resolution does not occur, recommendations for further individualised assessment and treatment will also be covered.



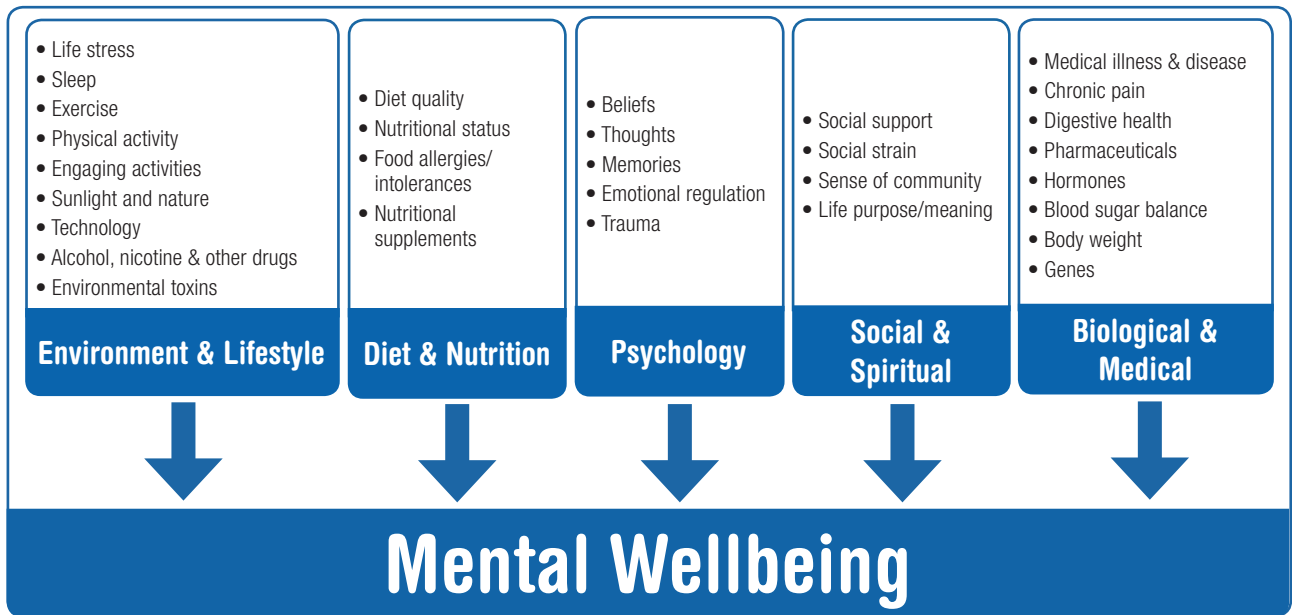
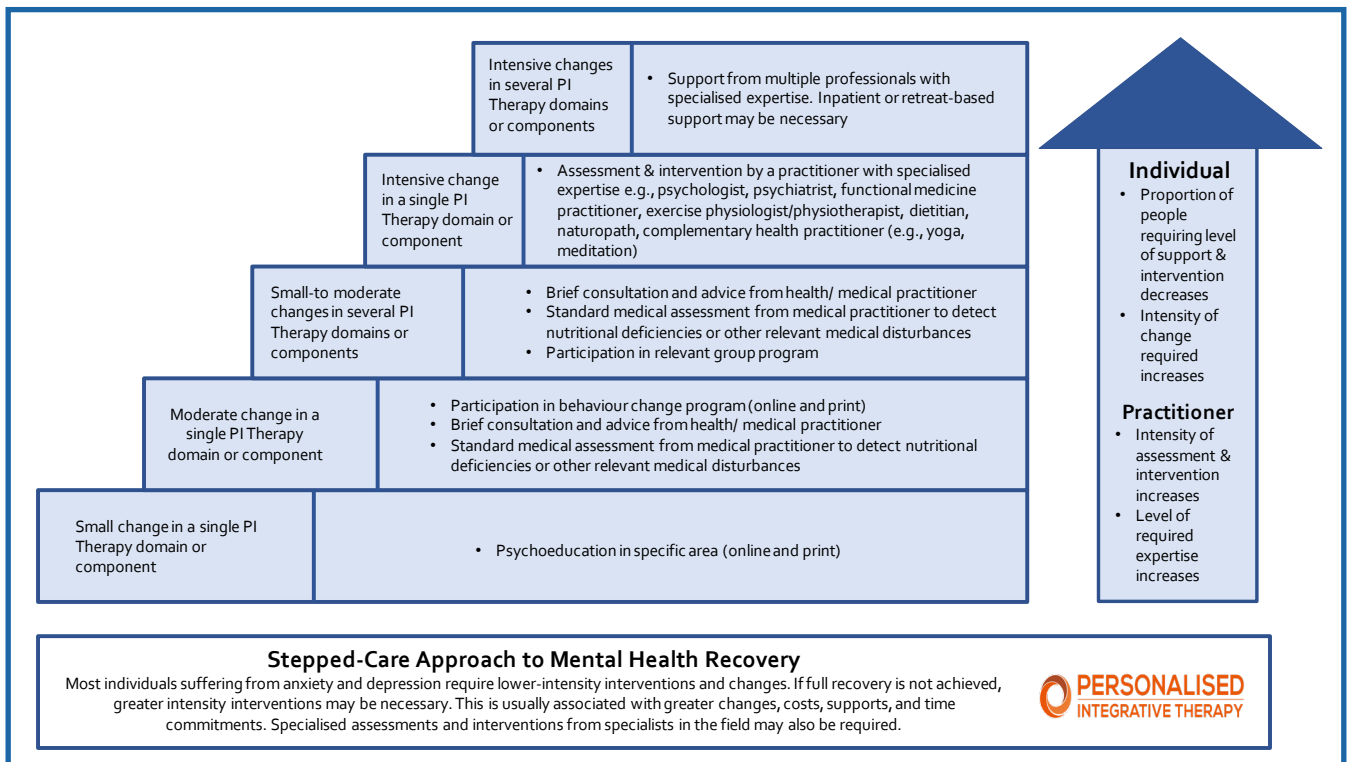


Figure: Integrative Approach to Mental Wellbeing



Identify Your Unique Cause(s) of Depression and/or Anxiety

Research confirms that depression and anxiety can be caused by several dietary/nutritional, lifestyle/environmental, psychological, social/spiritual, and medical/physical factors. Although our mental health can sometimes be caused by a single factor, often there are multiple possible causes. Identifying your unique cause(s) and making personalised changes are essential for improving mental health.

The 'Identification of Depression and Anxiety Causes Questionnaire (IDAC-Q)' is a 130 item online questionnaire that helps you identify your unique cause(s) of depression and/or anxiety. It assesses components within the domains of: (1) Psychology/Coping Skills; (2) Diet & Nutrition; (3) Lifestyle & Environment; (4) Social & Spiritual; and (5) Medical and Physical to identify your cause(s) of depression. A report is then created that you (and/or your treating practitioner) can use to develop an effective integrative treatment plan. A sample copy of 2 pages from the 5-page report is below.

Visit www.pitherapy.com.au/questionnaire to complete the IDAC-Q.

Cause	Description	Your Result
Diet and Nutrition		
Low Diet Quality	Research confirms that the quality of our diet has a significant influence on our mental health. Eating a healthy diet comprised of natural, whole foods is associated with better mental health and can even effectively reduce depressive and anxiety symptoms.	Low Moderate High
Pro-inflammatory diet	Chronic, low-grade inflammation (often termed silent inflammation) is associated with poorer mental health. The foods we eat can be a major cause of this inflammation. Some foods are classified as anti-inflammatory (e.g., vegetables, fruits, herbs, and spices) while other are pro-inflammatory (e.g., packaged foods, foods high in trans fats, fast foods, and soft drinks).	Low Moderate High
Nutritional deficiencies	There are several nutrients that can have a significant impact on our mental health, if we experience deficiencies (or excesses) in these one or some of these nutrients it can have a detrimental effect on the production of mood-boosting hormones and brain chemicals. Examples of mood-supporting nutrients include: B-vitamins, magnesium, vitamin D, folate, iron, and zinc.	Low Moderate High
Food allergies/intolerances	If we consume foods that we are allergic or intolerant to, it can increase inflammation in our body, have a detrimental effect on our digestion, and can alter levels of mood-related hormones and brain chemicals.	Low Moderate High
Lifestyle & Environment		
Poor Sleep Quality	Sleep is crucial for both mental and physical wellbeing. When our sleep is regularly disrupted, it has major negative effects on our mental health and can trigger an episode of depression or anxiety. Poor sleep also reduces the effectiveness of both psychological and medical treatments for depression and anxiety.	Low Moderate High
Lack of Exercise and/or Physical Activity	Our level of physical activity and structured exercise can protect us from depression and anxiety. Exercise is also an effective treatment for these conditions and is as effective as psychological and pharmacological treatments for depression and anxiety.	Low Moderate High
Limited Exposure to Sunlight and Nature	Spending time outdoors, particularly out in nature can have a substantial positive effect on our mood. Research also confirms that sensible sunlight exposure also has mood-enhancing effects. The timing of sunlight exposure is also important, as this can influence the circadian release of important mood-lifting hormones.	Low Moderate High
Limited Engagement in Pleasurable Activities	When we spend time participating in pleasant or enjoyable activities it can have a positive effect on our mood. In fact, increasing daily pleasant activities is an effective treatment for depression and anxiety.	Low Moderate High
Excess Technology and Screen Time	Although moderate exposure to computers, gaming systems, smartphones, and social media is fine, their excessive use can have a detrimental effect on our mood and overall mental wellbeing.	Low Moderate High