THE FEEL GOOD ISLAND

The Design and Development of a CBT Computer Game for Adults with an Intellectual Disability and Anxiety or Depression

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Historical Context

- Establishing valid estimates - problematic and wide variations
- People with ID experience the same types of mental health problems as the general population with at least equivalent, if not even greater prevalence (Emerson & Hatton, 2007)

Experience of mental health disorders in ID

- Mild - Moderate ID: 20- 25%
- Severe - Profound ID: 50%

(WHO; International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual Disabilities, 2000)

- Mental illness is three to four times more common in those with ID than in those without (Deb et al, 2001)

Incidence and Prevalence rates (Smiley et al, 2007; Cooper et al., 2007)

- 7.7 %; 6.6 % (affective disorders)
- 1.5 %; 3.8 %(anxiety disorders)
Evidence suggests that the treatment of mental health difficulties is currently inadequate for those who require therapy in this population (Brown, Duff, Karatzias & Horsburgh, 2011)

Evidence base for clinical effectiveness of psychological interventions is sparse yet growing

If the therapeutic approaches are adapted to meet the specific needs of people with intellectual disabilities they could be life enhancing (Brown et al., 2011)

Increasing interest in developing evidence based approaches and adapting interventions specifically for use with people who have ID
Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)

- CBT is the most clinically effective treatment in the general population.

- CBT has been demonstrated to be effective and adaptable to a wide range of mental health problems across a number of different populations and it is increasingly used in the ID population (Bruce et al., 2010).

- Hatton (2002) Skills required in general population for CBT
  1. Cognitive capacity (e.g. understanding of more/less, memory),
  2. The ability to identify different emotions,
  3. The ability to understand the cognitive model.
Do people with ID have the cognitive capacity for CBT?

- **Recognize emotions** (Joyce, Globe and Moody, 2006; Oathamshaw & Haddock, 2006; Sams, Collins & Reynolds, 2006),
- **Label emotions** (Joyce et al., 2006),
- **Discriminate between thoughts, feelings and behaviours** (Sams et al., 2006),
- **Link events and emotions** (Dagnan, Chadwick & Proudlove, 2000; Joyce et al., 2006; Oathamshaw & Haddock, 2006)
Do people with ID have the cognitive capacity for CBT?

- **Cognitive Mediation**: Difficulty mediating role of cognitions (Dagnan et al., 2000; Joyce et al., 2006; Oathamshaw & Haddock, 2006).

- However, Bruce et al. (2010) demonstrated with one standardized CBT training intervention increased participants’ ability to link thoughts and feelings.

- Performance on the experimental cognitive tasks was positively associated with receptive vocabulary.
Current Interest

- Cognitive-behavioural approaches with people with intellectual disabilities is becoming more widely accepted (Taylor, Lindsay & Wilner, 2006)

- Growing evidence of CBT as an effective intervention for people with ID regarding:
  - anger management (Willner et al., 2002),
  - psychoses (Haddock et al., 2004),
  - sexually abusive behaviour (Murphy et al., 2007),
  - anxiety and mood disorders (Gaus, 2011; Mc Cabe et al., 2007)
Research Recommendations

• Adapt the traditional CBT model to suit the needs of this group (Brown & Marshall, 2006)
  • ‘flexibility in method’ (Whitehouse et al., 2006)
• Further research through well-conducted Randomized Controlled Trials (Willner, 2005)
• Requirement of preparatory skill training for participants to be able to understand the concept of cognitive mediation (Bruce et al., 2010; Sturmey, 2006)
Current Project

- **Aim**: to develop an effective and accessible CBT intervention for people with ID and depression or anxiety

- **Objective**: Adapt and modify the content of the CBT computer game for children; *Pesky Gnats* (O’Reilly, Coyle & McGlade, )
  - An effective intervention for children aged 9-16 years with internalising difficulties (O’Dwyer-O’Brien et al., 2012; Ryan et al., 2013).

- **ID Version** – ‘The Feel Good Island’
  - CCBT has not yet been applied to this population
  - Evidenced-based intervention
Simplification

- Reduce complexity of exercises
- Break theory down into chunks
- Present information at a slower rate
- Repetition
- Remove Gnats metaphor
...after

**Situation**
Meeting people after work

**UNHELPFUL THOUGHT**
"I never know what to say to people"

**Feeling sad or worried & Cancel plans to go out**

Options:
- None
- Some
- A lot
- Shorter sentences,
- simple words,
- concrete language,
- non-verbal communication

Increased Visual aids

Boardmaker - The Picture Communication Symbols - Mayer-Johnson
Workbook exercise

The people Shona will turn to for help the next time she feels sad or worried:
- Mum
- Dad
- Brother
- Friends
- Therapist

Who will YOU turn to next time you feel sad or worried:
- Her Mum or Dad
- Her brother Daniel
- Her close friend Mike
- Her therapist Ann
Developmental Level & interests

Consider developmental level when choosing techniques and constructing social stories.

Meeting friends from work
Flexible methods

- Adjust techniques
- Increased use of Relaxation Strategies and Mindfulness exercises (One per session)

**Mindfulness**

Practising Mindfulness helps to calm the body and mind

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sit</th>
<th>When practicing mindfulness get comfortable in your chair. Feel your back resting against the chair.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feet on ground</td>
<td>Two feet flat on the ground.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hands on lap</td>
<td>Hands resting on your lap.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back straight</td>
<td>Shoulders loose and comfortable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close eyes</td>
<td>Close your eyes or look at the ground.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nice</td>
<td>Be kind and nice to yourself.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Listen to what is going on in your mind and body.
7 session game to allow for preparatory skill training to ensure participants have an understanding of cognitive mediation.
Session 1: Introducing the Cognitive Model

Jack

- Run
- Thoughts: Jack thought 'This is going to be great fun'
- Excited
- Roller Coaster
- Jack ran quickly to queue up for the roller coaster
- Jack was feeling happy and excited
- Jack got on the roller coaster and enjoyed himself

Luke

- Walked slowly
- Thoughts: Luke thought 'This is going to be awful, I will fall off or get sick'
- Worried
- Ran away
- Luke was feeling scared and worried
- Luke ran away from the roller coaster
Session 2: Thoughts, Feelings & Behaviours

JANE

Shona's Negative Thought Feeling Behaviour

Situation: I texted my friend and they didn't text back.

Thoughts: 'I must have done something to annoy them,' 'They don't like me anymore,' 'I have no friends.'

Feelings: Sad, Lonely

Behaviour: Made me cry. I didn't want to do anything.
Session 3: Noticing Unhelpful Thoughts

SCOTT

1. Situation
2. Unhelpful Thought
3. How you felt & What you did

"I'm stupid"

"I'll never have any friends"
Session 4: Stop Unhelpful Thoughts making things worse

4 Questions to STOP your Unhelpful Thought making things worse for you

1. Is my Unhelpful Thought completely true? [true ✅ / not true ✗]

2. What would I tell a friend who had the same Unhelpful Thought?

3. What are all the things I could do?

4. Which is the best plan for next time?

Situation: Meeting people after work

UNHELPFUL THOUGHT
"I'll never have any friends"

Feeling sad or worried & Cancel plans to go out

before 4 questions

None Some A lot

after 4 questions

None Some A lot

SHONA
Session 5: Unhelpful Core Beliefs

Unhelpful Thought: “I never know what to say to people”
Unhelpful Thought: “I am no good at talking to people”
Unhelpful Thought: “I will never have any friends”

Unhelpful Core Belief: “I am no good”
Session 6: Helpful Core Beliefs

DAVID

Things that my told me my Unhelpful Core Belief is TRUE

Things that told me my Unhelpful Core Belief is NOT TRUE

swim
computer games
maths
\[ \frac{1}{2} + \frac{3}{5} - \frac{1}{2} \]
Session 7: Relapse Prevention

The people Shona will turn to for help the next time she feels sad or worried:
- Mum
- Her Mum or Dad
- Brother
- Her brother Daniel
- Friends
- Her close friend Mike
- Therapist
- Her therapist Ann

Who will YOU turn to next time you feel sad or worried?

Things Shona would like to do to make her Physical Health better:
- Walk
- Walk to the local shop instead of taking the car
- Stairs
- Take the stairs instead of the lift at work
- Basketball
- Join the local basketball team
- Swim
- Go swimming more often

What things would YOU like to do to make your Physical Health better?

"I can cope"
Currently...
THE FEEL GOOD ISLAND

Thank You