

# Cognitive Conceptualization and Intervention in Psychotherapy

The way people think and perceive the world is at the heart of the human experience. Psychological problems often include cognitive distortions, irrational beliefs, and cognitive fusion. Cognitive interventions have gained robust research support and should be included in the toolbox of any mental health professional. When we help our clients embrace more functional ways of thinking, this is also likely to impact emotions, behavior, and other dimensions of adaptive functioning.

This seminar will teach both cognitive conceptualization and intervention methods. Distinct methods of cognitive formulation will be introduced that allow us to understand different parts of the cognitive experience. Dysfunctional self-talk will be highlighted as the most accessible way to approach cognitive conceptualization. Diversity is addressed in this webinar by describing the way cultural contexts shape clients' cognitions.

Video demonstrations of foundational cognitive skills drawn from Beck's Cognitive Therapy will be used to help participants prepare for practice. These skills will address three general processes: (1) Exploration and functional analysis of current patterns, (2) Guided discovery to uncover more adaptive functioning, and (3) Enacting adaptation outside of psychotherapy. More advanced cognitive interventions will be previewed as possibilities for future professional development.

Although cognitive change is often an essential part of treatment, there are times when thoughts and beliefs cannot be easily modified. In this case, more recently-developed strategies related to mindfulness and acceptance may be more helpful. This seminar will prepare psychotherapists to discuss with clients when to emphasize acceptance and when to promote change.

This seminar is part of Level One of Training in Unified Psychotherapy (TUP), focusing on working interactively with cognition, emotion, and behavior. Instead of exclusively focusing on cognition as a point of clinical leverage, TUP encourages psychotherapists to develop a wide repertoire of skills that can be adapted to the individual needs of each client.

## Target Audience

Psychologists  
Therapists

Social Workers  
Psychiatrists

Counselors  
Nurses

Course level: Intermediate

## Learning Objectives

At the end of this seminar, participants will be able to:

1. Explain how functional cognitions are likely to reduce psychological symptoms, support adaptive emotions, and promote effective actions.
2. Describe how exploring dysfunctional self-talk can be used as one way to understand how cognition impacts psychological problems.
3. Identify cognitive skills related to functional analysis, guided discovery, and enacting adaptation outside of psychotherapy.
4. Describe the types of cognitions that can be changed and those that would benefit from mindful acceptance.
5. Apply cognitive conceptualization and intervention to one's work as a psychotherapist in order to promote multidimensional growth.

## Seminar Schedule

The webinar outline is attached. See the Live Webinar page for the start and end times.

## Outline

Begin 10 AM ET  
Overview of Cognitive Therapy  
Cognitive Themes in Psychotherapy  
Historical Context  
Cognitive Primacy  
Focusing on Cognition in Unified Psychotherapy  
Cognition as a Focal Dimension  
Impact of Cognitive Interventions in UP  
Cognitive Case Formulation  
Differentiating Adaptive versus Maladaptive Thoughts  
Foundational Cognitive Skills for Working with Cognitions in UP

Break 11:30 (15min)

Foundational Cognitive Skills  
Exploring and Functional Analysis of Current Patterns  
Guided Discovery to Uncover More Adaptive Functioning  
Enacting Adaptation Outside of Psychotherapy  
Acceptance and Acceptance Strategies  
Differentiating Change Vs Acceptance  
Demonstration  
Using the Multidimensional Survey to Highlight Cognitions  
Differentiating Functional from Dysfunctional (Adaptive Vs Maladaptive) Thoughts  
Discussing Acceptance Vs Change  
Implementing a Cognitive Intervention

Discussion and Reflecting on One's Own Practice  
Other Cognitive Strategies  
Ends 1:15 PM ET

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## Continuing Education Credit

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## The Presenter

Jeff E. Harris received his Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from The Ohio State University in 1990. In 2004, he was awarded board certification as a Specialist in Counseling Psychology by the American Board of Professional Psychology. Dr. Harris has worked as a psychologist, training director, and director of counseling at student counseling centers at Southern Illinois University, the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and New Mexico State University. He also worked as an associate professor of Counseling Psychology at Texas Woman's University. Dr. Harris is a licensed psychology, currently providing telehealth psychotherapy for Amwell Medical Group and BetterHelp. Dr. Harris is the author or co-author of two books: *Workshops: Designing and Facilitating Experiential Learning* (Brooks-Harris & Stock-Ward, 1999) and *Integrative Multitheoretical Psychotherapy* (Brooks-Harris, 2008). In 2015, Dr. Harris started collaborating with other scholars to define Unified Psychotherapy as a distinct route to integration. Dr. Harris has developed Training in Unified Psychotherapy (TUP) as a webinar series and certification program to teach therapists to think about clients in a holistic manner and to utilize diverse interventions based on the individual needs of each client.

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This seminar has been reviewed and approved by Keith Hannan, Ph.D., Laura Davie, LICSW, Tina Jenkins, Psy.D., and Loreen Yearick, MSN, RN. This approval expires on March 1, 2028.

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