

**Cognitive-Behavior Therapy for Severe Mental Illness: An Illustrated Guide.**

Jesse H. Wright, Douglas Turkington, David Kingdon, & Monica Ramirez Basco

American Psychiatric Publishing, Inc. ([www.appi.org](http://www.appi.org)).

2009, 355 pp., \$58.50 (paperback with DVD).

Over the past decade dozens of studies have shown that when added to antipsychotic medication, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) significantly improves drug-resistant psychotic symptoms and associated distress, and that more than 60% of patients with severe mental illness, such as schizophrenia can be helped by this treatment. Following the positive findings from trials of CBT for severe mental illness, interest in this treatment modality has increased dramatically, resulting in a growing need for training and practical textbooks.

Wright, Turkington, Kingdon and Basco, the world leading experts in the field, have written a practical how-to guide for using CBT for schizophrenia and related psychosis, bipolar disorder, and severe depression. This practical guide provides clinicians with a clear understanding of the major CBT principles of working with patients who have such difficult to treat symptoms as delusions, hallucinations, mania and depression, and with a step-by-step approach to implementing effective CBT interventions for these conditions.

A major strength of this new book is that it provides both an excellent theoretical framework and the detailed case examples that show how to use CBT for a patient with severe mental disorder who suffers from delusions, hallucinations, depression, mania, interpersonal problems, impaired cognitive functioning, and negative symptoms. The book contains a DVD Guide that illustrates specific strategies and techniques described in the text. The DVD Guide provides a great opportunity to observe the actual CBT work done by experts. Thus, Dr. Kingdon demonstrates how to engage a patient with paranoia, trace the origins of his delusion, and to examine the evidence for the delusion. Dr. Turkington shows how to normalize the experience of hearing voices, to explore and challenge patient's delusional beliefs about voices and to develop more adaptive coping strategies for dealing with hallucinations. Other demonstrations include: developing antisuicide plan, behavioral interventions for anhedonia and building self-esteem (Dr. Wright), reducing grandiosity, helping a patient to recognize the early signs of mania, and promoting adherence (Dr. Basco), helping a patient with thought disorder (Dr. Turkington), and treating negative symptoms (Dr. Kingdon).

This book is an invaluable source for those involved in training and education. In addition to the case examples beautifully illustrated with therapist-patient dialogues, it provides very helpful learning exercises aimed at building therapeutic skills. These thought-provoking exercises involve various methods, such as role-playing and self-reflection. For example, to help therapists empathize with their patients and to learn how to normalize patients' experiences, therapists are asked to put themselves in the position of the person who just received the diagnosis of schizophrenia, to record their feelings, and to write down ideas that could help to accept having a mental illness.

The authors provide appendices including helpful assessment tools (e.g. Psychotic Symptom Rating Scale, and Schema Inventory), several useful worksheets (Cognitive-behavior therapy case formulation worksheet, Thought change record, Weekly activities schedule), and pamphlets designed for patients who hear voices (What is happening to me? A voice hearing pamphlet, List of 60 coping strategies for hallucinations). The authors also provide a number of

cognitive behavior resources including books and computer programs for patients and families, useful websites with educational information, and a listing of professional organizations.

This user-friendly book is a great resource for clinicians interested in learning basic principles of CBT for severe mental illness, for clinicians who are already working in this modality and looking to sharpen their skills, and for educators. After reading this book, clinicians will be likely to feel more confident when working with patients with serious mental illness as well as feel more optimistic and hopeful for their recovery.

**Yulia Landa, Psy.D.**  
*Weill-Cornell University Medical School*  
*New York, NY*