

Improving adherence and effectiveness of computerised cognitive behavioural therapy without support for depression:

A qualitative study on patient experiences

Sylvia Gerhards

T.A. Abma, A. Arntz, L.E. de Graaf, S.M.A.A. Evers, M.J.H. Huijbers, G. Widdershoven

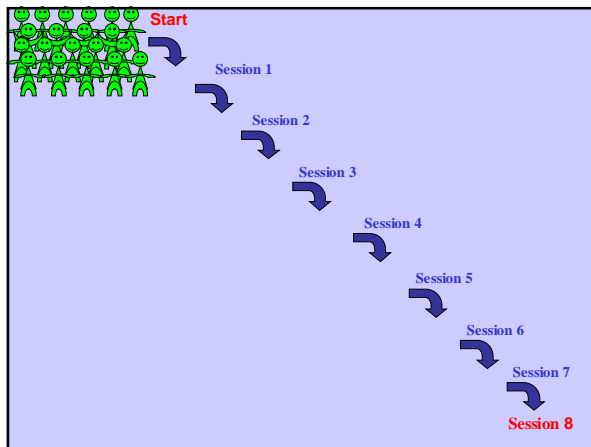
Maastricht University
Department of Clinical Psychological Science



CCBT effectiveness & adherence

- Results of effectiveness & treatment adherence CCBT ↓
 - What caused that many participants failed to complete the CCBT, while others did succeed to adhere to the treatment?
 - How did the participants experience CCBT?

Background Analysis Results Conclusion



Objective

- To gain
 - Knowledge on patient experiences with the online self-help CCBT program Colour Your Life (CYL) for depression,
 - Explanations for the low treatment adherence and effectiveness,
 - Indicate CYL improvements

Background Analysis Results Conclusion

CCBT



* Developed by Ripper & Kramer (2004) from the Trimbos-institute

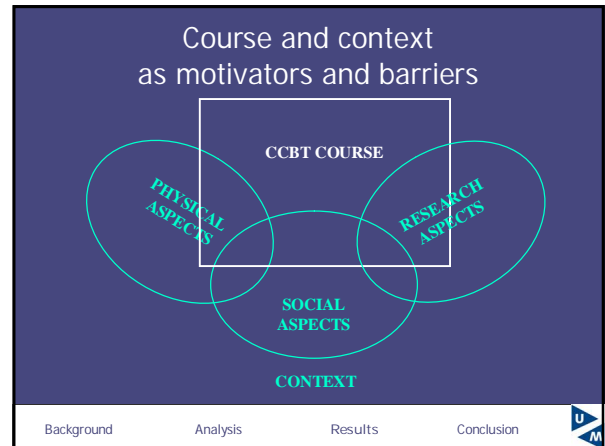
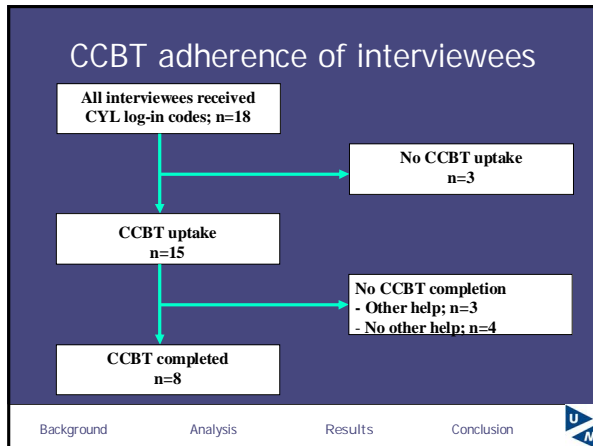
- Colour Your Life (CYL)*
- Online programme
- Based on cognitive behavioural therapy
- Self-help without assistance
- 8 sessions and 1 booster session
- 13 homework assignments
- Mood diary
- Patient forum
- Audio, video, and text

Background Analysis Results Conclusion

Method

- 18 trial participants with CYL log-in codes
- Selection basis: maximal variation
- Semi-structured interviews: topic list
- Open questions
- Inductive, content analysis (Grounded Theory)

Background Analysis Results Conclusion



Course content

- Adjusted to the patient's situation?
 - Consciousness-raising
 - Self-identification
 - Applicability to own situation

This is distant enough to be used as a mirror, and because it's the same people in the films each time this also gives a feeling of familiarity.

Go and find friends. I haven't any friends (laughs). I don't need any friends. (...) Not for me, the examples were nice. Nice okay, but not for me.

Background Analysis Results Conclusion

Course content

- Adjusted to the patient's situation?
 - Consciousness-raising
 - Self-identification
 - Applicability to own situation

I think that I've probably got more from the mood diaries than from the whole course up until now. (...) Why is it (...) that I get up in a good mood in the morning and then an hour later I'm suddenly in a bad mood. How come?

I just thought: I'm just torturing myself, I've had enough, I don't want this anymore (...). To write this feeling down and then at the end of the day to think about how I felt. It made me even more depressed so I just let it go.

Background Analysis Results Conclusion

Course content

- Adjusted to the patient's situation?
- Positive experiences leading to motivation

And then I started to connect the examples in the films to myself, and think about how I could make things better. It kept me occupied the whole week and then I noticed that I felt a bit better and that motivated me to follow the next lesson.

Background Analysis Results Conclusion

Course content

- Adjusted to the patient's situation?
- Positive experiences leading to motivation
- Negative experiences leading to non-adherence

The problem was that the whole computer course didn't fit in with my problems and my feelings. There were often things that I never had any problem with, then I thought this has nothing to do with me and I don't think that I followed the last lessons if I'm honest. Because I just had the feeling that it didn't help me.

Background Analysis Results Conclusion


Course content

- Adjusted to the patient's situation?
- Positive experiences leading to motivation
- Negative experiences leading to non-adherence
- Completers:
 - Relatively more positive experiences
 - Improvements (partly) devoted to CCBT

Background Analysis Results Conclusion 

Course content

- Adjusted to the patient's situation?
- Positive experiences leading to motivation
- Negative experiences leading to non-adherence
- Completers:
 - Relatively more positive experiences
 - Improvements (partly) devoted to CCBT
- Non-completers:
 - Relatively more negative experiences
 - No improvements / improvement through other help

Background Analysis Results Conclusion 

Context – Physical aspects

- Barriers
 - Computer skills

I'm not that great with the computer. Things kept going wrong in the programme or something, I don't know. And then I lost everything in the diary that I had just filled in. I was so frustrated that I just thought: I'm not going to do it anymore.

Background Analysis Results Conclusion 

Context – Physical aspects

- Barriers
 - Computer skills
 - Equipment

I often argue with my wife. We have a computer and that's in the living room. Everything that I do she can see and I don't like that. So I could only do that programme when she was gone.

Background Analysis Results Conclusion 

Context – Physical aspects

- Barriers
 - Computer skills
 - Equipment
- Positive experiences
 - Freedom


You could make up your own mind when you did something and for how long and what you do. And you're completely free to do what you want.

Background Analysis Results Conclusion 

Context – Physical aspects

- Barriers
 - Computer skills
 - Equipment
- Positive experiences
 - Freedom, anonymity and being yourself

It's not that easy to talk about this with other people. Therefore rather a programme that I can solve my own problems, than that I have to talk about these things with someone.

Background Analysis Results Conclusion 

Context – Physical aspects

- Barriers
 - Computer skills
 - Equipment
- Positive experiences
 - Freedom, anonymity, being yourself
 - Take back the overview (hardcopy improvement)

Background Analysis Results Conclusion 

Context - Social aspects

- Preference or need for support to
 - Create discipline

You haven't really got someone or something forcing you (...) I really need that. I either put it off or I just don't look at it (...) If you're in a bad mood then you really don't feel like it. Yes, that is motivation. Someone should say to me you have to do it.

Background Analysis Results Conclusion 

Context - Social aspects

- Preference or need for support to
 - Create discipline
 - Have personal contact

I need to be with people, I can't just be alone behind my computer screen.


Background Analysis Results Conclusion 

Context - Social aspects

- Preference or need for support to
 - Create discipline
 - Have personal contact
 - Receive feedback or go more in-depth

You reach a far deeper level than with a computer.

You can just ask a question like am I now on the right path. A confirmation.

Background Analysis Results Conclusion 

Context - Social aspects

- Need/preference for support by:
 - Nearly all non-completers
 - But also some completers
- Role of lay support in adherence/effectiveness?

Background Analysis Results Conclusion 

Context – Research aspects

- Research activities
 - Screening process (invitation letter, Internet questionnaire, face-to-face screening)
 - Monthly questionnaires (e-mail, Internet questionnaire, reminder e-mail, phone contact)
- Unintended impact

Background Analysis Results Conclusion 

Context – Research aspects

- Unintended impact
 - No invitation = no treatment

I just didn't think that it was so bad to get treatment for it. I had something like: go to the doctor about this, no need.

Background
Analysis
Results
Conclusion

Context – Research aspects

- Unintended impact
 - No invitation = no treatment
 - Research = engagement to adhere

If I take part then I do it wholeheartedly. In the name of science I owe this to them.

Background
Analysis
Results
Conclusion

Context – Research aspects

- Unintended impact
 - No invitation = no treatment
 - Research = engagement to adhere
 - Research = must be good

Background
Analysis
Results
Conclusion

Context – Research aspects

- Unintended impact
 - No invitation = no treatment
 - Research = engagement to adhere
 - Research = must be good
 - Questionnaire = CCBT

I thought that computer programme that is the questionnaire and then the doctor. So however, I read it I thought computer programme and doctor. That was it for me questionnaire and doctor.

Background
Analysis
Results
Conclusion

Context – Research aspects

- Unintended impact
 - No invitation = no treatment
 - Research = engagement to adhere
 - Research = must be good
 - Questionnaire = CCBT
 - Screening = consciousness-raising
 - Questionnaire = reflection on complaints
 - E-mail messages stimulate adherence

Background
Analysis
Results
Conclusion

Context – Research aspects

- Unintended impact
- Both completers and non-completers

Background
Analysis
Results
Conclusion

In conclusion

- CYL in current form does not work for large group
- Interviews point out difficulties in adherence and application of CYL

Background Analysis Results Conclusion



Discussion of findings



Is this what CYL users want?

- Improve CYL delivery through support

Background Analysis Results Conclusion



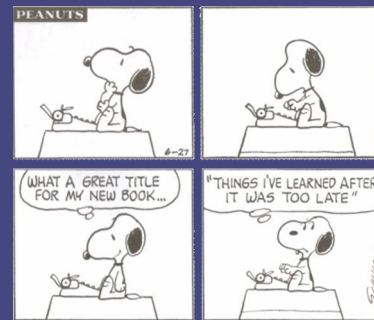
Discussion of findings

- Reflection on trial results and hypotheses
 - Improve CYL delivery through support
 - Improve CYL through tailoring
 - Adequate computer skills and equipment
 - Beware of unintended impact of research activities

Background Analysis Results Conclusion



The future of CCBT: learn from our study



Background Analysis Results Conclusion



Questions?

More information?
E-mail: S.Gerhards@maastrichtuniversity.nl

PhD Defence Esther de Graaf
October 23, Maastricht University

Background Analysis Results Conclusion

