

CETA: Common Elements Treatment Approach for the Effects of Trauma

Trauma and its effects.

Having traumatic experiences is very common. Most people will have at least one; many will have more. Everyone is affected by traumatic experiences; but the effects differ. There are differences in how severe, how long-lasting and how much they affect everyday life. When the distress is very intense or goes on too long, treatment that takes the trauma into account can be very helpful.

What is CETA?

CETA stands for Common Elements Treatment Approach. It is a cognitive behavioral approach that contains 8 different elements covered in modules. CETA has been shown to help with posttraumatic stress, anxiety, and depression in people affected by traumatic experiences. Element selection, order of the elements and how many sessions per element are based on the symptoms.

How does CETA work?

First there is an assessment to find out what the primary problems are. A standard checklist helps with choosing the primary clinical target for starting treatment. In every case, Safety is assessed at the beginning. If there is a safety concern, it is addressed at every session. CETA always has at least one Psychoeducation session (information about the presenting problem(s), their impact, and the treatment approach). Then the different elements, their order, and their “dose” are chosen based on what is most important to target. Usually, sessions cover one element at a time. Some elements may take more than one session. The clinical target and the modules can be adjusted as treatment goes along depending how treatment is working.

What are the common elements in CETA besides Safety and Psychoeducation?

<u>Relaxation</u>	Learning specific ways to calm the body down.
<u>Cognitive Coping</u>	Learning how thoughts are connected to feelings and behavior.
<u>Exposure-Trauma Memories</u>	Thinking about the trauma with thoughts and feelings in a safe place.
<u>Exposure-Live</u>	Facing up to situations in real life that are causing too much distress.
<u>Cognitive restructuring</u>	Learning how to change stuck thoughts that are keeping distress going.
<u>Behavioral Activation</u>	Planning on and participating in pleasurable activities.
<u>Problem Solving</u>	Learning a specific way to come up with realistic solutions to problems.

How long does CETA take?

Usually it takes between 8-12 sessions. Sometimes shorter, sometimes a bit longer depending on the individual and his/her presenting problems.