

## Interpersonal Psychotherapy (IPT)

Interpersonal Psychotherapy (IPT) is a short term, evidence-based treatment approach, which focuses on the patient's current life events, including social and interpersonal functioning, as a means of understanding and treating maladaptive symptoms. IPT was developed by the late Gerald Klerman, MD, and Myrna Weissman, PhD. IPT has shown efficacy in treating major depressive disorder as well as other psychiatric conditions. The initial sessions of an IPT treatment are devoted to information gathering and to clarifying the nature of the patient's illness and interpersonal experience. The patient's illness is explained through a medical model approach and then formulated in interpersonal terms. This phase concludes with the composition of the *interpersonal inventory* which is essentially a register of the key relationships in the individual's life. Within the interpersonal inventory, the patient's social functioning problems are conceptualized as belonging to one of the following four *problem areas*: Interpersonal Disputes, Role Transitions, Grief, or Interpersonal Deficits. The middle phase of the treatment is then devoted to addressing the social functioning problems experienced by the patient. The relevant *problem area* serves as a frame for choosing and implementing particular "here and now" techniques. The final sessions address the patient's accomplishments, feelings about termination, and review how the patient can apply learned skills independent of the therapist.

In applying IPT when caring for people with Cystic Fibrosis, the focus of mobilizing social support and improving interpersonal functioning might be relevant to help them find ways to feel less lonely or isolated; discuss issues around disclosure and practice ways to talk about their illness; and develop communication and problem solving skills that might help resolve interpersonal difficulties with family or friends who are integral to their ongoing care.

For more information about IPT and to learn about current trainings, please refer to the International Society of IPT (ISIPT).

<https://interpersonalpsychotherapy.org/>