



TREATMENT MODALITIES

URBAN INSTITUTE
OF MENTAL HEALTH

UIMH's Treatment Modality & Therapeutic Framework

it is not our standard practice to adhere strictly to mainstream standardized treatment modalities. We recognize that many of these modalities are rooted in colonization and predominantly Western world views and ideologies. We believe that these traditional frameworks may not always align with or fully serve the holistic well-being and unique experiences of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) clients.

In lieu of strictly following these standardized practices, we prioritize treatment approaches that are grounded in thorough research. We are especially attuned to, and incorporate, indigenous and native ideologies and treatment approaches. We strive for a therapeutic environment that respects and values cultural diversity, ensuring that our methods resonate more deeply and effectively with the varied experiences of our clients.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

a widely practiced form of psychotherapy that focuses on identifying and challenging negative thought patterns and behaviors in order to treat a variety of mental health disorders and improve emotional well-being. Rooted in the principle that our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are interconnected, CBT helps individuals recognize maladaptive thinking patterns, understand their impact on emotions and behaviors, and develop healthier coping strategies, thereby facilitating lasting change and improved mental health outcomes.

Racial Trauma Therapy

refers to therapeutic approaches and interventions that specifically address the emotional, psychological, and physical effects of racial trauma. Racial trauma, sometimes referred to as race-based traumatic stress, emerges from experiences of racial bias, discrimination, violence, or institutional racism. Such trauma can manifest as symptoms similar to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), such as hypervigilance, flashbacks, and avoidance behaviors. Racial trauma therapy aims to validate the lived experiences of individuals affected by racial trauma, provide coping mechanisms, and foster resilience. Culturally competent therapists, familiar with the nuances of racial and ethnic experiences, are vital for this therapy, as they can provide a safe space for clients to process and heal from traumatic racial experiences.

Behavioral Activation

is a therapeutic approach designed to address depression by helping individuals understand and modify the link between their behavior, emotions, and thoughts. Rooted in the idea that depression results from a decrease in positive reinforcing activities, BA encourages clients to engage more in valued activities and reduce behaviors that contribute to depression. Through identifying life values and setting related goals, clients are guided to increase experiences that bring them joy, purpose, and connection, while decreasing avoidance and isolation behaviors. The emphasis is on changing behaviors to shift mood and broader emotional experiences.

Insight-Oriented Therapy

Insight-oriented therapy, often referred to as psychodynamic or psychoanalytic therapy, is grounded in the belief that unconscious processes influence our current behavior, emotions, and thought patterns. By helping clients gain deeper insight into these unconscious processes and past experiences, particularly those stemming from early childhood, they can better understand the root causes of their present-day challenges.

The therapist's role in this approach is to interpret and reflect on the client's feelings, thoughts, dreams, and patterns, facilitating the client's self-awareness. As clients become more aware of these underlying patterns, they can then work to address and modify them, leading to symptom relief and personal growth. Insight-oriented therapy places a strong emphasis on the therapeutic relationship, valuing the transference (the feelings a client projects onto the therapist) and countertransference (the therapist's emotional response to the client) as important tools for understanding the client's inner world.

Neuroeducation & Psychoeducation

Neuroeducation bridges the gap between brain science and education. It's the process of teaching clients about the neurological and physiological processes underlying their emotions, thoughts, and behaviors. Psychoeducation involves teaching clients about their mental health conditions, including the nature of their disorder, its causes, and treatment strategies.

Exposure Therapy

Exposure Therapy is grounded in the idea that people avoid situations or thoughts that make them anxious or remind them of traumatic events. While this avoidance might provide short-term relief, it reinforces the fear or anxiety in the long term. Exposure Therapy involves confronting these fears in a controlled, therapeutic environment, with the goal of reducing the intense emotional reactions associated with them.

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)

DBT focuses on teaching patients skills to cope with emotional instability, improve interpersonal effectiveness, tolerate distress, and be mindful and present in their current situation. The "dialectical" aspect emphasizes the integration of opposites, particularly acceptance and change. DBT combines individual therapy sessions with group skills training, and often includes between-session coaching, aiming to provide a supportive and collaborative environment where patients can learn and apply practical life skills.

Family Systems Therapy

is a therapeutic approach that views an individual's challenges within the larger context of their family system. Rooted in the idea that an individual's behavior is both influenced by and influences their family dynamics, this therapy addresses relationships, patterns, and communication within the family unit. Therapists help families identify their strengths and weaknesses, reshape structures, and develop healthier coping mechanisms. By improving interactions and understanding within the family, the therapy aims to enhance emotional support and foster resolution of conflicts.