
S2C15. The sixth pillar - Insight

Psychological insight simply put means awareness of the rationality or irrationality of one's thoughts. Insight is important in the maintenance of and recovery from several mental disorders. Lack of insight can signify how long the recovery process can take. As an analogy, consider an alcoholic who goes to a counselor to give up drinking. If he has the insight that he has a drinking problem, he is more likely to put in more effort at tolerating the discomfort that comes with not drinking. However, if the person does not have sufficient insight, the person may not believe he has a problem and may only work on things that are easy in the recovery process. The moment something gets difficult, the person may give up either citing it as too difficult or unnecessary. In this example, low insight may lead to lesser effort which may steamroll recovery, whereas high insight may lead to better effort, and may aid the recovery process.

A person with ROCD knows that his thoughts are irrational. But when he is triggered, the thoughts seem so real that he begins to believe in them and does compulsions to make the thoughts go away. If he begins to believe that his thoughts are not irrational, he can be said to have low insight. He may think that others are wrong. He may consider needing to get his girlfriend's text all the time to know where she is as a rational requirement, in the name of love. But that may be an erroneous belief. Depending on their insight, sufferers decide whether their behavior is rational or irrational (Abramowitz & Jacoby, 2015). Depending upon the insight, the speed of recovery may also vary.

In the Worksheets file, PT5 is the Brown's Assessment of Beliefs Scale (BABS; Eisen et al., 1998). Complete it to know your levels of insight. Low scores indicate low insight. This score needs to be raised through cognitive restructuring for improving insight.

In the next chapter, we shall explore the seventh pillar of recovery, which is compassion.

To-Do:

Complete PT5 - BABS