



Books on Prescription

A summary of the self help Books on Prescription that can be obtained from your Trafford GP

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About the 'Overcoming' Series

Ten of the 33 books on the list are from the 'Overcoming' series published by Robinson. Books in this series use the cognitive-behavioural approach to provide easy-to-understand strategies for helping readers to overcome a variety of psychological disorders. The authors are all practising clinicians who have adapted the latest cognitive-behavioural techniques into a specifically tailored self-help programme focusing on a particular type of mental health problem.

Each book is divided into two sections. Part One explains the disorder and its possible causes and discusses various ways in which it can impact on people's lives. Part Two is the treatment manual, with step-by-step strategies and techniques for recognising, confronting and dealing with the problem. The books also provide helpful advice on preventing setbacks and relapse.

Brief Descriptions of Books on the List

Anger

1: Overcoming Irritability and Anger

Author: Will Davies

This book is a self-help manual for people who find that they are constantly becoming irritable and angry. It explains why such bouts occur and what can

be done to avoid angry over-reaction. Following a cognitive approach, the book aims to help people to control their temper and to handle potentially dangerous situations effectively and non-aggressively. With the help of real life case studies, the author describes what happens when people get angry and why some people become angry more easily than others. The book encourages the reader to keep an 'anger diary' and then to analyse any angry incidents that occur. It shows the reader how to look at situations differently so that anger occurs less frequently, and it also explains how anger can be controlled so that it does not lead to aggression or violence.

2: Managing Anger

Author: Gael Lindenfield

Gael Lindenfield stresses the fact that anger is a natural emotion response to threat, hurt, frustration and loss. It can be a vital means of releasing a build-up of emotional pressure but can also be a destructive force. If uncontrolled it can lead to violence; if repressed it can lead to bitterness, stress and guilt. Both extremes can damage health. The book explains the effects of anger on our minds and bodies, and suggests ways of dealing both with our own anger and that of other people. Using many engaging examples of everyday situations, the author suggests strategies for using anger in a positive and non-destructive way. Lindenfield is well-known for her books on self-esteem and assertiveness and has developed a model she calls Assertive Anger (which is assertive but responsible and non-violent). She shows how, by using specific strategies, people can learn to deal with frustration and threat in a positive way. The tone of the book is positive, optimistic, and understanding of those who have found it difficult to control their angry feelings in the past.

Anorexia Nervosa

3: Anorexia Nervosa: A Survival Guide for Families, Friends and Sufferers

Author: Janet Treasure

This is a clearly written guide for people with anorexia, and their families. It focuses on understanding anorexia, and the effects that the condition can have on patients and their families, before describing practical steps that can be taken to help recovery. Acknowledging that anorexia leads to strong emotions, including fear, the book attempts to overcome misunderstanding by providing answers to questions often asked by patients, their families and friends. The

book deals with the recognition of the condition, issues of blame and denial, and helpful and unhelpful responses of family members to anorexia. Nutritional aspects and the health hazards of starvation are also addressed. The book provides a wealth of sensible information but it is an educational resource rather than a step-by-step treatment guide.

4: Overcoming Anorexia Nervosa

Author: Christopher Freeman

This book offers a complete self-help recovery programme for overcoming anorexia. It incorporates insights from cognitive behavioural therapy, which has now been demonstrated to be highly effective in helping to overcome conditions such as anxiety, depression, panic attacks, and eating disorders. The book provides descriptions of the eating habits and the underlying psychological and social problems that may result in anorexia. The treatment strategies suggested by the author focus on reducing symptoms by changing negative beliefs and thought patterns. There are practical guidelines for uncovering faulty thinking patterns and then changing these. This self-help guide is written expressly for those who want to tackle their problem on their own, and to take control of their own recovery without formal treatment. However, the author is also careful to guide the reader towards additional sources of professional help, and the physical dangers associated with the condition are duly emphasised.

Anxiety

5: Overcoming Anxiety

Author: Helen Kennerley

This book explains why anxiety is a major problem for some people and not for others. It describes the various forms that anxiety problems may take, including panic attacks and phobias, and then guides the reader through a series of steps to enable them to overcome problem fears and anxieties of all kinds. The step-by-step plan follows the cognitive behavioural approach. The book includes many illustrative quotes from people who have had anxiety problems, allowing readers to realise that many others have shared similar experiences and have overcome their difficulties.

Assertiveness (Women)

6: A Woman in Your Own Right

Author: Anne Dickson

This is a classic text on assertiveness and self-confidence, written specifically for women. It has been widely recommended and widely read for the past 20 years and many women have found inspiration and strength in the book. Anne Dickson defines assertiveness as the art of clear, honest and direct communication. An assertive approach builds self-esteem and strengthens the ability to make choices by helping to manage the anxiety and stress of communicating in difficult situations. Instead of being governed by the need to either please or blame others, assertiveness involves taking responsibility for our own feelings and behaviour. The book helps the reader to recognise her rights, including – the right to be treated with respect; the right to express feelings, opinions and values; the right to say 'yes' and 'no'; and the right not to accept responsibility for other people's problems.

Binge-Eating Disorder & Bulimia Nervosa**7: Bulimia Nervosa & Binge Eating****Author: Peter Cooper**

This is a self-help guide for people with bulimia or binge eating disorder. It contains a good deal of valuable educational material, based on recent research, as well as a comprehensive self-treatment cognitive-behavioural programme that follows tried and tested clinician-directed procedures. Detailed strategies are described for the self-control of bingeing and purging. In common with many other such books, strict adherence to the complete therapy programme described will demand considerable commitment on the part of the reader. Incidentally, the book includes important information and warnings about the dangers associated with repeated vomiting (including due emphasis on the need for the person to brush the teeth after vomiting).

8: Overcoming Binge Eating**Author: Chris Fairburn**

This book presents a self-help version of a clinical programme that has been shown to be highly effective in a number of clinical trials. Based on the assumption that bulimic patients have lost control over their eating, the cognitive behavioural programme is intended to 'hand control back to the patient'. There is a strong educational component, with the reader being helped to understand the links between food deprivation, hunger, craving for food, and bingeing. The

programme addresses the wide range of problems encountered in bulimic patients, concerns about body shape and weight, perfectionism, 'all or none' thinking and low self-esteem. Patients are helped to monitor their own eating and purging behaviour, and to maintain a regular eating pattern. Deliberate attempts at dieting are held to maintain the problem, so efforts are made to eliminate 'inappropriate' forms of dieting (especially long periods of abstinence from food). Advice is given on the identification of personal binge triggers and on behavioural techniques that the person can use when tempted to binge. The final part of the book deals with 'relapse prevention' – techniques that can be used to maintain an avoidance of binge eating and purging.

9: Getting Better Bit(e) by Bit(e)

Authors: Ulrike Schmidt and Janet Treasure

The efficacy of this self-help book has been demonstrated in clinical trials. The book empowers people with eating disorders (principally, bulimia and binge eating disorder) to take control and tackle their eating difficulties by themselves. Easy to read, and written in such a way that it first engages and then motivates the reader, the book quotes many real-life examples of specific problems faced by those with eating disorders. Reflecting findings from recent research, the book provides detailed step-by-step advice for dealing with bulimia, concentrating on the key behavior changes necessary for the person to achieve a happier and more fulfilled life. Theory is closely interwoven with suggested practice. In addition to focusing on eating problems, the book also addresses a range of psychological and lifestyle issues that often contribute to the onset and maintenance of bulimia. Issues covered in depth include: coping with binges, cravings and urges; the health risks of dieting; achieving optimal weight; giving up vomiting, laxatives and diuretics; healing the wounds of childhood; correcting faulty thinking; being appropriately assertive; avoiding reliance on drink and drugs; and dealing with problems in relationship and work. Advice is also given on how to cope with setbacks.

The book prescribes a series of practical self-help tasks which provide a comprehensive treatment programme. Following the programme through to the end demands considerable commitment by the client, but many readers have found even the partial completion of the programme very useful.

Depression

10: Overcoming Depression

Author: Paul Gilbert

This self-help guide provides step-by-step strategies for sufferers of depression, using cognitive therapy techniques. There has now been a steady stream of evidence supporting the effectiveness of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) techniques in the treatment of depression. The techniques are relatively simple and can be self-administered by intelligent, literate and motivated people (however, it's worth noting that depression itself can undermine motivation). The idea is that depression (as well as anxiety, anger and other negative emotions) is often triggered and maintained by negative automatic thoughts which are over generalised, pessimistic and unrealistic. CBT enables this person to identify such thoughts, to devise more realistic alternatives and then to substitute these for the damaging, depressing thought patterns. Overcoming Depression sets out to explain CBT techniques and to guide the reader to use such strategies following practical step-by-step guidance. The book is very readable and sympathetic in tone and includes numerous case examples.

11: Mind Over Mood

Authors: Dennis Greenberger and Christine Padesky

Mind Over Mood became a classic text soon after it was published, and it may well be the book most frequently recommended to clients by those working in mental health (both in the US and in the UK). Although the book is classified here under the category 'Depression', it does in fact have a much wider focus. It provides a hands-on workbook for clients suffering from depression, panic attacks, anxiety, eating disorders, substance abuse, and relationship problems. In each case the approach used is that of cognitive therapy. Numerous case examples and written exercises help clients to understand and use these methods, and the book includes many sample worksheets and blank worksheets. The first Chapter guides the reader to develop introspective skills and new perspectives about everyday predicaments. This familiarises readers with the cognitive approach and allows them to discover their own problematic thought patterns. The remaining Chapters focus on specific emotional problems and provide clear, easy, step-by-step instructions for identifying distorted problematic thoughts and replacing them with more realistic and more positive thoughts.

In a foreword to the book, written by Aaron Beck, one of the pioneers of cognitive therapy, the authors are commended for their "vision and innovation" as well as their ability to teach what they practice.

12: The Feeling Good Handbook

Author: David Burns

This is a practical manual that helps those who are depressed to understand how their thinking processes have contributed to their depression and how, by changing their thinking, they will be able to exert some control over their mood. It begins with an easy to read overview of cognitive theory before discussing the various approaches to treating depression. The book then introduces a number of practice therapeutic techniques based on the cognitive theory of depression. Practice exercises enable readers to uncover any errors of thinking that may have contributed to their feelings of depression (for example, a tendency to under emphasise achievements and over emphasise failures). They are then helped to correct their faulty thought patterns using cognitive strategies that are taught and reinforced through self-managed practical assignments. The book provides down-to-earth explanations and engaging examples from everyday life and clinical practice. This book is widely recommended (as are several other books by this author – see books 25 and 28).

Gambling

13: Overcoming Compulsive Gambling

Author: Alex Blazsynski

This book explains how gambling problems develop. Some people become 'hooked' on gambling and suffer withdrawal symptoms similar to those experienced by people with other addictions. The author, who has researched the issue for over twenty years, presents evidence that the 'high' experienced by compulsive gamblers comes from the release of endorphins, and that the euphoria and pain-relief offered by natural morphine-like substances 'reinforce' the gambling behaviour. The book then describes various approaches to treatment, and considers whether abstinence or controlled gambling is the most appropriate treatment goal. The second part of the book presents a complete self-help programme for compulsive gamblers, based on cognitive therapy techniques.

General

14: How To Cope When The Going Gets Tough

Author: Windy Dryden & Jack Gordon

Everyone has crisis points in their life, and whereas some people are good at coping with these challenges, others would benefit from learning new strategies

for dealing with problems such as criticism and rejection. This book teaches practical, confidence-building strategies that focus on the stresses and challenges of everyday living. It describes techniques that can help the reader to identify personal vulnerability areas and to handle their problems in a rational, realistic way. It advises on how to deal with rejection and how to express disapproval and annoyance in a healthy way. Self-assessment exercises are included.

16: Overcoming Mood Swings

Jan Scott

This book offers insights and practical help for those who are seriously disturbed by extreme high or low spirits. Although everyone is aware of changes in their mood, some people are very distressed by changes, either because the mood swings happen too frequently or because they are very intense and are accompanied by other symptoms of depression or mania. *Overcoming Mood Swings* is a self-help manual that applies tried and tested cognitive techniques to allow people first to identify and then to manage their mood swings more

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effectively, and to regain more stable and comfortable emotional levels.

Background information on depression and mania is also included. The book presents a complete self-help program including self-tests and monitoring sheets.

17: Understanding Obsessions & Compulsions

Author: Frank Tallis

There is now increasing awareness that obsessions and compulsive behaviour are problems for many thousands of people. Many of these are embarrassed by their symptoms and reluctant to seek help from their doctor. For those who do ask for help, specialist therapeutic resources are often scarce and available only for those with very severe OCD. This book attempts to provide a comprehensive self-help guide for those with mild to moderate obsessions and compulsions. It explains the principles of anxiety reduction and provides self-treatment instructions in easy-to-understand language. The approach is cognitive behavioural. Problems covered include compulsive checking, washing and

hoarding as well as obsessional thoughts and worry. The book includes self assessment measures and advice on the detailed monitoring of symptoms. It

also includes sections on obsessional personality and on the depression that often results from obsessional symptoms.

18: Overcoming Panic

Author: Derrick Silove and Vijaya Manicavasagar

This book was developed as a self-help guide for overcoming and preventing panic attacks and the associated problem of agoraphobia. The authors offer a step-by-step management program based on cognitive behavioural therapy. The first part of the book describes the nature and origin of panic attacks and agoraphobia and considers the various ways in which these conditions affect and limit people's lives. The various approaches used to treat these conditions are then described. The second part of this book constitutes a self-help manual. Readers are shown how to recognise triggers of anxiety and panic and how to control panic attacks by changing unhelpful thinking styles and dealing with physical sensations. All of the information is presented in an accessible way and the book includes advice on maintaining progress and preventing relapse.

19: Panic Attacks

Author: Christine Ingham

This book provides many useful insights into the terror and misery of panic attacks by an author who has a personal history of such attacks. The book provides reassurance, insight and practical help. The author considers the nature of panic attacks and different causes of panic attacks before offering sensible guidance on what a person can do (and think) when having an attack. There is also a sensitive presentation of steps that can be taken to learn how to avoid a recurrence, and a section on how to help others with panic attacks.

20: Overcoming Traumatic Stress

Authors: Claudia Herbert & Ann Wetmore

This book applies proven techniques of cognitive behavioural therapy to help people who have experienced traumatic stress, their families and those who work with them to overcome the physical, mental, and emotional reactions to such stress. It is a self-help guide aimed at helping people to understand their reactions of traumatic stress. Step by step guides to recovery help people to recognise, accept and manage their longer-term reactions to a traumatic experience such as a road traffic accident, an industrial accident, or rape. It advises people on how to accept the trauma itself and then to let go and move on.

21: Overcoming Low Self-Esteem

Melanie Fennell

This is a highly readable and useful book for those who are oppressed by self doubt, self-criticism, social anxiety and other problems associated with low self esteem. It enables those with low self-esteem to understand their condition, and break the habit of thinking about themselves in negative ways by applying cognitive therapy techniques in a simple and logical programme for change. Many real-life examples are used to illustrate the nature and consequences of self-destructive thinking. The book aims to help the reader understand how a negative view of oneself can be changed to a view that is more positive and self accepting. An initial self-assessment enables readers to measure their own self esteem and to identify triggers to bouts of self-criticism. Strategies for overcoming these triggers are then described. The book provides a complete self-help programme for combating negativity and moving towards greater self esteem and a more positive mental attitude.

22: Self-Esteem for Women

Author: Lynda Field

This guide shows how women can increase their self-esteem and change their lives by using specific techniques, including visualisations and affirmations. These are presented in a five-step programme for personal change. The book demonstrates how women can examine their personal history to discover and change their negative self-beliefs. Clear guidelines are provided that can enable readers to believe in themselves, to let go of guilt, to have successful personal relationships and to become empowered in the home and the workplace.

23: Self-Esteem

Author: Gael Lindenfield

This book provides a practical programme to increase self-esteem. It aims to help the reader to feel more confident, self-reliant and energised. Poor self esteem is seen to be the root of many problems. It can sabotage relationships and careers and can hold people back from reaching their full potential. The book examines the origins of low self-esteem and then presents simple, practical exercises that allow readers to develop strategies for change. Practical tips are given for breaking out of self-imposed traps, for developing a realistic perspective and for coping with situations that threaten to undermine self confidence.

The book also shows the reader how to recover from deep-seated hurt and how to change self-destructive habits. The author maintains that overcoming self-doubt and building self-assurance can improve general wellbeing and create an enduring sense of self-fulfilment.

24: 10 Days to Great Self-Esteem

Author: David Burns

Written in a clear and understanding style, this book helps readers to identify the causes of negative mood changes and slumps and to develop a more positive outlook on life. Following a cognitive approach the book first explains how negative feelings like guilt, anger, and depression are not the direct consequence of bad things that happen to people, but stem from the way that people think about these events. By changing thoughts, therefore, the person is able to control feelings. The book focuses on the problems of those who doubt themselves, criticise themselves and have a negative view of themselves. The book contains a lot of information, but there are also many practical exercises, each one carefully explained. The book is structured in such a way that (as the title suggests) the reader who engages fully with the book may achieve, and learn how to maintain, self-confidence and an optimistic outlook in 10 days!

25: Breaking Free

Authors: Carolyn Ainscough and Kay Toon

This is a practice up to date self-help book for survivors of child sexual abuse. It investigates all the lasting effects of child sexual abuse, which may include guilt and shame, depression and anxiety, eating disorders, fear of relationships and sexual problems. The book includes frank and moving accounts by survivors to demonstrate the range of experiences and feelings involved. The authors (two British clinical psychologists with many years of experience in the field) address many sensitive issues in a sympathetic manner. The book offers a positive and optimistic approach and provides survivors with strategies for coping with the potentially very upsetting and painful process of breaking free from their past. Many abuse survivors have reported this book to be especially valuable.

26: The Courage to Heal

Authors: Ellen Bass and Laura Davies

Drawing on the authors' personal experience and extensive clinical involvement, this book is aimed at women who have been victims of child sexual abuse (although men who are survivors of such abuse may also find the book helpful). It offers advice on coming to terms with the past while moving positively into the future, and provides an explanation of the healing process, first-person accounts of recovery, and practical suggestions derived from the authors' work with hundreds of survivors. The purpose of the book is to infuse survivors with hope

and courage to embark on a healing process. It has an inspirational focus, but also guides readers through various stages of healing, helping them to recognise and understand the different ways in which they have already coped with the abuse and then suggesting a range of alternative strategies that might promote more effective coping. The reader is shown how to re-channel energy that might previously have been spent on self-blame and feelings of worthlessness into working towards a healthy recovery. The book also includes a section for partners, helping them understand the emotional and sexual problems faced by survivors.

27: Overcoming Social Anxiety & Shyness

Author: Gillian Butler

This well-written, very readable book, contains many real-life examples and provides detailed instructions on effective cognitive behavioural techniques for overcoming social phobia and shyness. Those who lack confidence when they are with other people, or feel embarrassment when meeting new people, are likely to benefit from reading this book. It is suitable for those with crippling, entrenched problems right through to those with mild feelings of discomfort and social shyness. The first part of the book explains social anxiety, its origins and what actually happens when social anxiety strikes. The second part provides a complete practical guide to overcoming these feelings, changing thinking patterns, reducing self-consciousness and building confidence. The author explains how to deal with upsetting thoughts, overcome avoidance and manage symptoms of anxiety through relaxation, distraction and panic management. Finally, the third part provides a number of "optional extras" such as an explanation of the long-term effects of being bullied and a guide to relaxation.

28: The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook

Martha Davis, et al.

This is a workbook designed to teach the most effective stress management and relaxation techniques and exercises. The book is currently in its fifth edition and now offers a number of new techniques for challenging problems in the area of stress management. There is a chapter on "worry control" to help people manage their mental stress and a section on coping with anger-provoking situations. A chapter on 'thought stopping' shows readers how to stop and then neutralise distressing thoughts. The book includes many real-life examples and practice exercises.

29: Managing Stress: Teach Yourself

Authors: Terry Looker and Olga Gregson

This practice guide to stress management advises on assessing and identifying stress, and on developing a personal stress management plan. Packed with good, easy to understand advice, it is based on the 'Stresswise' programme developed in the 1980's as a result of the author's research on the link between stress and coronary heart disease. An earlier book was revised many times and then completely rewritten to produce the current volume. This begins with a clear explanation of the nature, origins and consequences of stress. Advice is then given on relaxation and ways of adjusting to the demands of daily life. The main core of the book is a comprehensive self-treatment programme designed to enable readers to manage pressures and demands more effectively. A 'stress management planner' included in the book allows the reader to develop a personally tailored programme. It is suggested that the maintenance and enhancement of self-esteem is a key factor in managing stress. Thus developing and maintaining positive self-beliefs will enhance people's ability to cope and to adapt to the pressures and demands of life.

30 How to Stop Worrying

Author: Frank Tallis

Worry is discussed as a natural way in which the brain warns that something is wrong and needs to be dealt with. It becomes a problem when things get out of hand, and the worrying starts to spoil a person's health and enjoyment of life.

The author explains how readers can make worry work for them. A problem solving approach is taken, enabling people to avoid stress and anxiety by controlling worry, understanding their fears, and facing life calmly. The book includes detailed instructions in problem solving and also discusses how to deal with setbacks and how to cope when the worry doesn't stop.