



# ELKANAH COUNSELLING

[www.elkanahcounselling.com.au](http://www.elkanahcounselling.com.au)

Spring 2007

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**Reception Hours:**  
10.00 am – 4.00 pm  
Monday – Friday

**Consultation Hours:**  
8.00 am – 8.00 pm  
Monday – Friday

8.00 am – 12.00 pm  
Saturday

Consultations by  
appointment only.

After hours: Elkanah  
does not operate a  
locum service. If you  
need crisis assistance  
Lifeline can be  
contacted on 131114.

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**EDDY  
KLEINHANS**  
M.A.P.S.



## Introducing: Eddy Kleinhans

Eddy Kleynhans has recently joined our team as a Registered Psychologist (Vic.). He has been a member of the Australian Psychological Society since 1986. Eddy is an ex-member of The Dutch Psychological Society and worked in Amsterdam as a psychologist with substance abuse clients. His second language is Dutch.

For the last 20 years, he has been providing Employee Assistance Programs (EAP's) to organizations and is an ex-President of EAPA (Employee Assistance Professionals Association).

He has been practicing as a psychologist for the last 25 years with extensive experience in working with clients from diverse cultural backgrounds. His clinical practice encompasses trauma counselling, Critical Incident Stress Debriefing, career counselling and guidance, Workcover, substance abuse, phobias, marital problems, mediation, interpersonal conflicts, eating problems, time-management, consultations with management and stress management.

Eddy has been writing psychological assessments for the last 24 years.

He adopts an eclectic therapeutic method but his main focus is on Cognitive Behaviour and Solution Focused Therapies.

He is married, is a keen proponent of a healthy life style and is involved in his local parish.

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# COGNITIVE BEHAVIOUR THERAPY

*Lyn Shand .*

Medicare has been providing rebates for seeing a psychologist as of 1<sup>st</sup> November 2006. It enables the client to claim \$75 per visit for at least 6 sessions provided that their doctor has done a Mental Health Plan with them and written a referral. The forms of treatment under this scheme that are being recommended are for the psychologist to use focused strategies. Most people don't know what that means. Therefore it is useful to explain what is meant by cognitive behaviour therapy, as this is one of the focused strategies on our list. We can also use psycho-education, relaxation strategies, skills training and interpersonal therapy. The latter are more self-explanatory than cognitive therapy.

In short, cognitive behaviour therapy is about changing our thoughts when they are creating problems for us. This is because what we think about what happens to us causes how we feel. In other words it is not what happens to us that causes us the problems but rather what we think about what happens to us.

It is our perceptions that create our own reality. I see this constantly when counselling couples or families. Each member of the family has a different view of what it was like growing up in that particular family.

Activating events lead to beliefs, which in turn lead to consequences, OR situations lead to thoughts and beliefs, which then lead to feelings and behaviour. Often such unhelpful thoughts and beliefs lead to extreme feelings and unhelpful behaviour that block the person's goals in life.

Therefore as psychologists we work with people to reflect on their unhelpful thoughts and beliefs and see that by changing these, they are much more likely to achieve their positive goals. It also helps the client to accept themselves as a human being like the rest of us.

This form of therapy can be used for depression, anxiety and for those who have trouble with anger.

It looks at the "shoulds", demands we put on ourselves or on others. It also looks at how we may catastrophise about real or imagined situations. Clients need to look for the evidence that what they think is accurate and explore alternative explanations or points of view.

The client may also be given some questionnaires re depression or anxiety to see to what extent these are a problem. Obviously if extremely depressed or anxious, some people may also need medication as well as the counselling.

Usually the psychologist sets some homework to help the client to understand how their thoughts are causing them problems or they may be asked to carry out a task, do some assertiveness exercises or write up some positive thought cards – whatever seems most useful for that particular client.

I do not always use cognitive behaviour therapy as I believe that other treatment options will be more appropriate for some clients or in some sessions. However, as it is one of the forms of focused strategies listed by the Australian Psychological Society and Medicare, I felt it important to give people some insight into what it means.

Lyn Shand – Psychologist & Family Therapist

# GENERALISED ANXIETY DISORDER

When worry and anxiety are pervasive and debilitating

*Kerryl Beissel.*

It is part of our normal makeup as human beings to have some fear and anxiety as a natural response to danger and threat. For example, feelings of fear and the associated response in the body can prepare or help us to avoid or escape physical danger. The apprehensive and fearful emotions and the bodily response are known as anxiety.

What we think of as “worry” is the “thinking” associated with anxiety, which can involve thinking about feared situations and imagined future scenarios and trying to find ways to avoid or cope with them. Most people worry at times, for example about specific situations such as forthcoming exams or a complex workplace situation. Most are able to control or stop the worrying, or move on into constructive problem-solving and action. The worry does not pervade their lives.

By contrast, Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD) is distinguished by **excessive** anxiety and worry, which is pervasive and interferes with a person’s day-to-day functioning. The DSM-IV includes the criteria that the worry and anxiety occur on more days than not, for a period of at least 6 months. The anxiety and worry is usually in relation to a range of issues which may have a realistic aspect to them, though the content of the worry thoughts can seem extreme – especially to others. The worry and anxiety is not connected to only one type of event, or one type of object as in a phobia.

The person finds it difficult to control the worry. Other characteristics can include restlessness, being easily fatigued, difficulty with concentration, muscle tension and sleep disturbance.

People with GAD may not always identify their worry as being excessive, but may see it as normal in the face of what seem to them to be “worrying circumstances”. Even when people recognise that it is their worry thinking itself which is the problem they may find it difficult to directly control the worry or change the level of anxiety they experience. It does not help when others tell them “not to stress so much” or contradict the content of their worries directly, for example by saying “That (feared scenario) isn’t going to happen!”

So, what can help individuals with Generalised Anxiety Disorder? First of all it is important to recognise that there is a problem and to get professional assistance for diagnosis and treatment. Psychologists with expertise in counselling and therapy for anxiety disorders can help. A visit to a GP can also be a good place to start as the GP can provide a general check-up, including of physical symptoms, and may provide a referral to a psychologist. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) can be particularly effective for GAD. A psychologist can assist with developing techniques and strategies so that the individual can alter the behaviour, thinking patterns and underlying beliefs

about life which have been contributing to and maintaining the worry and anxiety. Individuals with GAD may believe the worry helps them in some way, for example that it helps them to prevent an unwanted outcome. A part of the process is to understand and identify that the worry-thinking is mostly useless or harmful, rather than a good problem-solving or harm-minimisation technique. Once the difference between worrying and problem-solving is clear, the individual can learn good problem-solving strategies. Thinking patterns, such as a tendency to expect the worst scenario in situations, can also be addressed.

Techniques for generally reducing and managing anxiety often prove helpful for GAD. For example, relaxation techniques which can be learnt with a psychologist or in other settings such

as classes, can make a difference to anxiety levels if practised regularly. General physical exercise undertaken regularly at moderate levels, similar to the usual recommendations for basic fitness, can also help. Both relaxation and general fitness activities can assist with the physical symptoms of GAD such as muscle tension.

For some people with GAD, structure and routine in their daily lives seems to be beneficial. Life balance, including the inclusion of pleasurable activities in daily life, adequate rest and nutrition, is important too as additional stress and tiredness can exacerbate the problem.

There are many ways in which a person with Generalised Anxiety Disorder can improve their emotional wellbeing and day-to-day functioning. It is important to become informed and to identify Generalised Anxiety Disorder, then to seek appropriate assistance and support.

Kerryl Beissel, Psychologist

### ***STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP***

You may be wondering what has happened to Peter Sale, who we introduced to you in the last newsletter. While we are sad to see him go, we are very happy to announce that Peter has relocated to London. Peter became a valued part of the Elkanah team very quickly and we wish him and his family every happiness and success for the future.

# ***ELKANAH NEWSLETTER***

## ***Feedback & change of details***

We appreciate any information and feedback that can help us in providing our newsletter and other services to you.

Please complete the following if:

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### **BROCHURE REQUESTS - Number required:**

Each newsletter contains articles written by members of our team of psychologists. Let us know of any of topics that you would particularly like to know more about, anonymously if you wish. Most of our psychologists are also available to present talks and seminars. Please contact reception on 9817 5654 for enquiries.

Comments:

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO: ELKANAH COUNSELLING, 1 WHITEHORSE ROAD BALWYN 3103