What is the self-management approach for ME/CFS?

This approach is about empowering you as an individual. Through understanding your condition and learning skills to help stabilise and improve symptom management and daily function, and overall quality of life.

We can help you understand your diagnosis, from a body systems and dysregulation perspective, understand energy demand and supply, and post exertional malaise (PEM). We offer suggestions around activity management, movement and functional activity for everyday life, quality rest, communication, sleep, and diet and nutrition.

The ME/CFS individual sessions factsheet:

This factsheet aims to give you information about ME/CFS 1:1 sessions so you know what to expect should you choose this option.

What is ME/CFS?

ME/CFS is a long-term fluctuating condition that causes symptoms affecting many body systems. People with ME/CFS experience persistent fatigue, which is very different from normal tiredness. People with ME/CFS can experience a variety of other symptoms connected with many of the body's systems becoming dysregulated, due to a variety of factors. Physical and/or mental activities can lead to a significant increase in symptoms making it difficult to function as usual.

From our point of view:

- Your symptoms are real.
- We understand that fatigue and related symptoms are having a negative impact in your life, stopping you from doing things you need and want to do.
- You are ready to make changes to reduce the negative impact of fatigue and related symptoms in your life.

The aim is to support you to develop your understanding of ME/CFS and evidence-based self-management strategies.

What we do:

At your initial appointment we will explore the bigger picture of life with ME/CFS, its impact, your knowledge, expectations, beliefs, and goals.

Discussions will include supporting you to make steps to improve your function, wellbeing and quality of life.

We will agree 3-6 sessions of 30min in duration. These can be in person, by telephone or virtually.

Individual sessions involve focussed education and learning skills and strategies that can help if regularly practised.

There will be gaps between sessions so you can practise putting knowledge and skills into practice.

We will provide information, so you do not have to remember everything, but you might find it useful to have a folder or notebook.

ME/CFS knowledge and strategies include:

Understanding the body's systems, energy supply and demand and the ME/CFS diagnosis
Exploring the impact of ME/CFS in my life
Goal setting and returning to value-based activity
Acceptance concept, and skills
Pacing and managing activity
Understanding fatigue and quality rest
Movement knowledge and skills
Relaxation skills
Mindfulness practice
Sleep knowledge and skills
Stress management and the influence of thoughts and feelings
Communication skills and pain
Managing the worst times, setbacks or crashes in energy

What is expected of me?

- You will need to identify the most important things for you to focus on and set a goal.
- Be prepared for each session, having looked at any resources you have been sent.
- Make time to work towards your goals in between sessions.

Supporting materials

We will give you a manual to accompany your sessions, please bring this along every time.

REFRESHER SESSIONS:

We run regular online (Zoom) sessions for anyone who has completed our group or individual sessions to continue to access support.

These last 90mins (with a break included) and are a mixture of reflection and goal setting, an information refresh plus opportunity for mindful movement, and time to connect and share ideas and experiences.

People tell us they find this really useful as a reminder to maintain useful skills, get back on track if old habits are creeping in, and to connect with others.

Open appointment:

You can also contact the team for individual support should you require.