

What type of treatment is this?

Present-centered therapy (PCT) is an individual or group therapy for PTSD in which you will discuss current life problems that may be related to PTSD. You will not discuss the trauma itself.

How does it work?

PTSD symptoms can affect how you feel about and react to relationships and problems in your daily life. PCT teaches you to identify how PTSD symptoms are affecting your daily life and learn to come up with better solutions for managing your symptoms. Learning to problem-solve can help you feel more in control and have confidence in your ability to face problems in your daily life.



Through the session, I learned ways to cope when triggers took place. So it did give me a coping method; I kind of learned ways to deal with it at that moment.”

What can I expect?

In PCT, you will start by learning about PTSD symptoms and common reactions to trauma. Then you will learn problem-solving skills that help you to feel more in control and to have more confidence in your ability to face problems in your daily life, including in your relationships. PCT has homework: You will be asked to use a daily diary to keep track of issues or problems that concern you between sessions. Over time, you will be able to identify problems that come up in daily life and learn to respond to them in ways that create hope and draw upon your strengths.

How long does treatment take?

In PCT, you will complete about 12 weekly sessions, so treatment lasts about 3 months. Sessions are 1 hour each. The benefits of PCT often last long after your final session with your clinician.

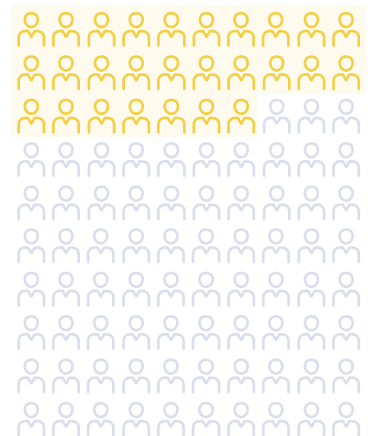
What are the risks?

The risks of doing PCT are minimal, other than the general discomfort you may feel talking to a clinician about problems in your daily life.

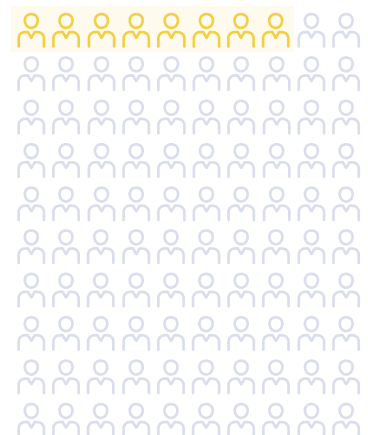
Is it effective?

Yes, Present-Centered Therapy is an effective treatment for PTSD.

For every 100 people with PTSD who receive present-centered therapy, **27** will no longer have PTSD after about three months.



For every 100 people with PTSD who do not receive treatment, **8** will no longer have PTSD after about three months.



Group or individual?

PCT can be an individual or group therapy.

Will I talk in detail about my trauma?

You will not need to talk about your trauma. You will have the opportunity to talk about your trauma in the first session if you want to, but this is not required. PCT will help you to better understand how your PTSD symptoms may be related to current problems you are dealing with, and to develop ways of responding that work better for you.

Will I have homework?

In PCT, you will be encouraged to use a daily diary to note issues and problems that concern you between sessions.

How available is this in VA?

Low. Some VA Medical Centers offer PCT in their specialized PTSD programs. PCT is not likely to be widely available in the community. Some therapists use elements of a present-centered approach to dealing with current problems, but this is not exactly the same as PCT.

Does VA have an app for that?

No, currently VA has not developed an app for PCT.



See what patients have to say about PCT:

“It’s kind of helped my soul because I had a big hole in my soul from this moral injury deal. So it helped repair parts of my soul. I mean, I don’t know how else to put it.”

“Having that one-on-one was crucial in that way for me. I had another set of eyes, professional eyes, that could see things that I would’ve missed... that had to do with the symptoms I was experiencing and how I could implement some things to try to manage those symptoms. And no guarantee anything was going to work, but at least I was trying different things, things I had never thought of before. And, so, it opened all those possibilities for managing the symptoms as best I can.”

“Finding new ways to think of things, getting me to think kind of the big picture instead of just getting kind of trapped in the here and now and what bad thoughts or whatever were in my mind... I think the journaling was very helpful. It helped me to kind of get an idea of day to day were there certain things that happened day to day that kind of would cause me to have better days or worse days? Kind of putting into perspective things that meant a lot to me in my life and happy thoughts, as well as things that bothered me, just kind of regroup and look altogether and, again, focusing on the big picture.”