

Theory A **Theory B**

Evidence that my problem is:

Reframes

Evidence that my problem is:

A serious problem - brain cancer

A belief / worry that I have brain cancer

Headaches

The headaches are worse when I am stressed

Dizziness

Focussing on my symptoms makes them worse

Vision goes blurry sometimes

Reassurance makes my symptoms better

Reframes

I've had these symptoms a long time and they have not got any more serious

- 1. There are lots of reasons for getting headaches (e.g. heat, dehydration, tension)*
- 2. Dizziness can be caused by anxiety*
- 3. Blurry vision is a common symptom of anxiety*

This technique has been described as:

'Dual model strategy' in Wells, A. (1997). Cognitive therapy for anxiety disorders. John Wiley & Sons.

'Hypothesis A / Hypothesis B' in Salkovskis, P. M. & Bass, C. (1997). Hypochondriasis. In The Science and Practice of Cognitive-Behaviour Therapy (ed. Clark & Fairburn). Oxford University Press : Oxford.

Theory A

Theory B

Theory A

Theory B

There is a problem with my appearance

I have a body image problem

“Theory A is the theory that you have been acting on for the last X years, it argues that the problem you have is your appearance”

“Theory B is that you have a body image problem. This problem makes you excessively self-conscious about your appearance. This has probably developed from some of your early experiences of being teased & bullied. Have you noticed that solving it as an appearance problem makes your preoccupation and distress worse?”

What are the implications of following Theory A?

“It means that you have to try very hard to hide or alter your appearance. Unfortunately, your solutions then become your problem and cause increasing handicap”

“Would you be prepared to act as if it were Theory B for at least 4 months? You can always go back to theory A if it’s not working.”

If theory B were true what would this mean in how you act?