# Therapy uncovers hidden struggles and sparks profound change in BBC series



Inside the therapy room, transformed lives unfold through the lens of a documentary series that poignantly captures the delicate interplay between mental health struggles and the power of therapeutic interventions. Featured in the BBC series "Change Your Mind, Change Your Life," three individuals embark on a journey with therapists to confront their unique challenges: Nicole, who grapples with a debilitating fear of driving; James, whose perfectionism was exacerbated by a life-altering stroke; and Anjalee, who seeks to process deep-seated grief from the loss of her mother.

For Nicole, a 31-year-old chiropractic assistant based in London, the road to recovery begins clinging to a "hugging pillow" for comfort. Her fear of driving manifests as crippling anxiety, prompting her to cancel plans and retreat into a cycle of panic. Through six sessions with psychotherapist Owen O'Kane, it becomes apparent that her anxiety is rooted in broader emotional turmoil. O’Kane describes his approach as detective-like; unearthing hidden truths beneath seemingly straightforward narratives. He encourages Nicole to confront her perceived shortcomings, guiding her towards a realisation that vulnerability need not be viewed negatively. The transformative impact of therapy emerges when she learns to extend kindness towards herself. “I found I wasn't being kind to myself. That was really eye-opening,” she reflects, illustrating a common yet profound shift experienced by many in therapy.

Similarly, James, a 39-year-old finance professional and former athlete, navigates his journey through perfectionism and crippling anxiety. After suffering a stroke at a young age, the pressure to perform became overwhelming. His therapist, Prof Steve Peters, emphasises that mastering one’s inner dialogue is crucial. James learns that his harsh self-critique—fuelled by a childhood marked by solicitous criticism—is holding him back. “If we think it's the end of the world if we make a mistake, it paralyses you,” observes Peters, highlighting how catastrophic thinking can encumber even the most accomplished individuals. With guidance, James begins to redefine his self-worth beyond performance, acknowledging his intrinsic values and personal traits.

Anjalee’s experience reveals the profound impact of unresolved grief. Now a mother of three, she finds her traumatic past materialising in everyday life, intensifying feelings of emotional disconnection and anxiety. The death of her mother when she was just 15 left her with unprocessed trauma, spilling into her parenting journey and culminating in experiences as harrowing as a severe illness during childbirth. Her psychotherapist, Julia Samuel, helps her confront this backlog of grief, reinforcing the importance of emotional processing for personal healing. Anjalee’s narrative underscores the compounding effects of trauma, particularly when grief is inadequately addressed, as she states, “Becoming a mother has reopened everything I’ve tried to suppress.”

The broader context of mental health in the UK reveals a staggering need for accessible support. According to recent data, one in six people experience mental health problems at any given time, with over 1.2 million individuals seeking help from NHS talking therapies annually. While therapies, particularly cognitive behavioural approaches, have shown potential in alleviating symptoms of anxiety and depression, research indicates that one-third of participants may not benefit from these interventions. This reality highlights the vital importance of tailored therapeutic approaches that resonate with individual experiences.

As these individuals navigate their journeys, therapy emerges not merely as a treatment but as an avenue for profound self-discovery and empowerment. By challenging ingrained beliefs and acknowledging buried emotions, they demonstrate that understanding oneself is an impactful precursor to healing. The narratives captured within the series present a compelling testament to the transformative power of therapy and its potential to help individuals cultivate resilience in the face of mental health challenges.

This exploration into the human psyche reinforces the notion that therapy, while multifaceted and personal, ultimately serves as a guiding light for those seeking to reclaim their lives amidst the complexities of mental health.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cg5vyv6dnmgo> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cg5vyv6dnmgo> - An article by Nick Triggle, published on May 18, 2025, detailing the experiences of three individuals undergoing therapy to address various mental health challenges, including driving anxiety, perfectionism, and unresolved grief. The piece highlights the transformative potential of therapy in managing mental health issues and emphasizes the importance of understanding and accepting one's emotions.
3. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cg5vyv6dnmgo> - An article by Nick Triggle, published on May 18, 2025, detailing the experiences of three individuals undergoing therapy to address various mental health challenges, including driving anxiety, perfectionism, and unresolved grief. The piece highlights the transformative potential of therapy in managing mental health issues and emphasizes the importance of understanding and accepting one's emotions.
4. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cg5vyv6dnmgo> - An article by Nick Triggle, published on May 18, 2025, detailing the experiences of three individuals undergoing therapy to address various mental health challenges, including driving anxiety, perfectionism, and unresolved grief. The piece highlights the transformative potential of therapy in managing mental health issues and emphasizes the importance of understanding and accepting one's emotions.
5. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cg5vyv6dnmgo> - An article by Nick Triggle, published on May 18, 2025, detailing the experiences of three individuals undergoing therapy to address various mental health challenges, including driving anxiety, perfectionism, and unresolved grief. The piece highlights the transformative potential of therapy in managing mental health issues and emphasizes the importance of understanding and accepting one's emotions.
6. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cg5vyv6dnmgo> - An article by Nick Triggle, published on May 18, 2025, detailing the experiences of three individuals undergoing therapy to address various mental health challenges, including driving anxiety, perfectionism, and unresolved grief. The piece highlights the transformative potential of therapy in managing mental health issues and emphasizes the importance of understanding and accepting one's emotions.
7. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cg5vyv6dnmgo> - An article by Nick Triggle, published on May 18, 2025, detailing the experiences of three individuals undergoing therapy to address various mental health challenges, including driving anxiety, perfectionism, and unresolved grief. The piece highlights the transformative potential of therapy in managing mental health issues and emphasizes the importance of understanding and accepting one's emotions.