



# The 8F Model – Main Approach at Masarat Clinic

## A Transdiagnostic Approach to Understanding Psychological Struggles

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### Instagram Video Link:

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/DEVsmmYMGI/?igsh=MW5lY3QzOGdxczlocA==>

At Masarat Clinic, we believe that people are more than diagnoses. Many clients come to therapy feeling confused by labels that do not fully explain their experiences. Anxiety blends into depression, trauma affects relationships, and obsessive thoughts coexist with emotional overwhelm.

This clinical reality is why the **8F model** was developed by clinic founder **Paul Kawkabany**. The 8F model is a **transdiagnostic therapeutic framework** designed to understand psychological suffering by focusing on the underlying processes that maintain distress, rather than on diagnostic categories alone.

## Why Masarat Clinic Uses a Transdiagnostic Approach

Research in modern psychotherapy shows that many mental health conditions share common psychological mechanisms. These include avoidance, rigid thinking, emotional dysregulation, and difficulties in relationships. Treating these shared processes often leads to deeper and more sustainable change than focusing on symptoms alone.

Instead of asking “*What disorder do you have?*”, the 8F model asks:  
**“What factors are keeping this struggle alive?”**

This approach allows therapy at Masarat Clinic to be:

- Personalized rather than one-size-fits-all
- Flexible and responsive to change
- Integrative across CBT, ACT, DBT, and Schema Therapy
- Focused on long-term wellbeing, not just symptom relief

## What Is the 8F Model?

The **8F model** identifies **eight core psychological factors** that commonly maintain emotional and psychological suffering across different diagnoses. Each person presents with a unique combination of these factors, and not all eight need to be present.

Therapy focuses on identifying which factors are most active and working with them collaboratively.

## The Eight Factors

### 1. Cognitive Rigidity

Cognitive rigidity refers to inflexible thinking patterns that make it difficult to adapt, see alternatives, or respond flexibly to life situations. This includes cognitive distortions, rigid beliefs, schemas, and strong fusion with thoughts.

When thoughts are experienced as absolute truths rather than mental events, distress increases and choice decreases. This factor plays a major role in anxiety, depression, OCD, and trauma-related difficulties.

### 2. Emotional Dysregulation

Emotional dysregulation involves difficulty identifying, tolerating, and regulating emotions. This may appear as emotional suppression, emotional flooding, impulsive reactions, or feeling controlled by emotions.

Learning to understand emotions rather than fight them is a central focus of therapy at Masarat Clinic.

### 3. Avoidance

Avoidance includes avoiding emotions, memories, thoughts, situations, or behaviors that feel uncomfortable. While avoidance often provides short-term relief, it strengthens distress over time and limits life.

This factor is a key maintaining mechanism in anxiety disorders, trauma, depression, and OCD, and is well documented in evidence-based therapies.

### 4. Remoteness From Values

When people lose connection with what truly matters to them, life can feel empty, confusing, or driven by fear and obligation. This factor reflects disconnection from values, purpose, and meaning.

At Masarat Clinic, therapy aims to help clients reconnect with what gives their life direction and vitality, even in the presence of pain.

## **5. Invalidation**

Invalidation can come from others or from within. It includes self-criticism, harsh standards, dismissing emotions, and feeling “not good enough.”

Chronic invalidation is closely linked to shame, emotional dysregulation, and relational difficulties. Therapy focuses on building validation, self-compassion, and a healthier internal dialogue.

## **6. Interpersonal Difficulties**

Psychological suffering often shows up in relationships. This factor includes difficulties with communication, assertiveness, boundaries, trust, and conflict resolution.

Strengthening interpersonal skills is essential for improving emotional wellbeing and building healthier relationships.

## **7. Mindlessness**

Mindlessness refers to living on autopilot, being disconnected from the present moment, and getting lost in thoughts about the past or future.

Mindfulness skills help clients reconnect with their experiences, notice patterns, and respond rather than react.

## **8. Unhelpful Cognitive Processes**

This factor focuses on repetitive mental processes such as rumination, worry, and obsession. These processes trap people in cycles of distress even when they recognize that the thoughts are unhelpful.

Therapy targets how the mind works, not just the content of thoughts.

## **How the 8F Model Is Used at Masarat Clinic**

The 8F model guides:

- Case conceptualization

- Treatment planning
- Choice of therapeutic strategies
- Progress tracking beyond symptom reduction

Interventions are drawn from Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), Schema Therapy, and compassion-focused approaches, depending on the client's needs.

A key goal of therapy is to help clients **become their own therapists** by understanding their patterns and learning skills they can use long after therapy ends.

## A Human, Not Pathologizing Perspective

At Masarat Clinic, we do not see people as broken. Psychological struggles are understood as **human responses to life experiences**, shaped by learning, relationships, and context.

The 8F model offers a compassionate, structured way to understand suffering and create meaningful change.

## Scientific Foundations

- Harvey et al. (2004). *Cognitive behavioural processes across psychological disorders*  
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- Barlow et al. (2014). *The Unified Protocol for Transdiagnostic Treatment of Emotional Disorders*
- Kawkabany, P. (2024). *8F Framework – First Draft*

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