

Complex difficulties have a number of common features and the focused approach of IPT offers a means of coping with them, as set out in the table below.

<b>Common difficulties</b>	<b>Problem</b>	<b>IPT response</b>
<b><i>The problem is unclear</i></b>	The problem is not understood or recognized so cannot be effectively targeted	Name the specific interpersonal problem area clearly and identify how it is linked to current depression
<b><i>Multiple competing goals</i></b>	Resources are pulled in many competing directions, undermining progress within and across goals	Set simple goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to reduce depression</li> <li>• to improve relationships related to the focal area</li> </ul>
<b><i>Large numbers of interrelated factors and decisions</i></b>	Confusion is compounded rather than resolved and the process stalls	Examine and understand the links between two main factors: depression and the chosen focal area
<b><i>Time considerations</i></b>	Without an end point in mind it feels too difficult to start, or momentum is lost when time runs on endlessly	Decide on a time period in which to complete the work, pace yourself accordingly, and review progress when the specified time period is over