



How to Choose a Psychotherapist Who is Right for You

Here are some helpful tips. Ask the therapist about his or her training, license and experience with your problem. The therapist should tell you what to expect if you work together. You should discuss fees, cancellation policy, and how to get help in an emergency. You should also discuss the limits of confidentiality (in what situations the therapist might have to break the usual agreement to keep your conversations private).

Sometimes after one meeting you may feel you can work well with a therapist. Or you may need more time to be sure this is a good match. Therapists will expect payment for in-person meetings, but this is a worthwhile investment in yourself and your wellbeing.

Here are some questions to think about:

1. Is this therapist available to meet with me regularly?
2. Was I included in making a treatment plan, including how often and when to meet?
3. Did this therapist listen to my concerns, value my opinions and see my strengths?
4. Is this someone I can trust with my deepest thoughts and feelings?
5. Do I think this therapist can inspire and challenge me to make changes in my life?

Most licensed therapists are competent and ethical. Good therapists NEVER:

- Violate the confidentiality agreement you made together.
- Engage in sexual behavior of any kind with you – even if you are no longer working together.
- Take advantage of you for their own personal or business interests.
- Criticize your race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or religious beliefs.

Congratulations on taking this important step, but be prepared that therapy can be hard work! You may not always feel better after each session; you may even feel worse as you face tough feelings or decisions. It may help to talk about these feelings with your therapist.

Some material adapted from The Wasatch Mental Health Guide to Choosing a Therapist, originally at www.wasatch.org/therapistguide.html, since deleted.