

WHAT DOES A THERAPIST DO, AND HOW CAN THEY HELP ME?

- Therapists act as a neutral party who can listen and try to understand without judgment.
- Therapists help you learn about yourself by pointing out patterns and giving honest feedback.
- Therapists teach specific techniques and strategies to deal with problems.
- Therapists can refer you to additional resources in the community that might be helpful.
- Therapists provide a safe place to learn and practice social skills.



TYPES OF PSYCHOTHERAPY

There are many approaches to psychotherapy, all of which have their own strengths and weaknesses. Some situations call for a specific type of treatment, but sometimes it's just about preference. Here are a few of the most common approaches to psychotherapy:

- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- Motivational Interviewing
- Psychoanalysis
- Person-Centered Therapy

Therapy can be provided in an individual, group, or family/couples setting as needed.

WHO CAN PROVIDE PSYCHOTHERAPY?

In most places psychotherapists must have at least a master's degree from an approved program. After receiving a degree, the therapist must practice for several years under the guidance of a supervisor before becoming licensed.

- Mental Health Counselors are most often persons who have received a master's degree from an approved university, and is licensed to practice psychotherapy. Titles include: LMHC or LMHP.
- Psychiatrists are medical doctors who can prescribe medicine for the treatment of mental illness. They also can provide psychotherapy.
- Psychologists are persons who have completed a doctoral degree in psychology. They may or may not be licensed as a psychotherapist. They often perform services such as psychological testing.
- Licensed Social Workers have a master's degree, and training to perform psychotherapy and other services. Social workers have additional training in areas such as case management.



OTHER INFORMATION

- Therapists should not tell you what to do or try to direct your life. Think of the proverb: "Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day. Teach him to fish, and you feed him for life." Therapists will help you learn to solve your own problems, rather than solving them for you.
- Some mental illness cannot be managed by psychotherapy alone. If medication is recommended, it's probably important.
- Benefitting from psychotherapy does require work on your part. Speaking to a therapist for an hour a week, and then pushing it out of your mind, probably won't do you any good. Complete homework, practice your skills, and legitimately try the recommendations you are given.
- Therapists cannot be your friend after starting a therapeutic relationship. Therapists generally like their clients, and would love to get to know them better, but ethical rules prevent the formation of relationships outside of treatment. It isn't you, it's just that the therapist could lose their license!
- Therapists cannot read your mind. If you hide information, or are dishonest, you're wasting your own time and money.