

Welcome!

The decision to seek professional help is a difficult and important one. We hope to provide you with the information to assist you in whatever brings you in today. People respond best to counseling when they have a good understanding of what they are about to undertake. Here is a guideline to help with frequently asked questions.

The Nature of Therapy

Although therapists have different styles and approaches, our goal is consistent. THERAPY IS ABOUT CHANGE. We, as therapists do not make decisions for you. Our goal is to understand your goals for your life and provide the assistance that allows you to become more confident in your ability to make healthy decisions.

Effectiveness and Risks of Therapy

Psychotherapy is an expensive and time-consuming process. It can be a challenging experience that can produce unpleasant feelings, memories and conflicts that can make therapy sessions emotionally painful. Research shows that for many people the gains of psychotherapy outweigh the temporary discomfort. Although there are no guarantees several factors that contribute to success in therapy include a commitment to change, severity of the problem, healthiness prior to treatment, quality of relationship with the therapist and the amount of social support. Although not a part of psychotherapy, medication may also be beneficial.

Your Responsibilities

Your responsibility in therapy is to be open to change. You will need to be active and honest during your sessions. Additional effort outside the therapy office is necessary for positive results. You will gain from this process in accordance to what you put into this process. Finally, it is necessary for you to be on time for scheduled sessions, notify the office of cancellations or changes and fulfill financial commitments.

Therapists Responsibilities

Your therapist's primary responsibilities are assessment of concerns and to plan an appropriate course of

treatment that is based on your goals and desired outcomes. Your therapist also has the responsibility of meeting with you at scheduled times or notifying you of a cancellation or change. Effective therapists also acknowledge that at times the therapeutic relationship is ineffective or the process has become stagnant. If this is the case your therapist has a responsibility to seek outside consultation or education to improve the effectiveness of treatment or recommend a provider who can more effectively assist in your goals.

Confidentiality

Both legal and ethical constraints demand that the information you share be kept confidential. Under Oklahoma and Federal laws, communication between a therapist and client is confidential. This means your therapist will not reveal any information about you without your permission. There are, however, exceptions to the law. Listed below are those exceptions:

- If consultation with another professional therapist will benefit your treatment or enhance the therapeutic process then clinical information will be shared. Full respect for your identity and right to privacy are kept during such professional consultations.
- If your fees are being paid, or partially paid, by an insurance company, details of personal difficulties and treatment may have to be discussed for us to obtain reimbursement. The amount of information varies according to the insurance company. A person at your place of employment may also review this information if claims are processed in that manner. The only way to assure confidentiality in these cases is to pay all fees yourself and avoid filing insurance.
- If a client reveals information that indicates he or she is a clear and imminent danger to another individual, the therapist must contact the appropriate authorities and/or the threatened person.
- If a client seriously threatens to harm him or herself, the therapist will contact family members and/or seek hospitalization if such actions are judged necessary for the client's protection.
- All helping professionals are required by law to report to the police or Department of Human

Services any knowledge or suspicion of abuse of a child or incompetent or disabled person.

- Finally, judges have the power to compel production of records for use in legal proceedings (i.e. child custody disputes, mental status hearing). Recent judicial decisions in Oklahoma have favored the court's right of subpoena in such cases.

We expect you will be respectful of the confidentiality of others in the office or waiting room. It is not appropriate to reveal the identities or issues of other clients or group members.

Frequently asked question of upholding the confidentiality of a minor: If a child reveals information that a parent does not possess, the therapist will respect the child's right to confidentiality. However, the therapist will attempt to create an environment within the family for these issues to be discussed.

Medication and Hospitalization

Although we believe the long-term solution to most problems ultimately resides in the development of improved healthy coping skills, there may be occasions when medication is indicated. In such cases, your therapist will be glad to refer you to a local psychiatrist or work with your physician.

There may be times when hospitalization is necessary. Your therapist is familiar with a variety of hospital programs and will assist in selecting the most appropriate setting for you.

Psychological Testing

There may be occasions when you are requested to complete psychological tests. This may include a personality inventory, vocational interest inventory, Attention Deficit Disorder evaluation or IQ testing. Your therapist will explain the purpose of the testing and how it could benefit your treatment. The results will be discussed with you if testing is pursued.

Court and Custody Evaluations

Although therapists work with marital and family problems, please make note that we do not testify in

court regarding custody or divorce actions. In order for therapy to be effective, clients must feel free to be open and know that they are doing so in an environment that will honor and protect the information that is presented. Legal evaluations are a specialized field and if such services are needed, you will be referred to individuals who are qualified to deal with such situations. Should a therapist be legally required to testify, the hourly fee will be billed for all time away from the office.

Handling Dissatisfaction with Therapy

If you become dissatisfied with your treatment, you should discuss this with your therapist. If the conflict cannot be resolved, you may see an opinion from another therapist. If you believe your therapist has acted unethically, you may contact the appropriate state review board.

Fees, Payments and Billing

We realize that therapy involves a financial effort. We hope you will view this commitment as an investment in yourself and your relationships.

Fees for services are collected at the time services are provided. Payment may be made by check, cash, Visa or MasterCard. Checks should be made to your individual therapist. If insurance is utilized, the client must pay their portion or co-pay of the bill at the time of the visit. Payment plans are the option of each therapist and such arrangements must be made with the therapist.

Our therapists do utilize a medical billing service who will provide statements on a regular basis. They may also be contacted for questions or a statement upon your request. If an individual fails to make satisfactory payments we will attempt payment resolution and reserve the right to contact collection agencies if necessary to resolve the issue. Such steps will occur only after attempts to solve the problem have proven unsuccessful. In addition, services may be discontinued.

It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with your insurance policy including the authorization process, reimbursement, limitations, and specific provisions. You are responsible for co-pays, deductibles and the balance that insurance does not cover.

Cancellations/Missed Appointments

We ask for a 24 HOUR notice for cancellations. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in the full fee charge for the missed appointment. Emergencies may be

discussed with your therapist.

Snow Day Policy

If Tulsa Public Schools is closed due to inclement weather, our offices will not be open before 10:00 am. If you have an appointment on a snowy day, please call ahead to be sure the offices have opened and that your therapist has arrived.

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