

Finding A Therapist Who is a Good Fit for You

- Identify the reason(s) for which you are seeking therapy
- Identify the qualities you want in a therapist
 - Gender
 - Individual vs. Group Therapy
 - Ethnic, cultural background, religious focus, sexuality, language preferences
 - Availability (hours/days), Specialties
- Using Insurance
 - Typically there is a copay for the service you are requesting
 - Sign into the insurance website or contact your insurance provider by phone
 - What is my deductible?
 - What is my copay?
 - How many outpatient visits are covered per year?
 - Do I need a referral from my PCP (Primary Care Provider)?
- Generating a list of potential providers using insurance
 - When you talk with your insurance, you may ask them for a list of providers or you can access the insurance website to obtain a list of providers nearby your location
 - Ask people you trust about their thoughts of specific providers on your list
 - If you have any connection to clinicians (through family, friends, or your university counseling center), ask them to review your insurance's provider list
- Using the internet to find potential therapist webpages/general information about each clinician
 - Please note: not everyone will have a professional website
 - <http://www.findapsychologist.org/>
 - <http://locator.apa.org/>
 - <http://webapps.ama-assn.org/doctorfinder/home.html>
 - <http://www.helpstartshere.org/common/Search/default.asp>
 - www.psychologytoday.com
- After you have narrowed down your list of choices, reach out to the providers and briefly talk with them on the phone. Some suggestions for questions are listed below:
 - What licenses and certifications do you have?
 - What degree do you have and what is your training in the mental health field?
 - Are you taking new appointments? If so, what are your hours of availability?
 - This is also an opportunity to give them a brief overview of your concern and ask how they might approach their work with you
- If you found the phone interaction with the provider to be positive, make an appointment
- During your visit be sure to ask some of the following questions
 - What are the types of treatments or theoretical orientations often used to support someone struggling with my concerns? How would you approach supporting me with my struggles?
 - What can I expect from treatment? What might it look like?
- After your initial meeting with the provider, take time to reflect on your experience
 - How well did the clinician listen?
 - Did you feel understood, safe, valued?
 - Did you feel like you could trust the clinician?
 - Can you see yourself working with this clinician?

*Please note: You may have to visit more than one clinician to find a good match for you.