

## Tips for Choosing a Therapist

Finding the right therapist is an important step in your recovery. The relationship you build with your therapist should feel supportive, respectful, and safe. Below are some steps and questions to help you make the best choice for you.

### Ways to find a therapist

- Ask your health care provider for a referral to a qualified therapist.
- Check with your insurance company for a list of covered mental health professionals.
- Contact your local or state psychological association for recommendations.
- Reach out to nearby universities or hospitals, especially psychology or psychiatry departments.
- Ask someone you trust, such as a family member or friend, to recommend a therapist.
- Call your community mental health center for nearby resources.
- Ask your employer if they have an employee assistance program (EAP). EAPs are workplace programs that offer confidential counseling, screenings, and referrals for personal or work-related challenges.

### What to look for in a therapist

#### Credentials

Therapists come from different educational and professional backgrounds. They may be psychiatrists, psychologists, licensed nurse practitioners, licensed master social workers, or licensed counselors. Ask about their license, education, training, and experience, particularly in areas related to the issues you wish to address.

## Personal comfort

Feeling comfortable with your therapist is just as important as their qualifications. It's okay to talk with several therapists before deciding who feels like the best fit.

## Questions to ask when you call the office for the first time:

- What are your areas of expertise? For example, working with couples, families, or children?
- I've been feeling anxious, depressed, or struggling with [your specific issue]. What experience do you have helping people with similar challenges?
- How long are your average sessions? For example, are they 30, 45, or 60 minutes?
- What types of treatments or approaches do you use?
- How long have you been practicing therapy?
- What is your availability?
- Do you accept my insurance? If you are uninsured, ask about cash payment options.

**Remember:** Finding the right therapist can take time. Trust your instincts and choose someone who helps you feel heard and supported.

**For more mental health educational resources, visit [depressioncenter.org/toolkit](https://depressioncenter.org/toolkit).**

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This document provides general educational information developed by the Eisenberg Family Depression Center. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice. Please consult your health care provider if you have questions about your health or treatment options.