

If you and your healthcare provider have determined that psychotherapy would be a valuable part of your treatment plan, this tool is intended to help you select a psychotherapist that's right for you.

Steps to consider in finding a therapist:

- Ask your doctor or other healthcare provider for a referral.
- Contact your insurance provider for a list of therapists covered by your insurance plan.
- Call your local or state psychological association for a list of trained therapists.
- Inquire at a local university or college's department of psychology or department of psychiatry.
- Ask a family member or friend for a recommendation.
- Contact the mental health center in your community.

What to consider when evaluating a potential therapist:

Credentials

Highly qualified therapists can come from a variety of educational backgrounds, including psychiatrists, psychologists, licensed nurse practitioner, licensed master social workers (LMSWs), and licensed counselors. Inquire about your potential therapists' education, training and experience.

Level of personal comfort

Finding a therapist with whom you can be comfortable is very important. Don't hesitate to interview possible candidates by phone or in person before making your selection.

Questions to ask:

- How many years have you been practicing psychotherapy?
- I have been feeling (anxious, depressed, etc.) and I'm having problems with (my job, my marriage, eating, sleeping, etc.). What experience do you have helping people with these types of problems?
- What are your areas of expertise - for example, working with children, couples, families?
- What kinds of treatments do you use?
- Have these approaches been effective for the kinds of problems/issues I've described to you?
- How long are your average sessions? (30 minutes? 45 minutes? One hour?)

For more information:

- University of Michigan Depression Center
- 1-800-475-MICH or 734-936-4400
- <http://www.depressioncenter.org/toolkit>

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