

# What is Therapy?

YOUR GUIDE TO THERAPY





# Getting Started with Therapy

Congratulations on taking a proactive step toward improved mental health and wellness! This guide is designed to answer questions you may have before your first session and help you get the most out of therapy.

## What is therapy?

Therapy is a treatment in which a therapist and their client work together to understand mental health concerns and develop a plan for treating them. Therapy is appropriate if there's a clinical concern, like depression or anxiety, as defined by the duration of symptoms and their severity (for example, if the symptoms are interfering with someone's ability to function in an important area of life for an extended period of time). A standard therapy session is 45–60 minutes in length and is conducted by a licensed mental health professional.

## What kind of license does my therapist have?

Therapists can have a variety of titles (counselors, therapists, clinicians, etc.). What they have in common is a masters (M.A. or M.S.) or doctoral degree (Ph.D. or Psy.D.) in clinical psychology or a related field and are licensed in the jurisdiction in which they practice. Common licenses include Psychologist (Ph.D. or Psy.D.), Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT), Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), and Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC). These therapists are all trained in the assessment and treatment of mental health concerns.



## What types of issues do therapists help with?

Therapists can help with a variety of issues. Here are some common focus areas:

- ADHD
- Anxiety
- Autism
- Depression
- Eating Disorder
- Grief
- OCD
- Postpartum
- Substance Abuse
- Trauma
- Health Psychology
- Child Psychology
- Couples Counseling
- Family Therapy



## How can I prepare for my first session?

Your therapist will likely ask you to complete intake forms before your first session. It's normal to be nervous! If you can, try to think through the following questions ahead of time. They can help guide your initial conversations with your therapist:

- Where do you want to start?
- What is most on your mind or stressing you out?
- What kind of goals do you have?
- What do you want to get out of therapy?
- What are you looking for in a therapist (for example, someone who challenges you, is a good listener, etc.)?
- How do you want your life to look when you are done? What does success look like?



## What does a therapy session look and feel like?

In your first session, your therapist will start by introducing themselves and walking you through expectations and confidentiality, to make sure you feel comfortable with them and the process. They'll then ask you some questions to get a better understanding of you, your background, your biggest concerns, and then help you identify how you can work together to achieve your goals. After this initial assessment, they'll work with you to come up with a treatment plan and review different evidence-based methods to help you address your needs (for example, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, or Dialectical Behavior Therapy). They will likely give you some follow up action items that you can take away from the session, and may update your treatment plan based on your needs in follow-up sessions. Typically, therapists visits will be 45-60 minutes in length and occur in person or via video, often weekly.

## How often should I attend therapy?

You and your therapist will develop a plan that works for you, but typically, sessions are weekly and most commonly last anywhere from 1-4 months.. Your therapist may suggest you meet with a coach either alongside therapy, or once therapy is completed so that you can continue to master the skills and tools you've learned.

## What's the difference between therapy and coaching?

Therapy is conducted by licensed mental health professionals who are trained to treat clinical difficulties, whereas coaching is a results-focused and goal-oriented process to help you create the life you want. Modern Health coaches are rigorously vetted, certified, and trained in evidence-based approaches. At Modern Health, we believe that anyone can benefit from working with a coach. For those who may be experiencing a clinical need like depression or anxiety, we will recommend working with a therapist in addition to, or instead of coaching.



### How do I meet with my psychologist/therapist?

Therapy sessions can be held both in-person or via teletherapy (phone/video). Your therapist's modality will be listed in the match email connecting you two.

### Is there a notable difference in efficacy between in-person vs. teletherapy?

There is no notable difference in outcomes between in-person vs. teletherapy because your therapist's training, knowledge, and judgement still applies.

### What is the cancellation policy at Modern Health?

If you need to miss a scheduled session, please give your therapist 24 hours notice. If you're a no-show or cancel within 24 hours, it will count as a used session and deduct from your total covered sessions. Please note that if your therapist has a different cancellation policy (i.e. 48 hours), please follow their procedures and we'll honor it.

### What do I do in a crisis?

Modern Health is not a crisis service. If you're experiencing a crisis, including thoughts of suicide, thoughts of harming yourself or others, medical crisis, or in a dangerous situation, please call emergency services or head to the nearest Emergency Room. You can access local crisis contact information in your Modern Health app if you select Settings > Crisis Information.

