



2400 Reading Road, Suite 139 912 Scott St, PO Box 122604
Cincinnati, OH 45202 Covington, KY 41011
Office 513-721-2910 / 877-361-4518 / 859-431-1077
www.MHAnkyswoh.org / www.GuideToFeelingBetter.org



What does a Therapist do?

Therapists are trained at a Master's degree level in a variety of different fields (such as psychology, social work, education, theology / divinity). They are qualified individuals who have been trained to help people deal more effectively with the problems / stress they are experiencing. Therapists work to alleviate and prevent emotional problems and mental illness.

Therapists may provide individual psychotherapy or work with groups at hospitals, private offices, and other agencies in the community. Some specialize in behavior therapy, family therapy, marriage counseling, etc. Therapists may also address specific issues such as domestic abuse, sexual abuse, chemical dependency, etc. When appropriate, therapists work closely with psychiatrists, pediatricians, neurologists and internists as well as with social workers, nurses, ministers, educators and with various volunteer and lay civic groups.

In the consultant role, a clinical psychologist can assist in many types of problems. Often this consultative work is used to identify needed services and link clients to these programs or services. A psychologist may act as a consultant in many different settings such as in the school system, in clinics, in community hospitals or in other health, education and welfare organizations.

Choosing a Therapist :

Check your health insurance to see if it covers the cost of treatment for emotional problems or mental illness. Most policies have limits on the number of visits, so you may also want to consider talking with your insurance agent or your employer's benefits representative about improving the coverage. Once you get through that process and are ready to choose a therapist, make sure to mention any characteristics about the therapist that are important to you (for example; age, sex, race, religious background, etc.). You will also want to check to make sure the therapist(s) accept your insurance or if they work on a sliding scale. Select two or three possibilities and call their phone numbers. First, ask if they are accepting new patients and then ask about your insurance or if they work on a sliding scale. Next, you should ask about appointment availability, office location(s) and the cost of the first visit. If you are satisfied with this information, schedule an appointment.

The First Visit :

Keep in mind that therapists are busy; they see many people during a day and are often running late. It's a good idea to bring something to read, to keep you occupied while you're waiting, or you may want to use the time to think about what you want to talk about. Also, some therapists have some intake forms which they may ask you to fill out before your appointment, if that is the case, remember to arrive a few minutes early so that you can fill out their forms. Once you are called back to the therapist's office, he / she will either go over the intake form or ask you a series of questions about your background, family, habits, etc. The therapist will also ask you what has brought you to their office, why you think you need counseling / therapy. It is important that you ask any questions you may have during the first visit. Feel free to ask about fees, appointment flexibility, cancellation policy and insurance form processing.

After the first visit, think about how you felt about the therapist. What was it like to talk with someone you've just met about your problems? Did he / she listen and seem to understand your feelings? Is this a person you could trust? Did you like the location and office setting? If you didn't feel comfortable with this therapist, just pay for the visit and move on to the next therapist on your list. When the chemistry feels right, you've finished the first part of your work. The second part - working together with your therapist to understand and overcome your problems - is about to begin.