

Counselor Information Sheet

Everyone can benefit from therapy, and there is no shame in seeking support. An essential component of therapy is the relationship between the client and therapist. Therefore, when choosing a therapist, it is important to remember that you are hiring someone to work with you toward mutually-determined goals; it is your right and obligation to choose someone with whom you connect well and want to work.

A good therapeutic relationship does not mean your therapist won't challenge you or that therapeutic work won't sometimes be difficult. A good therapist may propose treatment strategies or goals different from those you initially envisioned. Ideally, you will find a therapist who will both challenge you to meet your goals and also provide you with much-needed support.

When considering a potential therapist, we recommend considering the following questions:

- What are your treatment goals and what outcomes do you want at the end of this process?
- Is the potential therapist in agreement with these goals? Has the therapist suggested other goals that seem reasonable and consistent with your desired outcomes?
- Do you feel comfortable speaking with this person? Can you be completely open and honest with them? Do they treat you with respect or do you feel judged by them?
- Are they willing to listen to you and collaborate with you for your goals or do they dominate the conversation?
- Are they willing to answer your questions and be transparent?
- Are they willing to support you in your faith tradition?
- What is their understanding of the human person and does that correspond with your understanding of the human person? (For example, do they believe that we are able to change or imprisoned by our desires? Do they believe that human beings are a unity of body and soul; that we are created by God; that there is a spiritual reality to the world in which we participate?)
- Are there any limits to their confidentiality and what you will share with them?
- Ask what modalities they use to treat the issue for which you are visiting them. Some common treatment modalities include (but are not limited to):
 - Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
 - Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)
 - Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR)
 - Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT)
 - Emotional Focused Therapy (EFT)

Finally, therapists are legally obligated to provide information about their fees in writing, so ask for this to be provided.

In the end, go with your gut impression of who will help you best, but do not hesitate to choose a new therapist if the current relationship does not work or help. Again, the therapist-patient relationship is intended to function as a partnership to help you reach your desired goals. Therapists can be researched at Psychology Today (<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us>) as well as other online sources.

Counselor Information Sheet

Common Treatment Modalities in a Therapeutic Setting

Common treatment modalities for those with a history of trauma include:

EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing) – Single-incident trauma

TF-CBT (Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy) – Recent trauma

DBT (Dialectical Behavioral Therapy) – Suicidal Ideation, Eating Disorders, Substance Abuse, Personality Disorders

Emotional Focused Therapy (EFT) – commonly used for relational/couples therapy

Additional resources for past/childhood trauma:

- *Our Polyvagal World: How Safety and Trauma Change Us* by Stephen Porges, Ph.D.
- *Daring Greatly* by Brené Brown, PH.D.
- *What Happened to You: Conversations on Trauma, Resilience, and Healing* by Bruce Perry, M.D., Ph.D.
- *The Body Keeps the Score* by Bessel Van Der Kolk, M.D.
- *Mindsight* by Dan Siegel, M.D.

*This resource is made available through the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.
October 7, 2024*