

***Q. What is the difference between a psychologist and a psychiatrist?***

A. The simplest way to describe the difference between them is that a psychologist primarily aids the depressed patient by counseling and psychotherapy. A psychiatrist may also perform psychotherapy; but, in addition, can prescribe medications and perform ECT (electroconvulsive therapy). A psychiatrist is a medical doctor. A psychologist may hold a doctoral degree (Ph.D.) and be called "doctor"; but, is not a medical doctor (M.D.).

**How do you know if you need therapy?**

- Realizing the point where a talking to a professional is worth your time. Heads up. Experts explain how you can recognize when therapy can be beneficial to you.

Terry Mizrahi, M.S.W., PH.D.

President, National Association of Social Workers

I would rephrase the question: How do you know you need professional help? You may have attempted to cope with the problem yourself and may have even discussed it with family, friends or peers. Sometimes just talking it out with a sympathetic listener helps. Beyond that, you might try a mutual support program like Alcoholics' Anonymous or another such group. But you know you need professional help when nothing has worked, when you feel depressed, anxious or agitated, when you are unable to carry out your obligations. But the most important point is to select someone with professional credentials and experience, referred by a reputable person or organization.

James Morris, Ph.D.

President, American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy

There are a range of warning signals that could indicate the need for therapy-including marital or family relationship dissatisfaction or distress, alcohol or drug abuse, loneliness, depression, sexual problems, unexplained physical problems, employment difficulties, inability to set or attain goals. A person may experience repeated

problematic cycles, a feeling of being stuck or a sense of persistently losing ground. Getting feedback from trusted relatives and friends can aid in the decision to seek therapy. Finally, speaking with others who have been in therapy can provide useful information.

Jane Goodman, Ph.D.

President, American Counseling Association

You should consider counseling when you are unhappy, or when you wish you could be happier-when your anxiety or distress is interfering with work, relationships or self-confidence. Counseling can be helpful when you are facing a transition, have experienced a loss or just plain wish you could greet the day with more enthusiasm. I would suggest that if you are asking yourself this question, it is a good idea to consult a counselor or other mental health professional. Seeking help is a sign of strength. Don't wait until you are desperate.

### **Do You Need Therapy?**

Michael Herkov, Ph.D.

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People with a wide range of problems -- from depression to marital strife to simple phobias like the fear of flying -- can reap the benefits of psychotherapy. The common reasons you might seek therapy are listed below.

### **Significant or Chronic Emotional Distress**

Most people seek therapy -- or any professional treatment, for that matter -- to relieve pain or distress. Experiencing emotional pain is part of being human. But sometimes this distress is severe or long-standing and it could impair your daily life. Therapy might be appropriate for you if you feel emotional distress -- sadness, anxiety, grief -- that is persistent and troubling.

### **Relationship Problems**

Often, emotional distress comes from difficulty in relationships. Troubled relationships may involve a spouse, parent, child, coworker or significant other. Therapy can help you understand the root of the problem and provide you with the tools you need to correct it.

### **Skills Acquisition**

Some emotional distress or relationship problems are associated with the lack of a particular skill. Such problems can include excessive shyness, poor communication, lack of assertiveness or poor anger control. Many types of psychotherapy enable people to acquire or improve these skills. In these cases, the treatment focuses on teaching people to be able to do what they need to do to feel better.

### **Sexual Problems**

Sexual dissatisfaction and dysfunction are common problems that can be embarrassing to talk about. Over the last several decades, therapists have made substantial progress in helping people obtain the most enjoyment out of their sexual functioning.

### **Recent Loss**

Powerful attachments to others are uniquely human experiences. Enduring breaks in these attachments -- through death or separation -- can result in great emotional pain. Psychotherapy can help you cope with the loss.

### **Victim of Trauma or Abuse**

Being the victim of physical or sexual abuse, or another form of violence, such as being in an automobile accident, can overwhelm your capacity to cope and leave scars that impair your ability to live a normal life. Psychotherapy can provide a confidential arena to discuss these issues with a caring, supportive person. By focusing on healing the wound caused by the trauma, psychotherapy can help you move forward with your life.

### **A Clinical Disorder or Condition**

Persons with certain disorders or conditions can benefit from regimens that include psychotherapy and other forms of treatment, such as medication. For example, research shows that individuals with conditions such as major depression or bipolar disorder benefit from a combination of psychotherapy and medication. One type of treatment without the other might produce inadequate results.

## **Personal Growth**

Though you might not have clinical conditions or symptoms, psychotherapy can help you learn more about yourself and others and teach you how to control your life more effectively. It can help you overcome obstacles that have kept you from reaching your goals and becoming the person you want to be.

<http://psychcentral.com/therapy/>

### **Do You Need Counseling?**

*A Self Test*

Instructions for this test are as follows:

1. Click on the most appropriate answer for you for each question..
2. Print out a copy of your test with your answers boxes checked.
3. Upon completion of the test, go to the bottom of the page to see how to score the test.

Answer each question with True [T] or False [F] by checking the appropriate column. Check the left column for True and the right column for False.

Set One

- 1. Have your friends suggested that you get counseling?
- 2. Have you considered counseling but feel you can't afford it?
- 3. Has someone in authority over you suggested that you need counseling?
- 4. Are you experiencing emotional or mental pain associated with a divorce?
- 5. Are you having difficulty making a decision concerning marriage?
- 6. Do you entertain thoughts of suicide or self harm from time to time?

- 7. Do people tell you that you are cold and insensitive?
- Set Two 1. Are you fighting some substance addiction (drug, alcohol, nicotine, or food)?
- 2. Are you struggling with a choice of a career?
- 3. Are you wrestling with the issues concerning a job loss?
- 4. Do you depend upon your relationship with someone for your self esteem?
- 5. Do you use sex as an escape from other social problems?
- 6. Do you experience periodic or repetitive nightmares?
- 7. Are you dependent on antidepressants or anti-anxiety drugs?
- Set Three 1. Are you emotionally exhausted from a major or long term illness?
- 2. Do you feel hurt or rejected by people in a church?
- 3. Do you experience bouts of periodical depression?
- 4. Does your family complain about the amount of time you spend at work?
- 5. Are you facing some strong fear in your life?
- 6. Are you experiencing a major disappointment because of financial failure?
- 7. Do you have uncontrollable, annoying thoughts that just won't go away?
- Set Four 1. Do you find yourself in repeated moral failures?
- 2. Do you find yourself sleeping excessively?
- 3. Do you wrestle with doubts about God's love for you?
- 4. Do you find yourself becoming emotional over little things?
- 5. Are you searching for spiritual direction for your life?
- 6. Do you believe that God has rejected you for some reason?
- 7. Do you experience hearing voices or seeing things that are not of God?
- Set Five 1. Do you find yourself using excuses for not fulfilling your responsibilities?
- 2. Does your family complain about the time you spend in ministry?
- 3. Are you experiencing a long term sadness over the death of someone?
- 4. Do you find yourself drifting into a fantasy world to escape your problems?

- 5. Has someone left you with a bitterness that you have difficulty dismissing?
- 6. Has physical, mental, emotional, verbal, or sexual abuse left you crippled?
- 7. Do you find yourself lying about unimportant issues?
- Set Six 1. Do you have unresolved conflicts within your immediate or extended family?
- 2. Are you unsure or confused about your salvation from sin?
- 3. Have you convinced yourself that you only need 4 to 5 hours of sleep per night?
- 4. Do you often get angry with yourself over your inability to do things right?
- 5. Do you find yourself plotting revenge in your mind toward someone?
- 6. Do you fear losing your eternal salvation?
- 7. Do you at times have a sense of extreme loneliness?
- Set Seven 1. Do you wrestle with thoughts of jealousy or envy?
- 2. Do you suffer from physical problems which have no known physical cause?
- 3. Does your family complain about the money you spend on entertainment?
- 4. Have you experienced sudden unplanned weight loss or gain?
- 5. Have you been diagnosed as having a personality disorder?
- 6. Do you have trouble concentrating on the business at hand?
- 7. Have you fallen into a habit of using God's name in vain or cursing?
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- Score yourself based upon the number of [TRUE] answers that you gave. The greater the number TRUE answers that you gave, the greater the need you have for COUNSELING.
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#### Do I Need Counseling?

- A review of the following symptoms may help you to decide. Keep in mind that you may have fifteen or more of these symptoms and still be able to function, but usually not very well. You may only have one debilitating symptom, such as insomnia, and as a result not be able to carry out your daily

responsibilities. In both instances, counseling could remedy the underlying problem and improve your quality of life.

- GENERAL SYMPTOMS
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- Constant worry
- Irritability
- Tension
- Headache
- Feeling in a dreamlike state
- Fearful feelings
- Fear of losing control
- Jumpiness
- Restlessness
- Sweating
- Dizziness/lightheadedness
- Keyed up/on edge
- Agitation
- Nervousness
- Trouble concentrating
- Insomnia/trouble sleeping
- Decrease in sex drive
- Trouble making decisions
- Sad/depressed/down in the dumps
- Lack of/loss of interest in things
- Helpless feelings
- Fatigue - lack of energy
- Weakness
- Increase or decrease in appetite
- Increase or decrease in weight
- Frequent crying or weeping
- Frequent thoughts of death or suicide
- Worthless feelings
- Excessive feelings of guilt
- Hopeless feelings
- Feeling life is not worth living
- Sleeping too much
- Frequent negative thinking
- Memory problems

- Fear of doing something uncontrollable
- Fear of dying
- Chills
- Seeing or hearing things that are not real
- Fear of going crazy
- Fever
- Repetitive, senseless thoughts
- Repetitive, senseless behaviors
- Fainting or feeling faint
- Tremors, trembling or shakiness
- Seizures
- Easy bruising
- Skin rash
- Violent behavior

#### What Happens in Counseling?

- You--with your counselor's trained help--will...
  - define and clarify your problem(s)
  - explore the many possibilities that exist for change
  - develop a strategy for action
  - 
  - What Can I Expect?
  - Don't expect...
  - Ann Lander's "expert" advice
  - things to get better immediately
  - your counselor to tell you what to do
  - "shoulds" or "musts" about your behavior
  - 
  - Do expect...
  - clues to better coping
  - support and guidance to make sometimes difficult changes
  - to speak honestly about your state of mind, feelings and disappointments
  - caring, gentle challenge without any judgment