



Therapist Search Resource

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THERAPIST SEARCH ROADMAP

STEP 1

Research your resources and options that are available to you when it comes to therapy access.

STEP 2

Decide what kind of therapy type is best for your current needs.

STEP 3

Create a list of qualities that you look for in a therapist and research the therapist you are considering.

STEP 4

Identify specific things that you want to work on and weigh in with the therapist on creating an action plan.

STEP 5

Evaluation process. Use this time to decide if you want to move forward with this therapist or continue your search.

Resources

Affordable access to therapy

If you don't have insurance, or your healthcare plan doesn't cover mental health, there are several options we can explore.

- **Non-profit**

Open Path Psychotherapy Collective matches people with affordable mental health services. Rates vary from \$30 to \$80 per hour depending on your state and provider. Unlike more extensive mental health directories, this website only includes sliding scale therapists in their database.

The National Alliance on Mental Illness has a helpline that offers free assistance and advice 24 hours a day, 7 days a week: 1-800-950-6264.

Visit NAMI.org or text NAMI to 741741. If you don't have health insurance and you can't pay out-of-pocket, low-fee or free mental health clinics can provide care.

- **Sliding Scale**

You can search these mental health directories, PsychologyToday and GoodTherapy.org, for sliding scale therapists. Most therapists charge between \$75 to \$150 per session, and the rate is determined by each provider.

- **Local Social Services**

Student health centers or federally-qualified health centers (community-based centers funded by the government) may provide free or low-cost mental health services.

These clinics are staffed by psychotherapists and psychologists, but often are able to expand their services through the use of student psychologists, student mental health counselors, and student social workers who are supervised by licensed, experienced professionals. Services are often provided at no cost, or a reduced rate.

At the clinics, mental health professionals offer a variety of services, including individual and family counseling, medication management, and drug addiction counseling.

To find a clinic in your local area, contact the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) HelpLine or go to MentalHealth.gov.

Local University hospitals and college campuses often have programs that give patients access to interns and residents on a sliding payment scale that's typically much less expensive than mental healthcare providers in private practice.



Resources cont.

Affordable access to therapy

- **Employee Assistance Programs**

Your employer might offer mental health benefits through an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Access is free for employees. Ask your human resources department to provide additional information on any EAP benefit options. There is usually a limit to the number or amount of free EAP benefits an employee can receive a year.

- **Therapy Apps**

People often find teletherapy appealing because you can talk to your therapist from anywhere.

Before signing up for online therapy, complete a mental health questionnaire. Based on those results, you'll be matched with a therapist. Similar to in-person therapy, fees for online therapy vary. For example Talkspace fees are as low as \$65 per week while Betterhelp charges between \$35-\$80 per week.

According to the [American Psychological Association](#) (APA), online therapy may be as helpful as meeting in-person. However, this type of care isn't for everyone. The APA cautions that those with more serious mental health concerns often need more care than remote treatment.

Check out a list of popular online therapy apps [here](#).



Temporary Solutions

Until you have resources for therapy

- **Local Support Groups**

You may benefit from attending a local support group.

Different from individual therapy, support groups connect you with others who are going through a similar experience. While individual therapists often steer clear from giving direct advice, support groups allow you to ask for other people's opinions.

It can also be healing to hear other people share their stories. It's important to find a group that meets your needs.

Open-ended groups allow participants to share at any time during the session. Structured groups may follow a set curriculum each week. [Mental Health America](#) lists specialized support group resources. If you or a loved one has recently been diagnosed with an illness, hospital social workers can also provide a list of local support groups in the community.

Costs for support groups can vary. Addiction support groups, like [Alcoholics Anonymous](#), are free of charge, while other groups may charge a small fee.

- **Crisis & Suicide Prevention Hotlines**

Mental health emergencies like suicidal thoughts, sexual assault, and domestic violence require immediate psychiatric care and attention.

If these crises arise, hotlines can be called at any hour of the day.

[National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#). Available 24 hours. 1-800-273-8255

[SAMHSA's National Helpline](#). Available 24 hours. 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

[The National Domestic Violence Hotline](#). Available 24 hours. 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

[Al-Anon Family Groups](#). Meeting Information: 1-888-4AL-ANON (2666)

- **Meditation Apps**

Mental health apps, like [Calm](#) and [Headspace](#) can teach you meditation, relaxation, and breathing exercises. Meditation can reduce stress and increase well-being.

Here is a list of popular 2021 meditation apps [here](#).



List of options that you are eligible for

Add your research here:

- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
 - 6.
 - 7.
 - 8.
 - 9.
 - 10.
-

Resource Action Plan

YOUR TOP THERAPY FUNDING OPTIONS	
PLAN A	ACTION STEPS
	1.
	2.
	3.
PLAN B	ACTION STEPS
	1.
	2.
	3.
PLAN C	ACTION STEPS
	1.
	2.
	3.



THERAPY TYPES

When it comes to picking the type of therapy, you'll need to start some extensive research. I encourage you to spend time on Google going over each type. Make sure to ask questions about which may be the right fit for you to potential therapists.

I've added a list with some common therapy practices on the next three pages to get you started on your search. Please be mindful that my worksheet does not have every kind of therapy listed. There's a lot to list so I opted to start you off with common therapy types.

Types of Therapy

Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT)

- A CBT therapist will work with you to uncover unhealthful thought patterns. The therapist will discuss with the person how these patterns cause self-destructive behaviors and beliefs.
- The therapist works with you on developing constructive ways of thinking.
- NAMI indicates that CBT is an effective treatment for a variety of disorders including: anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, eating disorders, schizophrenia, & trauma-related disorders.

Dialectical behavior therapy (DBT)

- DBT is similar to CBT. However, DBT focuses more on regulating emotions, being mindful, and accepting uncomfortable thoughts and feelings.
- Psychotherapists first developed DBT to treat people with borderline personality disorder (BPD) who were experiencing thoughts of suicide.
- An article in The Mental Health Clinician indicates that DBT has reduced medical care and medications by 90%.
- Therapists now use DBT to treat: eating disorders, (PTSD), substance use, mood disorders

Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing therapy (EMDR)

- (EMDR) is a technique that therapists primarily use to treat people with PTSD.
- EMDR involves a person recalling a traumatic event while performing specific eye movements.
- EMDR aims to replace adverse reactions to painful memories with less charged or positive responses.

Exposure therapy

- Exposure therapy is a form of CBT. Therapists have successfully used exposure therapy to treat people with fear and anxiety disorders.
- Therapists may use exposure therapy to help treat: OCD, PTSD, phobias.
- A person undergoing exposure therapy will work with their therapist to figure out what triggers their anxiety. The person will learn methods to avoid ritualistic behaviors or anxiety after exposure to these triggers.
- The therapist will then expose the person to their triggers in a controlled environment to put these methods into practice.

Types of Therapy cont.

Interpersonal therapy

- Interpersonal therapy aims to help a person work on their relationships with others. According to NAMI Trusted Source, therapists often use interpersonal therapy to treat depression.
- During interpersonal therapy, the therapist evaluates a person's social interactions and helps them to notice negative patterns. The therapist can then help the person learn ways to understand and interact positively with others.

Mentalization-based therapy (MBT)

- (MBT) is an effective treatment to treat BPD.
- MBT involves a technique called mentalizing. This therapy helps people with BPD to notice and understand their thoughts and feelings and those of others.
- Its primary aim is to give a person with BPD a sense of self and help them connect to other people.

Psychodynamic therapy

- Psychodynamic therapy aims to help a person combat negative patterns of behavior that derive from past experiences.
- This form of therapy involves a person speaking freely in response to a therapist's questions, which allows a therapist to identify patterns of behavior and thought.
- Once a person understands how experiences have created unhelpful behaviors and feelings, they can learn to overcome them.
- This is successful in treating depressive disorders, BPD, anxiety & personality disorders.

Animal-assisted therapy

- Animal-assisted therapy involves a person spending time with a trained therapy pet. A therapy pet can help reduce a person's anxiety, as well as help those with PTSD.
- NAMI indicate that therapy dogs are particularly helpful to patients with cancer, heart disease, or mental health disorders.
- Using animal-assisted therapy, alongside music therapy, an enriched environment, and other supportive therapies, to minimize stress and trauma for hospitalized people who may require compulsory admission or seclusion.

Types of Therapy cont.

Emotion-focused therapy (EFT)

- EFT focuses on building awareness of emotions and regulating and resolving them. EFT encourages people to work on their emotions rather than suppressing them.
- EFT can treat: depression, trauma, social anxiety, interpersonal problems, eating disorders, relationship issues

Family therapy

- Family therapists help a family understand and work through patterns of negative behavior that may cause underlying problems.
- Family therapy can help families with adolescents experiencing mental health issues.
- This type of therapy can also help people with: substance misuse disorders, eating disorders, behavioral problems, anxiety, OCD.

Group therapy

- Group therapy allows people experiencing similar issues to join together as a group to resolve them. In group therapy, a therapist leads the discussion, and individuals can comment or contribute personal thoughts and experiences.
- Group therapy can benefit people with: interpersonal relationship issues, behavioral, medical issues, depression, anxiety, difficulty recovering from a loss, trauma, addiction, personality disorders.

Mindfulness-based therapy

- Mindfulness is the practice of becoming present in the moment. Mindfulness aims to encourage a person to observe and accept things as they are and without judgment.
- Mindfulness-based interventions were beneficial Trusted Source to people with: depression, schizophrenia, stress, anxiety, pain
- Meditation can be a big part of practicing mindfulness.

NARROWING IT DOWN

FIND THERAPY TYPES THAT MATCH ON THE
LISTS BELOW

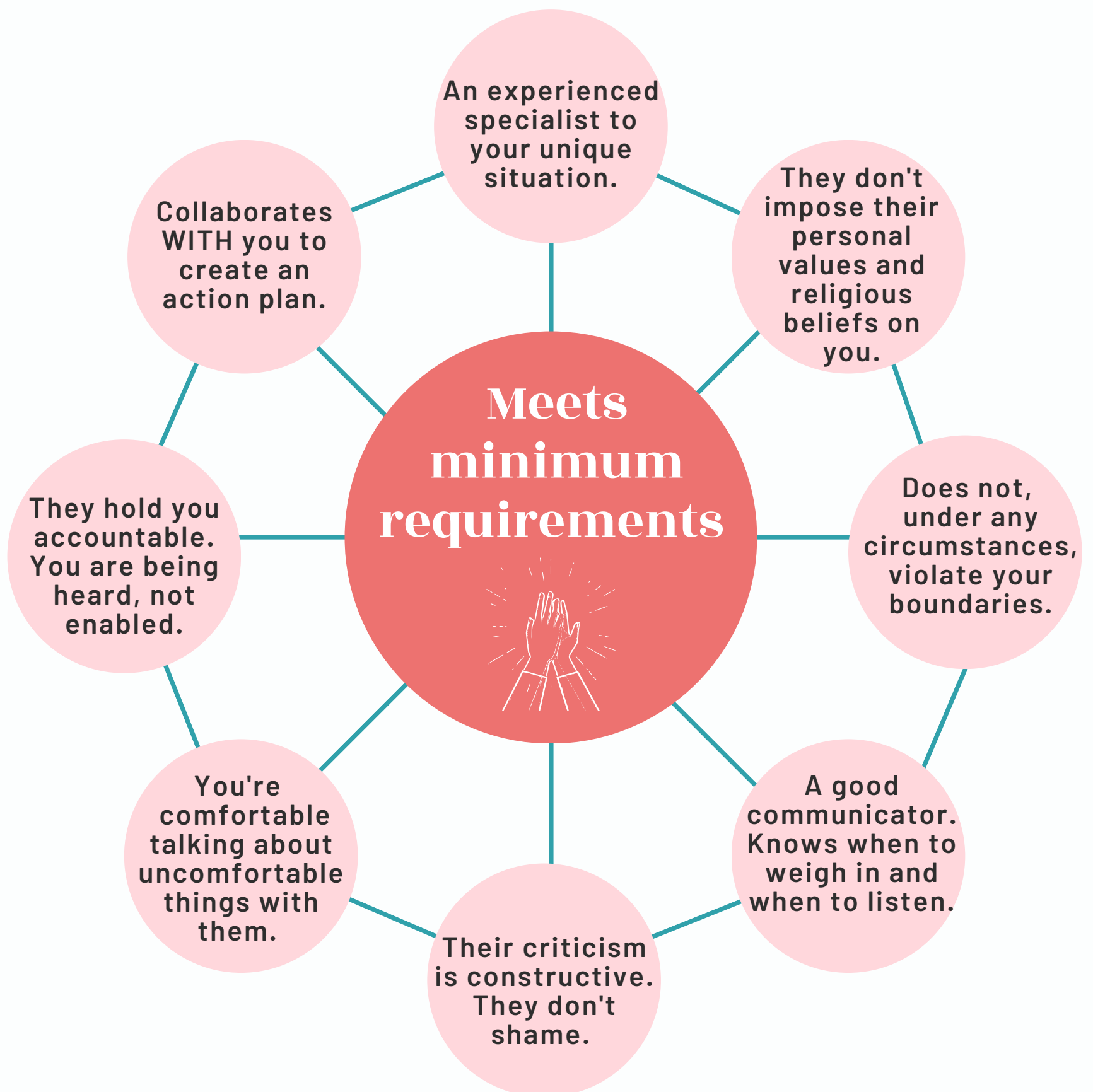
THERAPY TYPES THAT
WOULD MEET MY NEEDS
AND MATCH MY GOALS:

THERAPY TYPES THAT
ARE ON MY RESOURCE
ACTION PLAN:

LIST YOUR MATCHES HERE:

What makes a good therapist?

These are some qualities to look for.



BRAINSTORM SESSION

List what you personally require in a therapist and what you won't go for.

YOUR REQUIREMENTS

YOUR DEAL BREAKERS

Therapist Research Sheet

YOU FOUND SOMEONE, YAY!

NOTES ON WHAT YOU FOUND ABOUT THEIR
REVIEWS, PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND
AND ONLINE PRESENCE.

WRITE YOUR NICHE PREFERENCES HERE
AND CHECK OFF EACH ONE THAT THIS
THERAPIST MEETS.

*example: LGBTQ friendly, works with DV
survivors, specializes in adult children of
alcoholic parents, etc.*

☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS

YOUR ACTION PLAN OUTLINE

Pick the top 3 goals that you have for your mental health and why you want to pursue these improvements while in therapy. Make sure to bring this up during your first session.

Goal 1

Goal 2

Goal 3

NOTES ON YOUR FIRST SESSION

Concerns and questions after reflecting on the session.

What stood out to you? Likes & dislikes.

ASSESSMENT OF FIRST SESSION

	Yes	no
Do you feel comfortable around this person?	☐	☐
Do they meet the professional qualifications needed for your specific mental health goals?	☐	☐
Has this person worked with people similar to you?	☐	☐
Did they discuss how they will evaluate your progress?	☐	☐
Is their availability (frequency of visits, phone & email responsive, meet times) compatible with yours?	☐	☐
Did you feel confident with your compatibility by the end of the session?	☐	☐
Are they understanding of your financial situation and are they willing to work with the resources you have?	☐	☐
Did they exhibit a full understanding of your sexual orientation, religious affiliation and cultural background?	☐	☐
Were you able to express your therapy goals and discuss potential action plans with them?	☐	☐
Did it feel like this person was "on your team" (active listening, constructive suggestions, no shaming, etc.)	☐	☐
Were you able to ask all of your questions and express any concerns about potentially working with them?	☐	☐

FINAL EVALUATION

On a scale of one to five, one being you need to move on to another therapist and five being this is an excellent match, rate the following.

They meet my resources/funding requirements.



They offer my ideal therapy type and niche, with extensive background in both.



They meet my personal preferences, I am comfortable around them.



Their personality is compatible to mine.



I found our first session genuinely helpful. We addressed my goals/action plan.



Their availability matches mine. No scheduling issues, lengthy waiting lists, etc.



Was this helpful during your search?

If so, I'd like to invite you to check out my free goal book for trauma survivors.



If we create a system that's too complex,

then we don't end up accomplishing much of anything. I created this strategy after years of studying several other techniques and plucking what worked during tedious bouts of trial and error during my trauma recovery. I noticed there needed to be accessible motivators in the self help world that openly addressed what abuse survivors are facing while they are trying to better their lives. It's what I use to accomplish close to anything on a daily basis. The main focus? Overcoming shame and realizing that you deserve your dream life.

- ✓ **Immediate support** from a fellow survivor with trauma informed techniques.
- ✓ **A proven method** to get clear on what you want and manifest your goals.
- ✓ **Life enhancing process** to overcome your battle with self sabotage.

[GET THE GUIDE](#)



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