

# Therapy 101

A Toolkit For Young Adults Who  
Want To Start Therapy



National Alliance on Mental Illness

**NAMI**

**Mercer**

Serving the New Jersey Capital Area

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# Introduction

This toolkit was created by Cameron Regner, an intern at NAMI MERCER, with the hope of explaining the basics of therapy to young adults. Those who are in need of or are seeking therapy for the first time can be confused or intimidated by the process. This toolkit will help streamline that process by covering everything you need to know about therapy.

# Immediate Help

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**Having bad thoughts?  
Just need to talk?**

**You can access hotlines and helplines 24/7.**

**Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: 988**

**NJ Hopeline: 855-654-6735**

**Crisis Textline: Text NAMI to 741741**

## **LGBTQ RESOURCES**

**Trans Lifeline: 877-565-8860**

**Trevor Project LifeLine: 1-866-488-7386**

## **Domestic & Sexual Violence Concerns**

**Womanspace of Mercer County**

**Call: 609-394-9000**

**Text 609-619-1888**





# Help Without Therapy 5

Unfortunately, not everyone has access to therapy. There are, however, other beneficial activities to improve your mental health. Try these activities whenever you can.

## Guided Meditation Videos

Access YouTube for guided meditation videos designed to help ease your mind and calm your spirit.

## Positive Affirmations

Repeat positive phrases and statements to yourself, write them down, or say them out loud. Affirmations challenge negative thoughts and encourage positive ones. Try coming up with your own affirmations about yourself and your life or look up positive affirmations online.

## Journaling

Writing down your thoughts and emotions can serve as a good outlet. It allows you to vent, keep track of your life, and forces you to put your thoughts into words.

## Connect with Friends and Family

Share your experiences with people who care about you. This can provide you with emotional support and/or offer a different perspective.

## Physical Activity

Be active! It is great for your physical health and your mental wellbeing. It can help you set and achieve goals, improve your mood, and raise your self esteem.



# Benefits of Therapy



**More Confidence**



**Greater Happiness**



**Less Anxiety**



**Resolves Trauma**



**Improves Relationships**



**Relieves Stress**



**Regain Control of Your Life**



**Handle Situations Better**

# Therapy is for Everyone

For those considering therapy and for those who aren't, Dr. Emily Anhalt shares her experience both as a patient and as a therapist. She offers compelling reasons for why anyone should start therapy.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eE6Rt-bFkvw>

# When to See a Therapist



Feeling consistently stressed, anxious, and/or depressed



Having anger issues



Using alcohol or drugs to cope



Feeling dull, burned out, and not yourself



Experiencing relationship problems



Need to talk to someone

## Other signs you should see a therapist:

- Current coping skills aren't working
- Have problems you can't get through yourself
- Want a private place to vent
- Are feeling overwhelmed



# Paying for Therapy

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The average cost of therapy is between **\$65 - \$250/hour**  
ASK the provider about cost

**Sliding Scale:** Costs of sessions vary depending on the client's income, dependents, and insurance coverage

**Deductible:** The amount of money paid out of pocket before an insurance provider will cover costs.

**Copay:** A fixed amount paid by a patient to a provider for each session after you've reached your deductible

Many therapists accept insurance. If your therapist accepts your insurance, you may still have a co-pay or you might be responsible for paying the balance of what your insurance doesn't cover.

Once you spend a certain amount of money on healthcare in a given year you will have met your "out-of-pocket" deductible. Thereafter, your insurance provider will cover the full cost of each session.

# Different Kinds of Clinicians

To find the help that's right for you, it's important to understand the different types of clinicians and their specialties.

## **Licensed Professional Counselor-**

Has a degree in counseling and can offer advanced psychological treatment. They are very helpful for everyday therapy. They treat mental health through a variety of techniques. They also have at least a master's degree in their therapy field.

## **Licensed Clinical Social Worker-**

These professionals work in a wide variety of settings to provide emotional support, mental health evaluations, therapy, and case management services. Their clients are people experiencing psychological, emotional, medical, social and/or family challenges. An LCSW has at least a master's degree in social work and focuses on social welfare, social behavior, and social systems.

# Different Kinds of Clinicians

## **Psychiatrist-**

A Medical Doctor with psychological training. They help manage long term mental health conditions like bipolar disorder, OCD, severe depression and schizophrenia. They are licensed to prescribe and monitor medication, but generally don't spend much time engaging in talk therapy.

## **Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner-**

An advanced practice nurse with advanced training in mental health and psychiatry. They may conduct some forms of therapy, mental health assessments, and prescribe medications.

# Different Kinds of Clinicians

Not all clinicians are equal! Keep in mind that different degrees and certifications might increase the overall price.

Additionally, many mental health offices have a combination of clinicians under one roof, so you may not have to find more than one office to attend!

## **Psychologist-**

Has a PHD in psychology (or a subset of psychology) and offers advanced psychological treatment. They help patients cope with life issues and mental health challenges. They also conduct testing for treatment and diagnostic purposes. They are better suited for patients with more advanced symptoms.



# Different Kinds of Clinicians

It's okay to be confused about different kinds of clinicians. You will learn more as you make your way on your mental health journey.



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=dfex5wnWZXI&t=2s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dfex5wnWZXI&t=2s)

# How to Talk to Your Parents

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It's important to share with your family what you're going through. It's also important to talk to them if you're covered under their insurance.

***How you talk to them and how much you say is completely up to you!***

Hey Mom and or Dad, (insert problem) has really been upsetting me recently, and I think speaking with a professional would be very helpful.

Hey Mom and or Dad, I am very stressed out over (insert problem), and I would like to seek professional counseling to help me feel better.

Hey mom and or dad, I have been feeling very stressed out recently. I would like to talk to a therapist

★ If your parents aren't able to pay for your therapy, you can still receive therapy under their insurance and pay for it yourself.

# How to Talk to Your Parents

*If you are uncomfortable sharing your problems, that's okay! Saying something vague and simple is perfectly fine!*

I'm sorry but I feel uncomfortable talking about my problems with friends and family

I've had trouble dealing with my problems myself, a therapist would be really helpful

# How to Find a Therapist

The best way to find a therapist who accepts your insurance is through your insurance provider's website.

- 1. Go to your insurance website**
- 2. Log into your parents' or your account**
- 3. Navigate to Find Care/Find a Doctor**
- 4. Enter the geographic area where you would like to find care**
- 5. Search for a provider based on your preference- "Licensed Professional Counselor," "Psychologist," etc.**
- 6. Adjust the filters to best suit your needs**
- 7. Begin calling and emailing providers!**



# How to Find a Therapist

## Psychology Today

A great online resource to help you find a clinician who is right for you

You can filter based on many factors!

- Issues
- Price
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Ethnicity
- Religion
- Language
- Insurance

1. Go to [PsychologyToday.com](https://www.psychologytoday.com)
2. Filter by your clinician preference
3. Search by your city & state
4. Add additional filters per your needs (price, insurance, issues, etc.)
5. Begin calling and emailing providers!



# Don't Lose Hope!

Finding a Therapist can be difficult

It might take time

You might have to call multiple  
therapists

You might become discouraged

But you will find a therapist to help you

And your future self will thank you

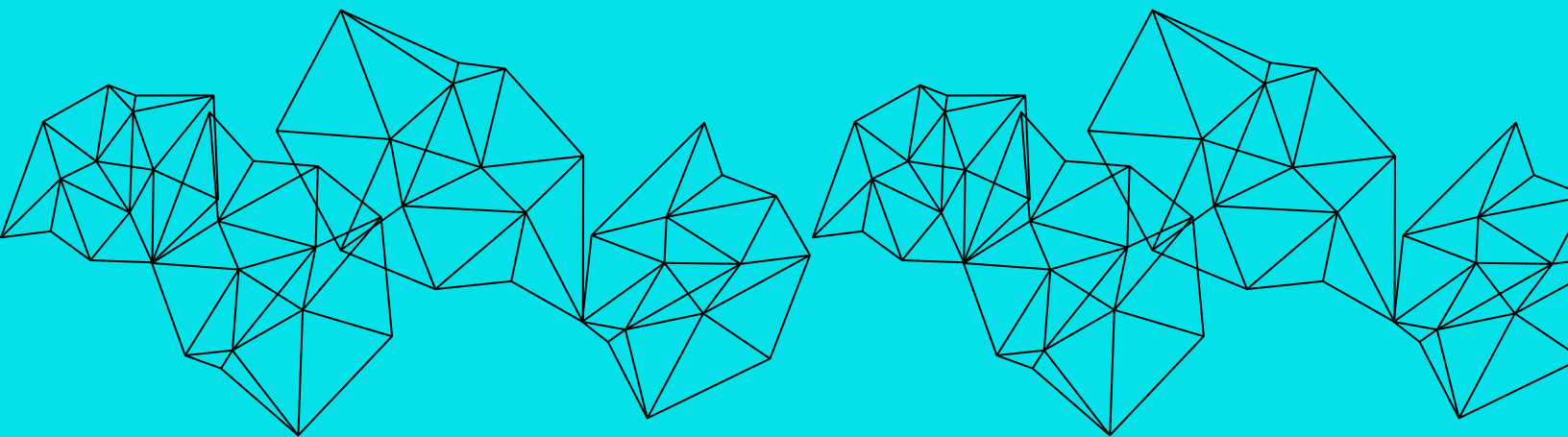


# Telehealth

Due to the pandemic, many providers have switched to online-only sessions using video meetings. This new way of receiving care online is called Telehealth.

## What is Telehealth?

Allows virtual patient-client interaction. A therapy provider will email a link to the client. Simply clicking the link allows you to join a session. Meetings take place on websites like Zoom, Google Meets, Doxy.me, and Simple Practice.



# Your First Session

Starting your first session might be intimidating, but there are things to keep in mind to make the process easier.

## Before Your First Session

**Set a List of Goals-** Setting clear goals for therapy can make your first session easier for you and your therapist. Think about what you want from therapy and your reasons for starting. **There is nothing wrong with not knowing your goals! Therapy can help you make them!**

**Make a List of Topics to Cover-** Having a list allows you to go into your first session focused on your issues and prepared.

**Manage Your Expectations-** Your first session is an introduction and will cover various things: insurance, paperwork, therapy process, confidentiality, and more. Each session will build on the previous ones.





# Your First Session

## Before Your First Session

**Congratulate Yourself-** It's not easy to seek out mental health help. Many people have difficulty coming this far, but you did it! That is important to celebrate.

## During Your First Session

**Opening Up-** Talking about your problems might be difficult, but it's what you're there for. As time goes on, you will become more comfortable with your therapist and be able to share more easily.

**Be Honest-** Being honest is crucial to get the most out of therapy. Remember that everything is confidential and your therapist is there to help you, not to judge you.

**Ask Questions-** There are no wrong questions in therapy. Ask your therapist anything that you would like clarified: insurance, scheduling, billing, their experience, personality, strategies, or anything else.



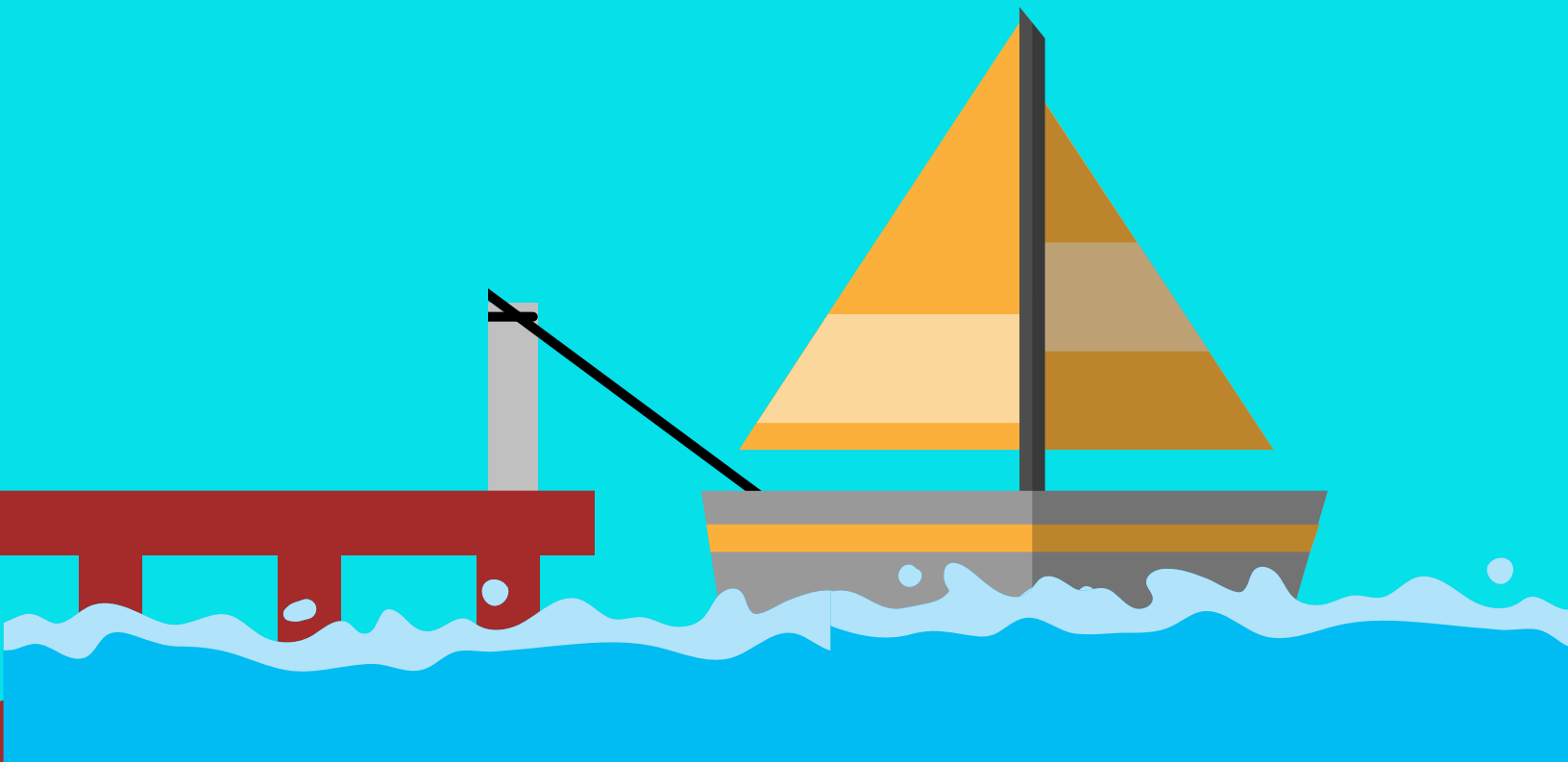
# Finding the Right Fit

The relationship you establish with your therapist is important. You are there to improve your life, so don't stick with the wrong person if it isn't working. There are many different factors and elements to consider.

**Personality-** Do I connect with this person? Do I feel supported and understood? Are they challenging me to become my best self?

**Professionalism-** Do they conduct themselves appropriately? Do they talk about themselves too much? Are they judgmental? Are they overly emotional? Are they confrontational?

**Affordability-** Am I able to afford this therapist without experiencing financial difficulties?



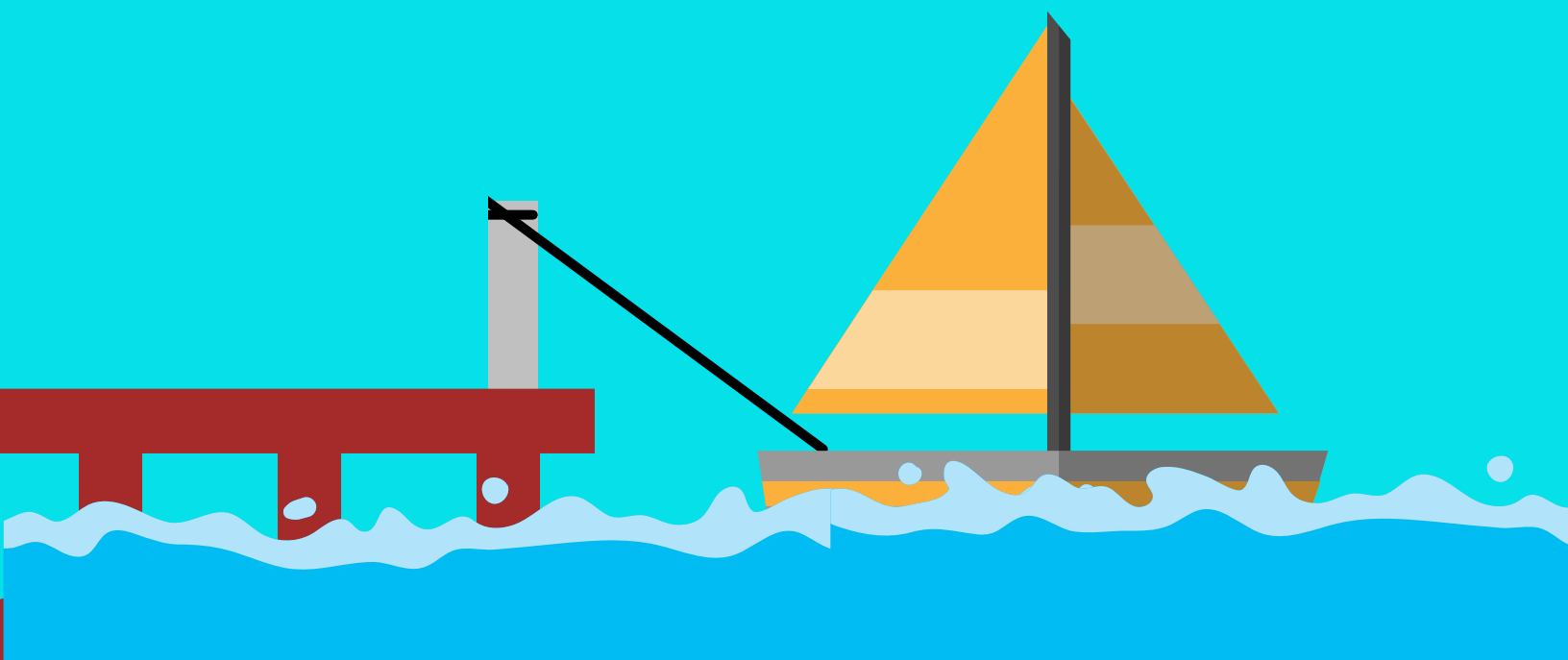
# Finding the Right Fit

**Accessibility**- Does their schedule align with mine? Am I receiving the amount of treatment and the number of sessions I need?

**Specialization**- Do they specialize in issues that are relevant to me?

**Methods**- Do their methods of helping benefit and work for me?

**These questions may help you, but no one can decide if a therapist is a good fit except you. A good comparison is dating: you need to find someone with whom you're compatible. Make sure you attend more than one session before deciding; your opinion of someone might change after you spend a little more time with them.**





# Author's Note

Therapy is a great resource for you to take back your life. Hopefully this toolkit makes the process easier. Everyone's mental health journey is different, so don't be discouraged if yours takes longer than others. Believing in yourself and taking steps to improve your mental health are what's important. Everyone deserves to be happy, including you. I wholeheartedly believe in you and I can definitely say that you deserve to be happy. Good luck in therapy and on your mental health journey. Whether you decide to go to therapy or not, reading this shows that you care about yourself and your mental health. That truly is a great thing; be proud of that.



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