

[How to Find the Right Psychological Counselor-From Barrington and Algonquin, IL](#)

If you are looking for a counselor or psychologist, here are some guidelines to help you choose correctly.

Which Professional Is Right For Me?

Mental health professionals include psychologists, psychiatrists, mental health counselors, psychiatric social workers and marriage and family therapists. Finding the right type of therapist therefore, may require some research.

Sometimes, it can be helpful to describe your problems to your family doctor or, even to a person who may be having similar issues and who is happy with the treatment he or she is receiving. Either of these sources may be able to suggest a professional to call.

Psychologists typically have a doctoral degree (Ph.D., Psy.D, or Ed.D) in psychology and are licensed to practice independently. They usually have 2 years of upper division college training in psychology, plus an additional 3-4 years of training at the graduate school level.

They are required to complete an internship and pass a rigorous state licensing examination. They are the most highly trained in psychological and counseling practice, than are any other mental health professionals.

They provide psychological therapy for emotional and behavioral problems and also specialize in providing psychological testing. Their concentration in testing enables them, more than any other profession, to make a thorough diagnosis.

A psychiatrist is a medical doctor, whose education includes a medical degree (M.D. or D.O.) and at least one additional year of study and training, known as the internship. Almost all of their training is in general medicine.

They are licensed as physicians and can call themselves psychiatrists, even if they have no coursework in psychiatry or psychology. However, physicians who pass the examination administered by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology are board certified in psychiatry, after having completed a three year residency studying mental health practice.

Psychiatrists can provide various treatments for psychiatric disorders. However, in practice they rarely do counseling and since most of their training is in medicine, they concentrate on the prescription and monitoring of medications.

Usually, social workers in a psychotherapeutic practice have earned a masters degree (M.S. or M..S.W.), which is an additional 2 years of training beyond the first 4 years of college. In most states, they can take an examination to be licensed as clinical social workers and they can provide most forms of psychotherapy.

Licensed counselors have earned a masters degree (M.S.) in counseling, which is an additional 1 to 2 years of training beyond the bachelors degree. In most states, they take an examination to be licensed as professional counselors and they also provide most forms of psychotherapy or counseling.

You Decide to Make the Call to the Therapist...Now What?

Spend a few minutes with the therapist on the phone and ask about his or her approach to working with patients, his or her philosophy and whether or not he or she concentrates in certain areas (some psychologists for instance specialize in family or child counseling, while others specialize in divorce or coping with loss.) It is also important to ask how much your treatment will cost and how much will be covered by your health policy.

If you feel comfortable after talking to the counselor, your next step is to make the all-important first appointment. During your initial consultation, the counselor will want to get to know you.

He will want to know how you would describe your problem and your life, how you support yourself and with whom you live. He or she may also ask about your family and friends.

This information will help him or her assess your situation and develop a treatment plan. Discuss any feelings of discomfort that you may have, if you do not feel comfortable after your first few visits.

If you would feel more comfortable, feel free to contact another therapist. Remember: Feeling comfortable with your therapist is crucial to the success

of your treatment.

How Much Will Therapy Cost?

The cost of treatment depends on things such as, the type of therapy, your therapists training, where the counseling takes place and your insurance coverage. Fees can range from \$85 to \$175 per visit. It is important to know that most health insurance companies cover at least part of the therapy.

Generally, if you have insurance your out-of-pocket costs will be somewhere between \$10 to \$50 per visit, depending on your particular policy.

Am I Getting The Care I Need?

As you progress, you should begin to feel a sense of gradual relief and an improving sense of confidence. Your ability to make decisions and the comfort level in your relationships should also begin to improve.

Occasionally, however, you may feel uncomfortable during your therapy, but episodes like those occur, even during the most successful counseling sessions. Over time, your psychotherapy should help you cope more effectively with your feelings and the situations you confront.

If your depression is not lifting or your anxiety is not decreasing, it may be because the specific type of therapy you are receiving is not the one best suited to you. If you have doubts or feel unsure, discuss it with your therapist.

Any competent mental health professional will be eager to discuss your concerns. If you are still dissatisfied or have nagging doubts, do not hesitate to get a second opinion.

About the Author

Dr Shery is in Cary, IL, near Algonquin, Crystal Lake, Marengo and Lake-in-the-Hills. He's an expert psychologist. Call 1 847 516 0899 and make an appt or [learn more about counseling](http://www.carypsychology.com) at: <http://www.carypsychology.com>

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