

[Counseling: Will It Help Me? From Mchenry, Lake in the Hills and Barrington](#)

Psychotherapy and counseling can effectively decrease any depression, anxiety or related symptoms you may feel, such as pain, fatigue, and nausea. In fact, emotional and physical health is so closely linked that psychotherapy and counseling may even help improve your overall health.

Scientific evidence demonstrates that most people with emotional problems who have at least several sessions of counseling are far better off than those who are left untreated. One major study showed that one-half of patients noticeably improved after only eight sessions, while 75 percent of those in therapy improved in just six months.

How Will I Know If the Therapy Is Working?

At the onset of therapy, establish clear goals with your psychologist. Perhaps you are trying to eliminate feelings of hopelessness or trying to control a fear that is interfering with your quality of life.

Some goals require more time than others. You and your psychotherapist should discuss at what point or what time frame might be necessary for you to begin to see progress.

If you begin to feel some relief and some hope, that is a good sign that you are beginning to make progress. People experience a wide variety of feelings as the counseling process takes place.

Some qualms about therapy are caused because some people have difficulty discussing painful and troubling experiences openly. However, when you begin to feel relief or hope, it suggests that you are starting to explore your thoughts and behavior honestly, and that is highly suggestive of a good outcome.

Examples of the types of problems which bring people to seek help from counselors and psychologists are provided here:

John, a man in his late 20s has been drinking heavily and getting into serious arguments with his wife. He has just been placed on probation at work because of various forms of inappropriate angry behavior towards his staff and other employees.

First, the factors that may have contributed to his increase in stress will be examined in the evaluation stage of therapy. Then he and the psychologist will design a treatment plan that targets his identified problems and isolates certain goals.

Initially, the psychologist will start by helping John assess how he coped with any earlier experiences that were similar. The goal is to glean any possible lessons from the past that might be useful in solving his current problems.

The psychologist functions as a trained, experienced and impartial professional, who attempts to help John benefit from any available resources (his own as well as others) to solve or cope with his problems. He also will help him develop any new skills or problem-solving strategies that may be necessary to resolve his problems.

Feelings of futility, crying spells, sleep problems, binge-eating and feelings of powerlessness are symptoms from which Melissa, a woman in her early 40s suffers. She has withdrawn from attending her weekly social functions and has a hard time getting out of bed and going to her job.

She feels like a black cloud looms over her every moment and perceives herself as trapped. These symptoms of depression tenaciously hover over her but the causes may not be initially apparent.

Significant crises--such as the death of a family member, job loss or a child's joining the military may contribute to the seriousness of her symptoms. Psychologists have a proven track record of using counseling and cognitive re-structuring techniques to help their patients cope with and resolve depressive disorders such as these.

The psychologist will address the reasons why Melissa is reacting symptomatically rather than normally. For example, he will assess whether she has a history or pattern of suffering from depressive feelings, and, if so, under what circumstances?

He will evaluate what was helpful to her when she previously dealt with similar feelings, and question what she is doing now to cope. The psychologist will help her see a more positive future and reduce the negative thinking that accompanies her depression.

He or she also will assist her in problem-solving through any major life conflicts that she has to confront. If her depression resulted from a loss, the psychologist will help to facilitate the grieving process.

If medical problems contribute to her symptoms, medical and psychological interventions will be implemented to help her overcome any depression specifically related to them.

Mark, a successful lawyer, has been laid off by the firm for which he works. Instead of looking for other jobs, he has gone on numerous shopping sprees and has gotten himself into thousands of dollars of debt; however, he keeps spending with no end in sight.

Surprisingly, Mark is doing the opposite of what appears to be common sense. His friends and family are initially bewildered and confused by his behavior.

However, such behavior is not unfamiliar to psychologists who understand depression and bipolar disorders. Any psychologist would start by doing a thorough assessment in order to understand the apparently contradictory behavior that Mark exhibits.

After that is completed, the counselor might conclude that Marks behavior is actually a symptom of depression, bipolar disorder or some other psychological disorder. Typically, the best treatment for such conditions combines the use of medication and psychotherapy or counseling.

Psychologists do not provide medication themselves; however, they can refer you to a physician who is able to do so. The psychologist provides an understanding of human behavior, psychological testing and tested psychotherapeutic techniques that can be effective in helping Mark.

Richard, a teenager, has just moved with his family and has been forced to go to a new high school. He is now skipping classes and getting very poor grades, even though he was once an excellent student. He also has problems making friends there.

For most teenagers, fitting in is crucial. Richard is trying to make a major transition under difficult circumstances.

This is happening because he has been separated from his usual network of friends which allowed him to feel part of the group and he no longer has that important feeling of belonging. Since teens often respond to frustration and difficulty with noticeable changes in behavior, Richards starting to get poor grades, his becoming a loner and his loss of interest in school activities, under the circumstances, would not be so unusual.

Psychologists know that teens tend to test first and trust second, so his counseling psychologist will initially spend time focusing on developing a good personal relationship and rapport with him; then he or she will be in a better position to help Richard use better ways to adjust to his new environment.

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>

Source: <http://www.onlineearnings.net>