



Finding the Perfect Therapist

A Companion Guide for Your Search

3

is the average number of therapists Americans see before finding “the one.”

Source: OnePoll / Mindstrong survey, 2,000 U.S. adults (2022)

72%

of people seeking care say the search for the right therapist feels overwhelming.

Source: OnePoll / Mindstrong survey, 2,000 U.S. adults (2022)

Top 10 Things to Consider When Choosing a Therapist

1. The Right Fit

You're hiring their perspective and personality, not just their expertise. Do they feel like a co-captain in your care?

2. Their Specialty

What do they treat, and how? If they say they can handle “anything and everything,” that's a red flag — run.

3. Modality of Treatment

Talk therapy, EMDR, Family Systems, ART, Neurofeedback, coaching, and more — ask what method they use and why.

4. Their Credentials

What licensure do they hold, and does that matter to you? Confirm it's verifiable.

5. The Cost

Insurance doesn't always mean free. Ask about cash-pay, sliding-scale and no-show fees, deductibles, and copays.

6. Location

In person or telehealth — consider which setting helps you show up consistently.

7. Availability

Do their open hours work with your job and schedule? Fit only helps if you can actually be seen.

8. Diversity

Do they bring personal or professional experience, and diversity of age, gender, or background that matters to you?

9. First Impression

Do a quick phone call — it tells you a lot about fit before you commit to a full session.

10. Gut Feeling

Trust it. If it's not right, it's okay to change therapists.

Good luck — and don't give up!

What Actually Predicts a Good Fit

The relationship between you and your therapist — not the specific technique they use — is one of the strongest predictors of whether therapy helps and is considered successful. Research puts the therapeutic alliance well ahead of any single method in explaining outcomes. However, the “method” they use is vital to your healing journey as well!

That's why finding the right fit deserves the same care as choosing any other specialist, and why it's completely normal to need more than one try before it clicks.

When to Take the Next Step

If a therapist checks these boxes, trust the process even if the first sessions feel a little unfamiliar — that's normal. If it still doesn't feel right after 2–3 sessions, it's okay to keep looking.

US: Call or text 988 (Suicide & Crisis Lifeline) — free, confidential, available 24/7.

This guide is educational and not a substitute for professional medical or mental health care.

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