

FIVE WAYS TO TELL THERAPY IS WORKING FOR YOU

In last month's Medical Minute we discussed five ways to tell when it's time to change therapists. This month we will discuss five signs that therapy is going well. There are some straightforward characteristics of a good therapy relationship. However, there is one thing no therapist can do no matter how skilled they may be. Nobody can help you change unless you agree to accept the challenge of making the changes. Once you have reached the stage in your life where you are ready to do what it takes, you then need to make a good choice about who will be your treatment provider. The therapist who helps you will have the qualities to match your needs. This article will offer five of those qualities.

1. The therapist should be on time unless there are exceptional circumstances. They should not miss appointments and if they cancel any appointments they should offer a valid explanation. They will be interested in you and your issues and remember them between appointments (they take notes to help with this). They will be objective and positive. They will give you the agreed upon time for the appointment. Unless it is absolutely necessary they will not cut appointments short or go over the allotted time.

2. There is a clear understanding of the payments for their services and how they will collect them. This is a professional business arrangement and both parties have a responsibility. This is important for you to feel like your time and the therapist time is valuable. They discuss any payment issues with you.

3. The therapist's style is compatible with yours. You understand how they work and it makes sense to you. You see their suggestions and strategies as positive and you are willing to try them. You may not feel comfortable facing the issues, but you respect the knowledge and advice the therapist is offering. It feels like a good partnership for your growth. You will leave the appointments with a sense of accomplishment even if the steps are small or the tasks ahead are difficult.

4. The relationship has good boundaries. The therapist focuses on you and talks about you. They do not veer off into their own life unless it's appropriate or relevant to what you are trying to accomplish in therapy. They also do not allow you to cross the line into a personal relationship. You know you are not friends but also know they have your best interests at heart.

This column sponsored by:



Affiliated Clinical Services Inc.
38 Sell Drive, Hartford WI 53027
262-673-0301

5. There is an ongoing evaluation of your progress and you can see you are making measurable gains. If there is little progress, the therapist discusses this with you and may try a different way of working toward your goals or reassessing what your goals should be. If this does not achieve success the therapist may suggest you try a different provider, a different type of treatment such as a group, or perhaps a different modality like yoga as a better option for you. Also, the therapist will discuss when you are ready to end therapy. A good therapist will be happy to send you on your way when you have completed your goals.

There are more ingredients in what makes a good therapy experience but the five described are a good way to determine the quality of your therapy experience. These are five attributes the therapists at Affiliated Clinical Services believe in and offer to their clients.