

Health

What is therapy – and could it help you?

Depression, a major life event or simply the need to try and understand some events from your past may lead you to think about seeing a therapist

Often depression, a crisis or a major life event can start people thinking about seeing a therapist. They may want to work through bereavement or loss, relationship or parenting difficulties, career issues or sexual issues.

People choose therapy at any point in their lives - because they want to learn more about themselves, gain greater clarity on thoughts and feelings, improve their quality of life and their relationships, or to unburden and have someone to talk to and tell their story to.

Psychotherapy is an exploration of your relationship to yourself with constructive support. Through one-to-one contact with a therapist, you can learn how you enter relationships, how you think and feel in a relationship and reflect on how you have handled past relationships.

Therapy gives you the time and space in a non-judgemental, safe, supportive and confidential environment to reflect on what works for you and recognise changes you might like to make. It gives you greater awareness of your emotions and your behaviours. With this awareness, you can feel more in control of your life and more able to make informed choices.

One of the most common statements people make about their time in individual therapy is how important it is to have somebody there for them over time and on a regular basis. This is an important



experience to have and in itself can increase your self-esteem and confidence.

Short or brief psychotherapy

can be referred to as counselling with the focus on specific issues with an agreed number of sessions, which can be extended. Sometimes people go to therapy wanting to talk about one aspect of their lives, although this can motivate them to have longer term psychotherapy where they continue to be supported to reflect on other areas of their life.

Long-term psychotherapy

involves a different commitment, both in terms of time and deeper exploration. The client and therapist regularly review the work they are doing and how the therapeutic relationship is progressing. This on-going review of the work helps contain it, give it shape, acknowledge and appreciate where the client and therapist have come to and how they would like to take the work forward.

Sessions are usually an hour and initially you will probably meet once a week. However, the frequency and length of therapy is decided by the therapist and client together.

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