

What NOT to look for when seeking therapy.

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What NOT to look for when looking for a therapist.

Here are some tips to help you avoid seeing a therapist who is only after your money, and is not interested in your desire to function effectively independent of the therapist.

How do I know about this? And how am I qualified to give you these tips and hints?

I am a licensed Hypnotherapist of over 16 years, a Meditator and a qualified NLP Practitioner.

You can find out more about my approach to treatment at;

<http://www.hypnosistapes-and-cds.com/treatmentmethods.htm>

I see clients for stress related problems, anxiety, fears and phobias, depression, addictions and similar.

Unfortunately some unscrupulous therapists will try to take advantage of you.

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What NOT to look for when seeking personal therapy - or (how to save yourself money, time, and loss of independence).

Things to avoid with therapists: -

### **1. Does he offer a free consultation?**

This can mean he may have a hidden agenda to "Sell you his therapy" during the consultation.

Obviously this is not always the case, but certainly is something to think about.

*(When I use the word 'he', I mean equally 'he' or 'she').*

A sensible therapist will almost always charge for the initial consultation, after all it is their expertise that you are paying for to tell you whether or not they can help you. At the end of the consultation, you may both agree not to take it further, and nobody feels they have lost out. All therapists will conduct a brief phone consultation at no charge before booking a consultation.

### **2. Do they avoid giving you a clear indication of how long therapy may take?**

If he says he cannot do this, or seems to evade answering, then be careful. It could mean that they simply want to keep seeing you.

With experience it is not difficult to be able to give at least a guide as to how long it may take to fix the problem. i.e. between 6 and 8 sessions. This gives you the confidence to know when the problem is likely to be solved, and to know, that you will most likely not need more sessions than this.

### **3. Do you feel totally comfortable with him during the consultation, or at any time during subsequent therapy sessions?**

Does he appear 'glib' or 'smarmy' or 'overconfident' or 'overbearing'?  
Does he appear to attempt to ingratiate you with his qualifications, skills and experience, and history of effective client work?

This could well be an attempt to make you feel he is your friend, which clearly he is not. His job is to help you change, and at times he may have to ask you to do things which you may not like or want to do.

If he is skilled and experienced, he shouldn't need to have to tell you about it - you will discover this as you change over the weeks.

Do your gut feelings about him match with your experience of him?

**4. Does he provide you with the tools you need to function independently of him? i.e. Does he teach you self hypnosis skills, deep relaxation skills, self talk strategies, and so on?**

Having taught you these skills, does he then suggest more than once during later therapy sessions - how helpful it would be if he saw you on a regular basis - say once every couple of weeks, for "top ups" and a chance to chat through the things which have come up for you since the last session?

This is a strategy I have seen with my own eyes, conducted to entice and entrap clients to keep attending for sessions that are not needed, in order to keep the weekly client appointment diary full. I have seen this strategy used to keep one particular client coming to sessions which were not needed for 2 or 3 years. This particular client comes each week. Imagine the money that this client has wasted on therapy sessions which were simply not needed!

**5. Does the therapist have a sliding scale of charges? Or does he offer reduced fees to someone who clearly cannot afford to come regularly? Or does he say – “I am unable to offer reduced fees.”**

Any reasonable and fair therapist will offer reductions to someone who it clearly appears cannot afford their regular fees.

Beware of any therapist who says they cannot offer reductions of any kind. Ask yourself, why is this the case?

Obviously, from time to time, clients who clearly can afford your fees will try and get “cheap sessions”. This is a different issue.

**6. Does he always conduct his sessions to a particular format. i.e. I will have to teach you relaxation and self hypnosis skills for the**

**first 5 to 6 therapy sessions, and only then will I be able to help you work through your specific problem.**

Does he have any flexibility to his approach? Or does he actually listen to what you want, and be guided by your needs?

This is a strategy I have seen used to ensure the therapy takes longer than is necessary, often 5 to 6 sessions more than may be actually needed.

**7. Do they have one of the largest adverts in the Yellow Pages, or similar local phone directory?**

This could be a bad sign. How?

Therapists with large adverts are often looking to expand their business. Now there is nothing wrong with this, but do they really have the time to give you their very best attention, if they are seeing 20 to 30 clients or more every week?

**8. Do they walk the talk? Do they look fit and healthy?**

If the therapist you see for your consultation looks considerably more overweight than they should be, and if they seem breathless, or their hands have some apparent eczema, how healthy are they? If they have not sorted out their own health problems, how can they really sort out yours?

Do they more than once during your course of therapy, phone to cancel your session, saying they are ill or unwell?

This could be a sign that they are overstretched or overstressed. Do you really want to be seeing someone who can't competently handle their own work load and stress levels?

**9. Do they say they are so experienced that they don't need any supervision of any kind, for their practice?**

All professional therapists should have some supervision on a regular basis. Anyone who uses the above statement, you should be very wary of seeing.

**10. Do they have professional indemnity insurance, in case something goes wrong? (In the right hands, it is rare that treatment will ‘go wrong’, but there is always a possibility).**

If they say they do not need it, avoid seeing them. Ask yourself, what would happen if you had an adverse reaction of some kind to treatment. What redress would you have?

**11. Do they offer very “cheap” or “low cost” sessions?**

There is nothing wrong with this practice. But you need to be aware that they may be a very newly qualified therapist, or struggling so much to get clients, that they will do anything to get them, including taking on clients which they may not have the skills to work with effectively.

**12. Do they allow you to tape any session you want? Or do they make various excuses as to why this is not permissible? *Especially* if they are using hypnosis in their sessions.**

Be very wary of any therapist who says you cannot tape any sessions. Ask yourself why would they not want you to? What could they be trying to hide?

**13. Do they allow you to be accompanied, especially in the first few sessions while you are learning to be comfortable with the treatment process?**

Or do they say, “Sorry, no one can accompany you to any sessions”.

There is a big difference between not allowing a bossy mother to accompany her 24 year old son to therapy sessions, to what I am trying to explain here.

The 24 year old son, shouldn’t have his mother attending every session ;-)  
But if this is not the case, there is usually no reason why your friend cannot accompany you, certainly for the first few sessions.

**14. If you are having psychiatric treatment, for example for depression, is the therapist clear about the need to inform your psychiatrist or doctor before treating you? Or does he say, “I don’t need to contact them”.**

Be extremely wary about seeing any therapist who uses this line with you. If you have a serious condition, for which you are taking psychiatric medication of any kind, then your doctor or psychiatrist *should be informed*, whether you like it or not. The therapist should insist on this, or refuse to take you on.

**15. Do they list 6 or more different therapies which they say they are qualified in?**

Beware of the therapist who lists sometimes up to 10 different treatment therapies which they say they are qualified in.

Do you really want your hypnotherapist or counselor, doing massage on you, or using hopi ear candles, aromatherapy oils, flower remedies, or homeopathy with you? You ought to be seeing someone else for these therapies – your therapist should be specializing in their chosen field.

You have heard the phrase “Jack of all trades, master of none”. I leave you to draw your own conclusions about this one.

**Recommended.**

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If you have any questions, please do contact me, it may take me a day or more to get back to you, due to the many emails I receive, but I will get back to you.

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