

CONNECT TO HOPE: ACCESSING MENTAL HEALTH CARE

hope

www.giveanhour.org



Seeking therapy is always a good thing. Therapists listen to your story and help you make connections. They may offer guidance or recommendations when you feel lost. A good therapist will not tell you what to do, but empower you to take action on your own. People often know exactly what to do when they have a physical illness, but do you know when, who, and how to find care for a mental concern? There is no single, correct approach in finding care. Connecting with the right provider may take some time. With patience & perseverance, these tips will help you find your provider.

WHEN TO SEEK CARE

- Anytime! Maintenance is essential to your mental health
- You feel like you can't do normal daily activities you previously were able to accomplish
- Thinking about or coping with an issue is taking more than one hour of your day
- You have a major life event (birth, death, job change, breakups, family struggles)
- You need help coping with symptoms of an illness that may not respond to treatment right away
- You've developed habits to cope with your emotional health that are impacting you physically in a negative way

WHO TO CHOOSE

- If you have a mental health condition that may benefit from medication, consult a mental health doctor, such as a psychiatrist or mental health nurse practitioner who has experience treating your condition (MD, DO, PMHNP, APN)
- If you're seeking help with emotions, behaviors, and patterns, consult with a therapist, counselor, or psychologist. Like medical doctors, these professionals have specialties, so find one who knows about your specific issue (credentials include LCSW, LPC, LMFT, PhD)

REMEMBER: YOU ARE IN CONTROL OF YOUR THERAPY RELATIONSHIP. ADVOCATE FOR YOURSELF AND SEEK ANOTHER CARE PROVIDER IF YOU DO NOT FEEL LIKE IT IS A GOOD THERAPUTIC FIT. ONE SIZE DOESN'T FIT ALL!

HOW TO FIND CARE

Common places to find mental health providers:

- Ask your insurance company for a list of in-network providers or your company's employee assistance program (EAP)
- Ask trusted family or friends for recommendations
- Search nonprofit, government or mental health organization websites that have lists of providers
- Contact local or national mental health organizations
- General internet search for "psychiatrist" or "therapist" in your city

Consider consulting your physician. Some physical health issues may cause symptoms similar to mental health illnesses. A physician can navigate this concern.

WHAT TO ASK PROVIDERS

Before the first session:

- Do you have experience helping individuals with concerns like mine?
- Do you accept my insurance? If I don't have insurance, do you have a sliding scale for payments?
- What kinds of therapy do you offer?
- Do you have a regular opening that fits my schedule?

After the first session:

- Do you think we are a good fit?
- What will my treatment plan or our sessions look like?
- How often do you think I should come?
- Will we make goals together? How will we measure success?
- How do I reach you in an emergency?

****If you, or someone you love, is in immediate danger, call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room right away****

