



# HOW TO FIND YOUR DREAM THERAPIST

Research shows that “clicking” with your therapist is the most important factor in effective therapy. Use these steps to help you find a therapist that fits.

(And if you’re in Texas or Utah, schedule a call with me and let’s see if we’re a match!)

## GET CLEAR ON YOUR “WHY”

What are YOU looking for in therapy? Most new clients tell me they want “coping skills,” but we quickly discover together that they are looking for more. They might want to transform what they believe about themselves, reprocess trauma, or learn to advocate for their needs. You may need to talk with your therapist to identify what you really want, but here are some questions to get you closer to your “why:”

*When I finish therapy, I will believe \_\_\_\_\_ about myself.*

*When I finish therapy, I will be able to \_\_\_\_\_.*

*When I finish therapy, \_\_\_\_\_ will no longer be holding me back.*

Once you are clear on your “why,” you’ll have a tool to identify what type of therapist you need. You’ll also be able to communicate this to a therapist on a consult call.

## WRITE YOUR MUST-HAVE AND WOULD-BE-NICE LISTS

Is there a certain specialty that you need your therapist to have? How flexible is your schedule? Get clear on your non-negotiables so you don’t waste your time on someone who is not a fit. Flexible with your finances or location? Be open to scheduling a consultation with a therapist that checks all your mandatory boxes, but misses on the flexible pieces.

*Example: You know you want a therapist with a background in trauma-sensitive therapy. Put “Trauma Informed” on your non-negotiable list. You’d like in-person therapy, but you’re open to virtual visits. Put “In-Person” on your would-be nice list.*

**Blank Must-Have and Would-Be-Nice Lists are on the next page.**



# MUST-HAVE & WOULD-BE-NICE

Use this template to identify your must-haves and your would-be nice elements!

Here's a hint: don't get *too* specific, but don't get *too* broad, either. Aim for balanced lists.

## FILL OUT YOUR PREFERENCES

- Price per session: \_\_\_\_\_
- Insurance Company: \_\_\_\_\_
- Will you pay out-of-pocket (without insurance)? Y / N / Maybe
- Are you open to superbills? Y / N / Maybe
  - (A superbill is when your therapist is not covered by your insurance, but you submit a bill to your insurance and they may reimburse you).
- Time of Day / Days of Week: \_\_\_\_\_
- In-person / Virtual / Either
- Specialty: \_\_\_\_\_
- Therapy Technique (e.g. EMDR, CBT): \_\_\_\_\_
- Individual / Couple / Family
- Faith: \_\_\_\_\_
- Gender: \_\_\_\_\_
- Language: \_\_\_\_\_
- Identities (e.g. ethnicity, race, sexuality): \_\_\_\_\_

### MUST-HAVE

<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

### WOULD-BE-NICE

<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____



# START THE SEARCH

I wish there was one place where you could see all the therapists and find the perfect fit. Honestly, there are many different paths to finding the right therapist for you. Be open to trying out a few of these paths. You may find a therapist in a place you didn't expect!

## WEB SEARCH

- Simply start with “(insert issue here) therapist (your city / state)”
- Try including some of your must-haves in the search terms

## MENTAL HEALTH MATCH / PSYCHOLOGY TODAY

- These websites allow you to quickly see the profiles of many therapists
- Keep in mind that not all therapists are on these sites

## INSURANCE LISTS / DIRECTORIES

- Your insurance company has a list of covered therapists
- Specific issues have directories. Search “(issue) therapist directory”
- Directories often cost money for therapists to be included, so only some therapists use them

## SOCIAL MEDIA

- Search local Facebook groups for recommendations
- Search #(yourstate)therapist on Instagram or TikTok

## WORD OF MOUTH

- Ask people you know!
- Have a friend grab business cards from their therapist's waiting room

## OTHER THERAPISTS / HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS



# ROCK THE CONSULT CALL

Many therapists offer a free 15 minute consult call to make sure it's a good fit. While these calls can be a little nerve-wracking at the beginning, a good therapist will be able to answer your questions, put you a little more at ease, and leave you feeling heard and hopeful.

- TAKE A FEW DEEP BREATHS. WIGGLE YOUR ARMS. LAUGH AT YOURSELF. YOU'VE GOT THIS. :)**

- GO AHEAD AND CHAT**

**Say: "Here's a little bit about me. I am wanting to work on (*your "why"*) in therapy. I'm looking for a therapist who (*your must-haves*). From what I found on your website/profile/social media, it seems like we may be a good fit. Could you tell me a little about working with you?"**

Therapists usually have a little monologue they give to explain what they do and who they work with. As they speak, check off your must-haves and would-be nice elements. Mark any mismatches (e.g. virtual when you want in-person).

After they explain about themselves, be sure to ask about any must-have elements that may have been missed.

- TAKE THE NEXT STEP (IF IT FEELS RIGHT)**

Take note of how you feel in your body. There may be some residual nervous energy, but is there excitement or hope? Is there a lightness in your chest? If you feel good talking to the therapist and they meet your must-haves, consider scheduling a first session while on the call.

**Say: "After talking with you, I feel good about scheduling a first session. What steps do I need to take?"**

If you need more time to think about it (or it's a no), that's totally fine.

**Say: "Thanks for talking with me! I'm going to take some time to think about it. What is the best way to contact you if I want to schedule an appointment?"**



# CONGRATULATIONS!

Once you find a therapist that fits your must-haves and some of your would-be-nice elements, go ahead and schedule that first session. You've already taken the first steps on your therapy journey-- keep going and build that momentum!



## MAY I INTRODUCE MYSELF?

My name is Kimberly Saggers, and I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Perinatal Mental Health Certified therapist. I am licensed in Texas and Utah.

I help with people who, despite any outward success, feel like failures.

**If you're a mom or a Millennial and you feel anxious or depressed that you haven't lived up to that "gifted" label you had as a child, let me help you feel proud of who you are and the life you're creating.**

Using my signature Terracotta method, my clients transform what they believe about themselves and how they show up in the world.

**Visit [terraccottacounseling.com](https://terraccottacounseling.com) to schedule your 15 minute consult.**

And hey, it will be a great chance to use this handout!

*Kimberly*