Tips for Choosing a Therapist in Private Practice

People choose to access a therapist working in a private practice for different reasons. Some people prefer it because it can often provide more flexibility and choice, while others have extended health benefits that can cover some or all of the costs associated with it.

Psychology Today is an online directory that helps you find therapists working in a private practice. Psychology Today offers filters to help you narrow down your search for a therapist. You can filter by location, cost, insurance, specialty, language, provider type, type of therapy offered, how therapy is offered (in-person or virtual), gender, to name a few. Once you have narrowed down your list, review the therapists' profiles and consider if their approach feels right for you.

Below is a list of questions you may find helpful to ask when you first reach out to a therapist working in private practice:

- Do you offer a free consult?
- Can you confirm how much you charge each session?
- What forms of payment do you accept? When are payments due?
- Do you offer a sliding scale (some therapists may be able to adjust fees based on financial circumstances)
- Are you able to bill directly to my insurance?
- What is your location? Can you confirm that you are able to offer virtual sessions?
- What days or hours are you available?
- Do you have a waitlist?
- What is your education? Do you belong to a regulatory body?
- What kind of treatment approaches do you use?
- Can you tell me a bit about your experience with…?

Finding a therapist that you feel comfortable with can take time. You deserve a therapeutic relationship where you feel respected, heard, and supported.

And remember, you are allowed to change your mind. If the therapist you've started working with does not feel like a good fit or you are not noticing the benefits you had hoped for, it's ok to explore other options.