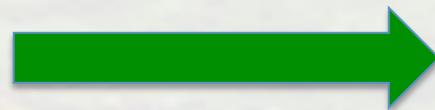


The Path Through Psychotherapy...

There is a great deal of scientific research on psychotherapy, and we know a lot about what can be helpful for people. We continue to learn more and more about how to use psychotherapy to help as many people as possible.

However, because everyone is different, and our brains and lives are very complex, right now it is often hard to know exactly what it is that will help a particular person feel better.

On the next page, follow the path from the bottom of the page upward for some tips to make your "path through psychotherapy" more helpful and rewarding.





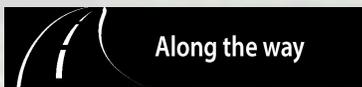
See this as **just one piece of the puzzle** in your process of better understanding yourself and moving toward what you want in your life. Get all you can out of it and then make efforts to find out what other types of work could be helpful. For example, maybe you did a great deal of work on managing your depression with cognitive and behavioral skills. Now you believe that you want to improve your relationships to achieve more in that area of your life.

Manage barriers to showing up regularly to treatment and practicing skills: improvement depends primarily on follow-through and the amount of work you put into your therapy.

Address depression from different angles. There is no one “silver bullet” that will change depression all by itself. Usually a combination treatment, or mixed approach is what works best to make depression better. This also means putting in some effort to understand the different ways to manage your depression.

Practice skills over, and over, and over. It usually takes time for changes in our behavior and thinking to lead to feeling better. Like learning an instrument, we are practicing new ways of doing things that will feel “clunky” at first, and become more comfortable over time.

Take small steps toward change each day. Try not to wait for “light bulb moments,” “epiphanies,” or for something to take it all away instantly.



Expect **ups and downs** during the process. Think of it as “2 steps forward, 1 step back.” Try not to get too discouraged or give up when things seem to move backward or stagnate.

Make it about you: engage in your treatment because **you** want to improve your life, take responsibility for achieving your aims, and feeling better, not because others are telling you to do so. Remember that even if you are being pushed to engage in therapy by someone else, that relationship must be important enough for you to consider this option!



Maintain an **open mind about the possibility of change**, while being realistic about **how fast** this change can happen.

Especially at first, gauge **success according to how you change your responses** to stress, uncomfortable emotions, and body sensations, not whether or not these things exist or continue to occur. Focus on **valued action**, even more than just “feeling better.”

“Credibility:” Make sure the treatment in which you are engaging makes sense to you and seems to be addressing your problem. There are different paths to the same goal. If this type of therapy is not working for you, you are confused about what you are doing, or you have any other concerns, talk to your clinician right away. Clinicians are trained to have these discussions with their patients!

Make sure **your definition of the “problem”** is the same as the clinicians with whom you are working. Maybe they think it is “depression” and you think it is something else. Try to clarify this with your clinicians.

