

IS THERAPY / MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELLING FOR ME?

When it comes to seeking help, no problem is too big or too small. Any time your quality of life isn't what you want it to be, therapy can help. Many people wait until they're facing a crisis to seek therapy, however, taking a proactive approach to get support can help you develop the skills and resilience needed to navigate future challenges more effectively.

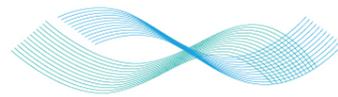
PRIVATE VS. PUBLICLY FUNDED THERAPY IN ONTARIO

Choosing between private and publicly funded therapy depends on your needs, urgency, and finances. In Ontario, some agencies provide free therapy (covered by government or other funding), but often have longer wait times and offer limited sessions (i.e., 5-12 sessions). Private therapists (not funded through the government or other sources) typically have shorter wait times, can see people for as many sessions as is needed, and charge fees ranging from \$100 to \$250+ per session. While private therapists require people to pay, they will often accept extended health benefits to cover their cost. Some private therapists and therapy clinics also offer sliding scale or low-cost options ranging from \$10-\$100 per session. This is something you can ask a private therapist about. If you have financial means to pay for therapy, or extended health benefits that cover the cost, private therapists are recommended to ensure minimal wait times, greater flexibility in choosing a therapist and longer-term support. If you do not have financial means, public therapists will be the best option.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SOCIAL WORKERS, PSYCHOTHERAPIST, PSYCHOLOGISTS, AND PSYCHIATRISTS

While these professionals share some overlap, each has distinct expertise, scope of practice, and regulatory bodies.

- **Psychiatrists** are medical doctors specializing in mental health who diagnose mental health conditions and prescribe medication. Some also provide psychotherapy, but their primary focus is diagnosis and medication management. Psychiatrists are regulated by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO).
- **Psychologists** hold a doctoral degree (Ph.D., Psy.D., or Ed.D.) and provide psychological and psychoeducational assessments, therapy, and diagnoses but generally cannot prescribe medication. Psychologists are regulated by the College of Psychologists and Behaviour Analysts of Ontario (CPBAO).
- **Social Workers** with a Master's degree in Social Work (MSW) offer counseling, psychotherapy, advocacy, and resource support but cannot diagnose or prescribe medication. Social Workers often have a background in social justice that helps to inform their values and therapy practice. Social workers are regulated by the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (OCSWSSW).
- **Psychotherapists** come from various mental health backgrounds and provide psychotherapy for emotional and psychological concerns. They cannot diagnose or prescribe medication. Psychotherapists are regulated by the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario



FINDING A THERAPIST / SOCIAL WORKER

Just as with friendships or careers, finding the right therapist takes time. If you've tried therapy before without success, don't get discouraged—research shows that a strong therapist-client relationship is key to success.

1. Clarify Your Goals

Consider what you hope to gain from therapy, such as improving relationships, reducing anxiety, or processing grief. Having a goal can help narrow your search for a therapist with the right expertise.

2. What If I Don't Know What I Need?

That's okay! Therapy is a space to explore thoughts and emotions to uncover underlying issues. Therapists are skilled at helping you identify and work through challenges, even if you're unsure where to start.

PRIVATE, FULL COST THERAPY RESOURCES

Shift Collab is a virtual therapist matching service in Canada. You can complete an online quiz that assesses budget, location and modalities of interest. Clients are then matched with a private therapist who they can book a free consultation with: <https://www.shiftcollab.com/>

Psychology Today is a well-established directory of private therapists. You can filter your search based on the type of therapist you're looking for. You can also view therapist profiles and contact the therapist(s) of their choice to book a free consult: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/therapists/on/toronto>

LOW COST / SLIDING SCALE THERAPY RESOURCES

Family Service Toronto is a community service organization that offers low-cost therapy. Fees are charged on a sliding scale based on household income and your family size. Fees are designed to be accessible for all income ranges for anyone living or working in the city of Toronto: <https://familyservicetoronto.org/our-services/programs-and-services/counselling/>

Affordable Therapy Network is a directory of therapists in Canada who offer therapy for a lower cost: <https://affordabletherapynetwork.com/>

Hard Feelings is a charity that offers low-cost therapy. They also have a storefront with books and resources related to mental health: <https://www.hardfeelings.org/>

The Toronto Institute for Relational Psychotherapy (TIRP) is an organization that employs students and recent graduates who offer low-cost therapy: <https://www.tirp-lowcost-therapy.ca/>

FREE / PUBLICLY FUNDED THERAPY RESOURCES

Ontario Structured Psychotherapy (OSP) provides free, publicly funded cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) for people with anxiety and/or depression: <https://www.ontariohealth.ca/getting-health-care/mental-health-addictions/depression-anxiety-ontario-structured-psychotherapy>

CMHA provides free mental health services across Ontario. For a list of programs offered by the branch nearest you, [find your local branch](#).

CAMH offers various mental health programs and services for groups and individuals. You can browse their services here: <https://www.camh.ca/en/patients-and-families/programs-and-services?page=0>



Taddle Creek offers free single counselling sessions to all patients, and ongoing psychotherapy (up to 7 sessions) to patients who do not have extended health benefits.

QUESTIONS TO ASK A POTENTIAL THERAPIST / SOCIAL WORKER DURING A CONSULTATION SESSION

Most private therapists offer free consultation calls, which are highly recommended. Even if you like the first therapist you talk to, speaking with 2–3 others may help to ensure that you find the best fit. Some questions you can ask a potential therapist include:

- What challenges do you typically support clients with?
- What is your approach to helping clients?
- What do your sessions look like?
- How long do you typically work with clients?
- What is your availability?
- Do you accept insurance or extended health benefits?

During the consultation ask yourself, “how does it feel talking to this person?”, “do I feel understood?”, “does this feel good for me?”. If it feels good, that’s great! If not, it is okay to look for someone else. Although the process of looking for a therapist can feel intimidating, it is important to find someone who makes you feel safe and supported. Don’t be discouraged if you don’t find the right fit immediately, sometimes it can take several consultations to find the best therapist for you.

TADDLE CREEK’S SINGLE SESSION CLINIC

Regardless of your financial situation you can book a free Single Session with Taddle Creek’s Mental Health Team. Single Sessions are 45-minute meetings with a Social Worker, where you can get information, resources, or referrals regarding mental health and therapy. Our Single Session clinic is held on Tuesdays and Fridays, and is available by appointment. To book a Single Session with one of our Social Workers, please call 416- 260- 1315 ext. 0. **Please note, due to Taddle Creek’s high client population, our Single Session clinic is only meant to be utilized sparingly.*

TADDLE CREEK’S SHORT-TERM PSYCHOTHERAPY

Taddle Creek also offers short-term psychotherapy, where you can meet with a Social Worker for up to 7 therapy sessions. Each therapy session is one hour. A referral from your primary care provider is required for this service.

We typically have a waitlist so please speak with your primary care provider about a referral as soon as you’re ready to connect.

**Please note, due to Taddle Creek’s high client population, patients may only access one cycle of care (7 sessions) per year.*