

THERAPY: KNOW YOUR OPTIONS

Judaism values life and health above all else, so we all need to know how to take care of ourselves. Maintaining our health is even codified as a full-fledged commandment by physician and philosopher Moses Maimonides (1135-1204). In his collection of Jewish laws called the Mishneh Torah, he wrote:

“It is a positive commandment to remove any obstacle that could pose a danger to life, and to be very careful regarding these matters, as the Torah teaches, ‘Take utmost care for yourself; and guard yourself scrupulously’” (Deut. 4:9). (Hilchot Rotzeach, Chapters 11)

Knowing how to take care of yourself means knowing what options you have in a crisis. However, with the plethora of choices now available to most people, deciding which one is best for you can be overwhelming. We hope this short guide to the options you have for mental health care gives you some clarity about the different types of therapies and treatments are out there and allows you to fulfill the commandment to care for your health presented by Maimonides.

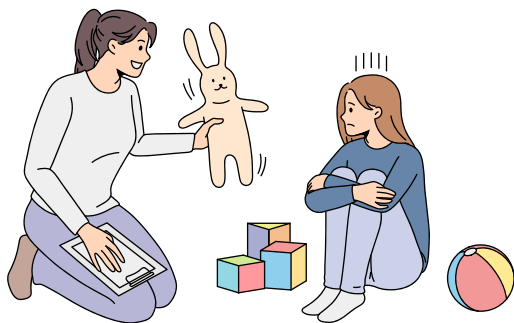


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Types of Therapies: Each therapy approach is designed to tackle unique issues or conditions – but many overlap. Make sure to ask your healthcare provider for a recommendation. Don't be afraid to try different techniques to see what works for you. (Therapists tend to describe their approaches on online profiles.)

PLAY THERAPY



In the textbook *Play Therapy: The Art of the Relationship* (4th ed.), Landreth (2023) defined Child-Centered Play Therapy: As a dynamic interpersonal relationship between a child (or person of any age) and a therapist trained in play therapy procedures who provides selected play

materials and facilitates the development of a safe relationship for the child (or person of any age) to fully express and explore self (feelings, thoughts, experiences, and behaviors) through play, the child's natural medium of communication, for optimal growth and development.

ART THERAPY



Art therapy is a technique employed by therapists to aid individuals in deciphering, conveying, and addressing their emotions and thoughts.

Collaborating with an art therapist, patients delve into their emotional landscape, gaining insights into conflicts or distressing feelings, and harnessing the power of art to seek resolutions for such challenges.

(Also check out our Art Therapy and Judaism Resources: [Resource One](#) | [Resource Two](#))

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FAMILY THERAPY



Family therapy is a type of group psychotherapy. In family therapy, "family" is defined as a group of people who care about each other and call themselves a family. This could include parents and children, partners, grandparents, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, cousins, friends,

caregivers and other professionals that are close to the group. The goal of family therapy is to help everyone in the family understand and support each other. This type of therapy can help when families are feeling overwhelmed, sad and angry; when they're unsure how to move forward; or when they feel that they are repeating the same harmful behaviors over and over. If a family is dealing with changes associated with illness, mental health and substance use problems, unemployment, moving, aging, divorce, trauma, and death and grieving, family therapy can be helpful.

COGNITIVE-BEHAVIORAL THERAPY (CBT)



Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is a structured, goal-oriented type of talk therapy. It can help manage mental health conditions, such as depression and anxiety, and emotional concerns, such as coping with grief or stress. CBT can also help manage nonpsychological health conditions, such as insomnia and chronic pain.

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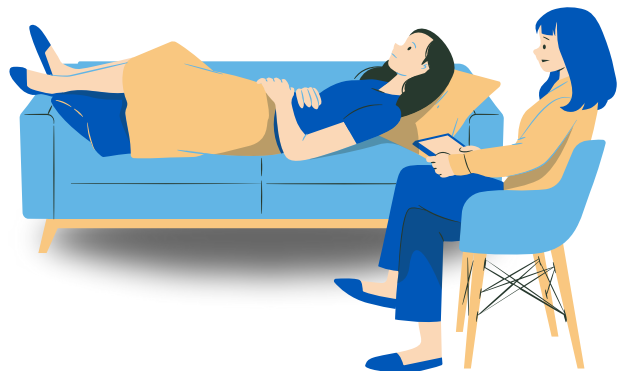
PSYCHOANALYTIC OR PSYCHODYNAMIC PSYCHOTHERAPY



Psychoanalytic or Psychodynamic Psychotherapy is a form of clinical practice that is based on psychoanalytic theory and principles. Psychoanalytic psychotherapy uses psychoanalytic theories as the frame for formulation and understanding of the therapy process. These multiple theories apply to the

psychotherapy situation, with a focus on increasing self understanding and deepening insight into emotional issues and conflicts which underlie the presenting difficulties. Typically therapists make use of exploration of unconscious thoughts and feelings, understanding aspects of the relationship between therapist and patient, which may relate to underlying emotional conflicts, interpretation of defensive processes which obstruct emotional awareness, and consideration of issues related to sense of self and self esteem.

Most often therapy sessions occur between one and four times weekly. The focus is on exploration of the patient's inner experience, emphasizing this as it occurs in current daily life, as it carries over from significant and influential events and relationships of the past, and as it is manifest in the context of the therapeutic relationship.



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TRAUMA FOCUSED COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY



Trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy (TF-CBT) addresses the mental health needs of children, adolescents, and families suffering from the destructive effects of early trauma. The treatment is particularly sensitive to the unique problems of youth with post-traumatic stress and mood disorders

resulting from sexual abuse, as well as from physical abuse, violence, or grief. Because the client is usually a child, TF-CBT often brings non-offending parents or other caregivers into treatment and incorporates principles of family therapy.

ACCEPTANCE AND COMMITMENT THERAPY



Acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) is an action-oriented approach to psychotherapy that stems from traditional behavior therapy and cognitive behavioral therapy. Clients learn to stop avoiding, denying, and struggling with their inner emotions and, instead, accept that these deeper feelings are appropriate responses to certain

situations that should not prevent them from moving forward in their lives. With this understanding, clients begin to accept their hardships and commit to making necessary changes in their behavior, regardless of what is going on in their lives and how they feel about it.

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DIALECTICAL BEHAVIORAL THERAPY



Dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) is a structured program of psychotherapy with a strong educational component designed to provide skills for managing intense emotions and negotiating social relationships. Originally developed to curb the self-destructive impulses of chronic suicidal patients, it is

also the treatment of choice for borderline personality disorder, emotion dysregulation, and a growing array of psychiatric conditions. It consists of group instruction and individual therapy sessions, both conducted weekly for six months to a year.

The “dialectic” in dialectical behavior therapy is an acknowledgment that real life is complex, and health is not a static thing but an ongoing process hammered out through a continuous Socratic dialogue with the self and others. It is continually aimed at balancing opposing forces and investigating the truth of powerful negative emotions.

DBT acknowledges the need for change in a context of acceptance of situations and recognizes the constant flux of feelings — many of them contradictory — without having to get caught up in them. Therapist-teachers help patients understand and accept that thought is an inherently messy process. DBT is itself an interplay of science and practice.



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Types of Providers: Varies somewhat state by state, but here are the basics.

PSYCHOLOGIST



Level of Education: PhD, PsyD.

Services Provided: Assessment, diagnosis, formal testing, therapy

Credentials: Licensed by the state, are able to use the title "Dr."

Specialties: Can obtain specialties not affiliated with license (pediatrics, marriage, trauma, etc.)

PSYCHIATRIST



Level of Education: Doctor of Medicine (MD)

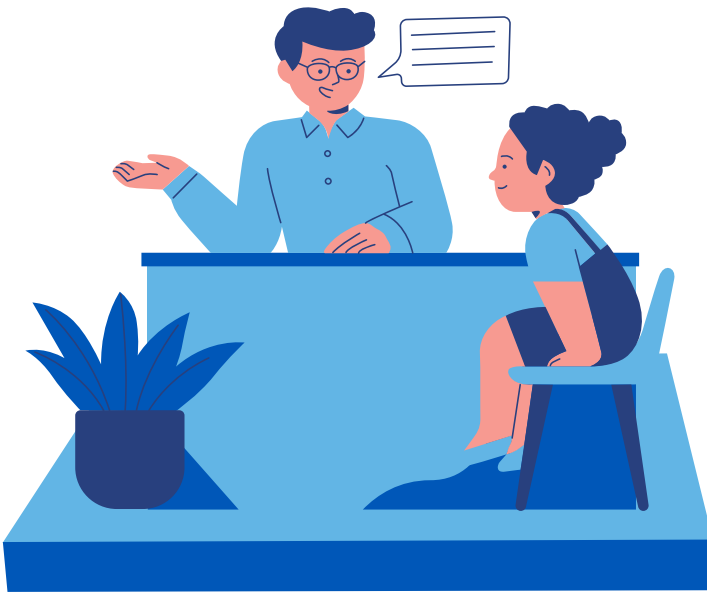
Services Provided: Diagnosis, prescribe and monitor medication, therapy

Credentials: MD

Specialties: Can be certified with special populations (pediatrics, addictions, etc.)

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COUNSELOR (SOMETIMES CALLED CLINICIAN OR THERAPIST)



Level of Education: Master's degree in psychology, counseling, marriage and family therapy, etc.

Services Provided: Assessment, diagnosis (in some states), therapy, case management

Credentials: Varies state to state: LPC or LCPC. Specialties can include addictions (LCADAC), marriage and family (LMFT), etc.

Specialties: Can obtain specialties not affiliated with license (pediatrics, marriage, trauma, etc.)

CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKER



Level of Education: Master of Social Work (MSW)

Services Provided: Assessment, diagnosis (in some states), therapy, case management and advocacy services

Credentials: Varies: LCSW, LISW, ACSW, LCSW-C

Specialties: Can obtain specialties not affiliated with license (pediatrics, marriage, trauma, etc.)

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PSYCHIATRIC NURSE PRACTITIONER



Level of Education: MS or PhD in nursing with focus on psychiatry

Services Provided: Assessment, diagnosis, therapy and prescribe medication (in some states)

Credentials: PMHNP-BC

Specialties: Can be certified with special populations (pediatrics, addictions, etc.)