

Growth & Wellness

E-NEWSLETTER

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STEPS FOR SUCCESS

Tips to Reach Your Goals

If you are looking to keep a New Year's Resolution or are just looking to be the best version of yourself these tips can help you reach your goals!

We might desire instant results, but the path to lasting change is paved with tiny steps and small accomplishments. We are much more likely to achieve small, manageable goals. When we achieve a goal, no matter how small it is, we get a surge of reward chemicals in our brain, creating a sense of accomplishment that fuels our motivation to keep going. This creates a positive feedback loop of success: Set an Attainable Goal, Accomplish Small Step, Have Increased Motivation, Repeat.



- Find Your Motivation
- Set a Specific and Measurable Goal
- Write Down Your Goals
- Put Your Goals Where You Can See Them
- Take Small Steps
- Celebrate Your Accomplishments Along the Way
- Take Care of Yourself
- Use Encouraging & Kind Self-Talk

BLOOM & GROW

Service Spotlight

If you or a loved one are looking for ABA, Speech Therapy, or Day Care, look no further than Bloom & Grow; Experts, Dominique & Malorie, have opened their own center and have openings now!

Bloom & Grow uses holistic practices to support individual needs.

I had the pleasure of working alongside Dominique providing ABA, and I am so excited to see her and her partner continue to offer exceptional care.



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New Year's Resolution: THERAPY



What you need to know to find the right fit.

According to Forbes, 36% of US adults made improved mental health a goal for the new year. Companies are aware that people often want to improve their physical and mental health and aggressively market “life changing” services. All this information about the “best” services, products, and apps can make it confusing to identify the best fit for your individual needs. If improving your mental wellbeing is on your to-do list this year, here are some things to know to help you find what’s right for YOU.

What do those letters mean?

You may have noticed the letters that follow behind a therapist’s name. They are there as a shorthand to indicate the provider’s formal training and expertise. Typically, we will see a degree listed first, as MA, MS, Ph.D., or Psy.D.. See the chart below for more information.

Abbreviation	Degree	Educational Focus
MA	Master of Arts Masters Degree	Humanities, Social Sciences, & Fine Arts
MS	Master of Science Masters Degree	Research & Analysis in Specific Areas of Science Including: Technology, Mathematics, or Behavioral Science, or Health

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Abbreviation	Degree	Educational Focus
Ph.D.	Doctor of Philosophy Doctoral Degree	Scientific Research Development & Application
Psy.D.	Doctor of Psychology Doctoral Degree	Psychological Treatment & Providing Therapy
MD	Doctor of Medicine Medical Degree	Treating Physical Illnesses, Ailments, and/or Injuries, Modern Medical Approaches (e.g. Medication or Surgery)
MO	Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine Medical Degree	Treating the "Whole" Person, Emphasizes Implementing Preventative & Lifestyle Techniques

What about the other letters?

Next, we will see letters indicating licensure. This very important. In order for a therapist to become and stay licensed, they must submit documentation showing they completed proper education, training, and verify that they have not violated any laws or ethical guidelines. Licenses are renewed every 2-3 years depending on the type, ensuring that the therapist continues to provide ethical, legal, and current services.

Some licenses require therapists to submit proof of "Continuing Education," which shows they are staying informed and are building on their skills. Therapists who participate in trainings and Continuing Education will be informed about the new techniques and research, allowing them to provide the best support to you and their other clients.

Abbreviation	License	Prescribes	Continuing Edu.	Areas of Focus
LPC	Licensed Professional Counselor	No	Not Required	Treating Individuals or Groups of People with Mental, Behavioral, & Emotional Problems & Disorders
LMSW	Licensed Master Social Worker	No	Required	Case Management, Advocacy, Mediation, Running Human Services Organizations, Research, Activism,& Policy Formulation

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Abbreviation	License	Prescribes	Continuing Edu.	Areas of Focus
LMFT	Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist	No	Not Required	Works with Couples, Families, or Family Members to Help Them Cope with Interpersonal Conflicts, Challenges, or Emotional Disorders
LLP	Licensed Masters Psychologist	No	Required	Works with Numerous Populations, Supports Individual Differences in Behavior, Provides Therapy for Abnormal Behavior, Mental & Emotional Health, & Mental Disorders
LP	Licensed Doctoral Psychologist	No	Required	Works with Numerous Populations, Supports Individual Differences in Behavior, Provides Therapy for Abnormal Behavior, Mental & Emotional Health, & Mental Disorders
MD	Licensed Medical Doctor	Yes	Required	Diagnoses & Treats Physical Conditions
MO	Licensed Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine	Yes	Required	Diagnoses & Treats Physical Conditions, Helps Clients Make Lifestyle & Attitude Changes to Promote Prevention
NP	Nurse Practitioner	Yes	Required	Assesses, Diagnoses, Orders & Interprets Medical Tests

Life Coach VS Mental Health Professional

Many people have found support using a Life Coach, but I encourage using caution when exploring this option. I do believe there are helpful life coaches, but the field as a whole lacks educational requirements and regulation which puts clients at risk of being taken advantage of or harmed.



Life coaches are not required to have any training or education in order to offer coaching. There is no regulatory board for coaching, so there is no central authority to enforce that coaches a code of ethics. Without a regulatory board, there are almost no consequences for coaches who use outdated, harmful, unhelpful, or unethical practices. Life coaching is considered to be a “Wellness” service, and not a health service. Although wellness is similar to the health care and behavioral health fields, it is not health care. Therefore, life coaches are not required to abide by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and keep personal information confidential.

Are there individual coaches who are educated, ethical, and keep information confidential? Yes. Unfortunately, finding one that follows these standards can be a gamble. Not all coaches provide the same level of care, and there are no indicators to help potential clients tell the difference between one that provides quality care and one that does not.

Licensing guarantees that mental health professionals will have completed the educational requirements. Licensing also ensures that mental health professionals must act ethically, otherwise they risk consequences such as being fined or even losing their license.

Telehealth VS In-Person



When choosing to meet with a therapist in-person or online consider how the pros and cons line up with your treatment goals.

Use the chart on the next page to understand the benefits and drawbacks of each.



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	PROS	CONS
In-Person	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More Non-Verbal Communication• Neutral Private Location• Use of Hands-On Therapy Interventions (e.g. Play Therapy)• Increased Co-Regulation from Calm Presence of Another	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Possible Accessibility Challenges (Transpiration, Mobility)• Travel to & from Requires More Time• Obstacles from Commute or Interacting with Others in the Lobby may Increase Anxiety
Telehealth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Convenience: Attend Appointments in Comfortable Clothing in Your Own Space• No Commute Required, Increasing Accessibility to Those without Reliable Transportation or Who have Mobility Challenges• Increased Privacy, as Others wont ask Where You are Going• Convenient Communication: Most Telehealth Providers Offer Additional Electronic Communication via Text, Email, or Secure Messaging• Virtual Support Between Appointments• Increased Flexibility to Schedule Times and Locations that Work Best for You	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires that You have a Private Space & Reliable Internet• Assessments & Treatments that Require In-Person Observation would be Unavailable• Some Communication, like Body Language, is Limited• There may be Increased Distractions at Home (e.g. Pets, Family, Roommates)

Consultation

Most therapists will offer a free consultation where they will have a short meeting with you to answer questions or provide information about their style. I highly encourage people to take advantage of this before investing more time and money. Each client and each therapist will have their own personality, communication style, and background that impacts their unique therapeutic relationship. Therefore, not every therapist will be the right fit for each client. It's important to find a therapist who makes you feel secure & safe, heard & understood, and who has expertise in your concerns.



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Cost and scheduling are additional factors that will help determine if the therapist is the right fit for you. Ask about costs, insurance and fees to make sure their fees are within your budget. It is also important that they are able to meet with you during times that you are able to meet, so ask about their availability to make sure they can meet with you during the days and times you are free, and that they have the room in their schedule to meet as often as you'd like.

Here are some questions you can ask during your consultation call to ensure you get the information you need to find the right fit for you.

Do you accept my insurance? What are your fees?

What availability do you have?

How will you measure my progress?

How will you help me reach my goals?

What methods and techniques do you use?

How often do you usually meet with clients?

What should I expect in a typical session?

Do you have experience providing therapy to people with similar issues to mine?

What if I decide we are not a good fit?

How will we decide I don't need therapy anymore?

Conclusion

There are many types of therapists, all with different personalities, styles, and methods. The most important thing is to find someone who supports YOU.

Resources: New Year's Resolutions Statistics 2024, Forbes

<https://www.forbes.com/health/mind/new-years-resolutions-statistics/>