

Common Terms Found In Counseling*

Treatment Levels & Types:

OP - Outpatient. Individual session with your therapist or psychiatric provider on regular intervals. Typically 45 min -1 hour once a week for therapy and 20-30 min monthly or quarterly with a Psychiatrist.

IOP - Intensive Outpatient Program. Short term program (usually 6-8 weeks) with a minimum of 3 hours a day, 3x per week. Provides individual and group therapy, as well as medication management during this time. Conducted in an agency setting rather than an inpatient hospital setting. Usually the next level of care after PC or if OP is not enough.

PC - Partial Care Program or Partial Hospitalization Program. Short term program (usually a few days to a few weeks) with minimum of 5 hours a day, 5x per week. Provides individual and group therapy, as well as medication management during this time. Conducted in an agency setting rather than an inpatient hospital setting. Usually the next level of care after a hospitalization, in-patient, or residential/rehab program, or if IOP is not enough.

Inpatient - Short or mid-term mental health treatment in a hospital setting, typically lasting anywhere between a few days to a few weeks for those with intense symptoms who are not better served in OP, IOP, or PC or need medication stabilization.

Residential - Typically 30-90 day mental health treatment program conducted in a private facility where clients live onsite and receive individual, group, and medication therapy while working to stabilize intense issues or symptoms. Usually for clients who need more time than inpatient allows or who have made repeated treatment attempts with little success. Residential placement can address behavioral, addiction and mental health needs.

Rehab - Typically 30-90 day addiction or eating disorder treatment program conducted in a private facility where clients live onsite and receive individual, group, and medication therapy while working to stabilize symptoms and gain stability.

Group Home - A short or long-term living facility for clients who are either unable to return to their home or who do not have a home to return to. Group homes can be short term, such as a half-way house, or long term such as a youth home or home for disabled populations. These environments are often managed by case managers.

Individual Therapy - Therapy sessions with a licensed counselor, therapist, or social worker focused on you. You, as the individual, are the client.

Group Therapy - Therapy sessions with a licensed counselor, therapist, or social worker conducted with a group of individuals experiencing similar issues or that has a specific focus, such as group therapy for anxiety, addiction, or the gain specific skills. Sessions are conducted together with all the group members and rely on group support in addition to the counselor.

Marriage Counseling – Also called relationship counseling or couples counseling. Therapy sessions with a licensed counselor, therapist, or social worker focused on the relationship between the parties involved in the relationship. The couple, relationship partners, or spouses as a whole are the client, not one individual person.

Family Therapy – Therapy sessions with a licensed counselor, therapist, or social worker focused on the relationship between the parties involved in the family unit, whether biological, blended, or through marriage. The members of the family unit as a whole are the client, not one individual person.

Types of Mental Health Workers:

Provider – A term that means someone who is providing you mental health or medical services. While this can mean your therapist or counselor, it typically is used in the field when referring to medication providers, such as Psychiatrists.

Therapist/Counselor – A licensed professional that helps you identify needs, increase skills, process emotions, and meet goals.

Social Worker – May offer therapy services, but social workers have a focus on community-based needs and resources and may provide case management services instead of counseling.

Case Manager – A person who may or may not hold a therapeutic license within their state that advocates for their clients' needs and helps clients obtain additional resources. Typically holds at least a Bachelors degree and works for community or state agencies.

LPC – Licensed Professional Counselor. Licensed by the state in which they practice and holding at least a Masters degree, has completed all education and supervision requirements. Focus is on the helping clients understand their needs and move towards their goals.

LAC – Licensed Associate Counselor. Licensed by the state in which they practice and holding at least a Masters degree, however, they have not meet the supervision requirements and must work under a licensed and approved supervisor.

LCSW – Licensed Clinical Social Worker. Licensed in the state in which they practice and holds at least a Masters degree, has completed all education and supervision requirements. Similar to LPC but with a community-based needs and resources focus.

LSW – Licensed Social Worker. Licensed by the state in which they practice and holds at least a Masters degree, however, they have not meet the supervision requirements and must work under a licensed and approved supervisor.

LMFT – Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist. Licensed in the state in which they practice and holds at least a Masters degree, has completed all education and supervision requirements. Similar to LPC but with a focus on marriage and family dynamics and systems.

LCADC – Licensed Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor. Able to work independently within substance abuse and addictions counseling. Often has additional licenses such as LPC, LCSW, or LMFT.

CADC – Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor. A certification course that allows the holder to work only within the substance abuse community. CADC's must work under an approved supervisor. Often found in addiction facilities or agencies.

Psychologist – A licensed mental health professional who has completed a doctorate program and may conduct additional psychological assessments or who may focus on specific types of care such as in a school system or for clients with ADHD, Autism, or Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.

Psychiatrist – A medical doctor with specialized training in mental health needs and pharmacology, who can conduct additional assessments for long term diagnosis and disabilities. Typically does not have training in counseling and does not conduct therapy sessions.

APN – Advanced Practicing Nurse or Nurse Practitioner. A licensed nurse who holds an advanced degree and certification, allowing them to practice as independent doctors under a board licensed medical doctor's supervision Typically used in place of a psychiatrist.

A Few Common Types of Therapy:

REBT – Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy. Started in the 50's by Albert Ellis, this is a theory that states that our thoughts are rational or irrational and those thoughts produce feelings and actions that hold us back or move us forward.

CBT – Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. Started in the 60's by Aaron Beck, this is a theory that states our feelings and actions or based on thoughts we may or may not be aware of and the life's difficulties arise from cognitive distortions and negative automatic thoughts.

DBT – Dialectical Behavior Therapy. Started in the 80's by Marsha Linehan, this is a theory that states that we must become proficient in skills and techniques that help us regulate emotions, increase distress tolerance, and learn interpersonal effectiveness to move forward through life.

ACT – Acceptance and Commitment Therapy. A system of therapy that focuses on mindfulness, behavior changes, and acceptance of what is rather than focus on what should be.

MI – Motivational Interviewing – A type of therapy, often used in addictions treatment, that helps a client move through the stages of change.

SFBT – Solution Focused Brief Therapy. A type of therapy that focuses on short term goals and steppingstones to meet immediate needs and make changes in the now.

Shema Therapy – Focused on the idea that intense emotional experiences or repeated

emotional experiences can create a belief about how we work within the world. Utilizes components from multiple theories and therapies to address negative schemas and core beliefs.

Psychoanalysis – A type of therapy conducted over many years that relies heavily on exploring the conscious and unconscious and connecting them through techniques such as free association and dream analysis. Typically not covered by insurance due to the length of treatment.

Therapeutic Terms:

Therapy – Also known as *Counseling*. A form of treatment used to treat and alleviate emotional and psychological issues and distress.

Psycho-Therapy – Also known as *talk therapy*. Utilizing a trained professional to work through life's adversities.

Psycho-Education – Learning a skill, technique, or concept to increase mental and emotional wellness and reduce distress.

Person-Centered – May also be referred to as client-centered. Both a theory and type of therapy that focuses on the client and what they identify needs to be addressed or changed. This theory believes that regardless of a client's actions or symptoms, they have inherent value as a human being and that regardless of society's views of their actions, they choose what they want to change or focus on.

Skills Based – Treatment that focuses on identifying, learning, and honing coping skills to reduce distress in our everyday lives and create healthy patterns in place of negative patterns of behavior and thoughts.

Informed – Often used in conjunction with a type of therapy (i.e. DBT Informed, Trauma Informed, REBT Informed). This indicates that the clinician, agency, or practice is heavily trained and utilizes many elements of that therapy but are flexible in how they use it and may not adhere to every aspect of the therapy. The clinician, agency, or practice may or may not be certified in that particular therapy.

Adherent – When a clinician, agency, or practice is heavily trained in a particular therapy and follows that therapy's components, treatments, and concepts rigidly. The clinician, agency, or practice will be certified through the governing board of that particular therapy if they present themselves as "adherent", but a certification does not automatically indicate "adherent".

Rational – An REBT term. Meaning to be supported by evidence, true for everyone, moves you towards your goals.

Irrational – An REBT term, Meaning to NOT be supported by evidence, that is true to you (but not necessarily others), and can hold you back from your goals.

Negative Emotions – Emotions that every person has but that feel unpleasant; anger, sadness, fear.

Positive Emotions – Emotions that every person has that feel good; happiness, joy.

Healthy Negatives – Feelings that are unpleasant but help you move forward; concern, frustration, sadness, healthy jealousy, healthy envy.

Unhealthy Negatives – Feelings that are unpleasant and keep you from moving forward in life; despair, anger, rage, depression, unhealthy jealousy, unhealthy envy.

Mindfulness – Being present in the moment, without getting stuck in the past or the future.

Acceptance – The concept of acknowledging what is, rather than focusing on what should be, identifying what can be changed and focusing on making changes without being stuck in negative emotions regarding what cannot be changed. It is NOT saying that harmful actions are ok, it is NOT forgiveness, it is NOT looking the other way.

Validation – Acknowledging that a belief, action, or feeling may be had without judgement on the morality, correctness, or fairness of those beliefs, actions, or feelings through identifying the circumstances that created them.

Self-Esteem – A negative construct created by society that individuals use incorrectly, and often at great personal cost, to determine their level of importance or worthiness in other's eyes.

Family Session – An individual session with your counselor or provider where a friend, family member, or partner is present to address specific concerns, behaviors, or needs. This is different than couples, marriage, or family counseling.

Support Groups – Groups that provide support, education, and/or accountability to members through regular meetings. These most often are not facilitated by licensed professionals and are usually run by others who have struggled with the same issues. Therapy is not conducted in these groups but the support and connections with others can be invaluable in personal growth and treatment progress.

*This list of terms is by no means meant to be extensive and definitions given are designed to be easily understood regardless of level of experience in the therapeutic world. If you need further clarification, have a term you would like to see added, or see an error please email Emotional Healing LLC. We are happy to assist.