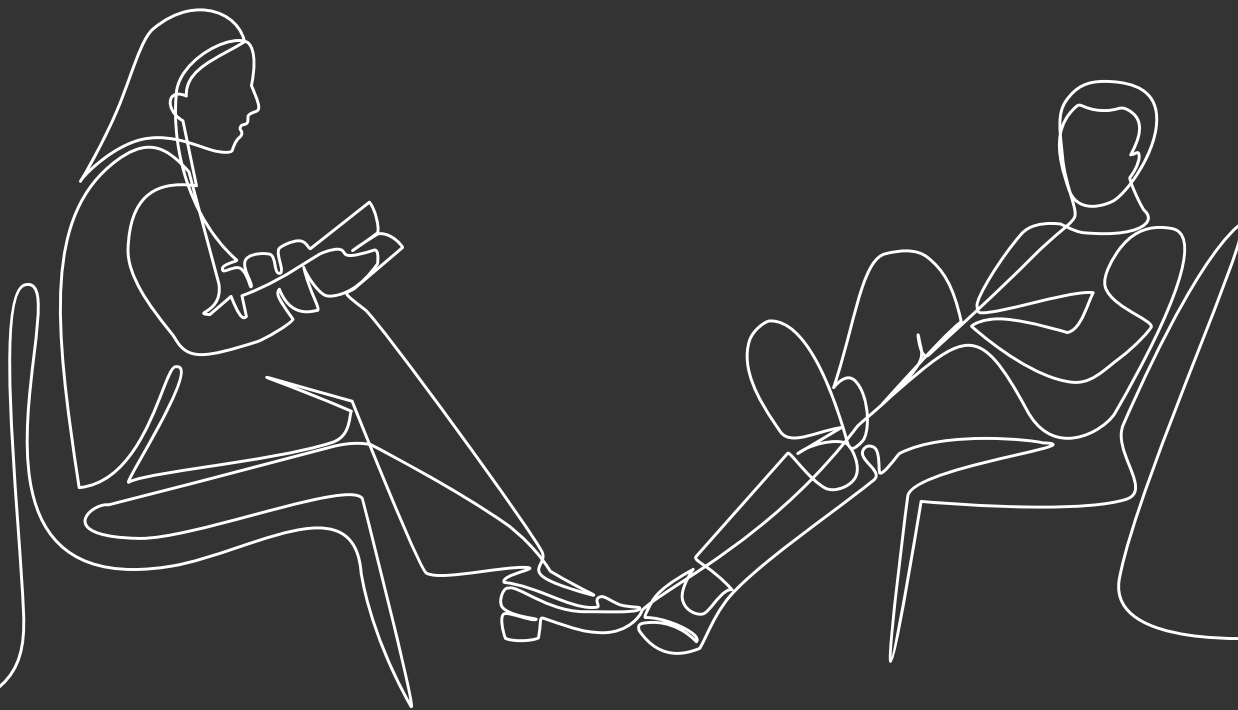




LifeStance
HEALTH

How To Find The Right Therapist



Evaluate Cultural Intelligence

Cultural intelligence has always been core to the training of mental health clinicians. **People's individual backgrounds have a strong underlying impact on how they experience life.** Because of this, licensed mental health clinicians at LifeStance Health are trained in cultural intelligence to be able to provide care for as many patients as possible.



We also know that some patients prefer to connect with clinicians that have **similar shared experiences or are of the same race, religion, gender, etc.**

These connections can **create a stronger therapeutic alliance**, or the feeling of trust and understanding that allows someone to be vulnerable and talk about things that are challenging for them to talk about.



How to **evaluate cultural intelligence** when matching with a clinician:



Make sure to **read available clinician bios** when booking an appointment to learn more about that person beyond just their medical credentials.



Ask questions during your session that allow you to learn more about the clinician you are working with and how you might be similar.



Evaluate Your Symptoms And Look For A Clinician Who Has Experience That Matches Up



Taking time before scheduling an appointment to **self-reflect on your symptoms might help guide you to find a clinician who specializes in what you are experiencing.** For example, if you are experiencing symptoms of PTSD, seeking out a clinician who frequently works with PTSD patients or has extensive experience might increase your comfortability with that person. Of course, you want to avoid self-diagnosing, and any clinician who you book with can help guide you to find a specialist should you discover you need one.

How to self-reflect on what you are experiencing:



Journaling or physically writing down how you feel can help your brain contextualize your emotions



Have an **open discussion with a friend or family** member about what you are experiencing and what they have noticed in your behavior



Ensure That Your Choice Of Clinician Is A Best Fit For Your Lifestyle



Participating in therapy **should never feel like an added burden on your life.** An important step to ensuring that your chosen clinician is compatible with your life so that you can keep your care as consistent as possible is making sure that therapy doesn't become a burden due to costs or appointment preference.

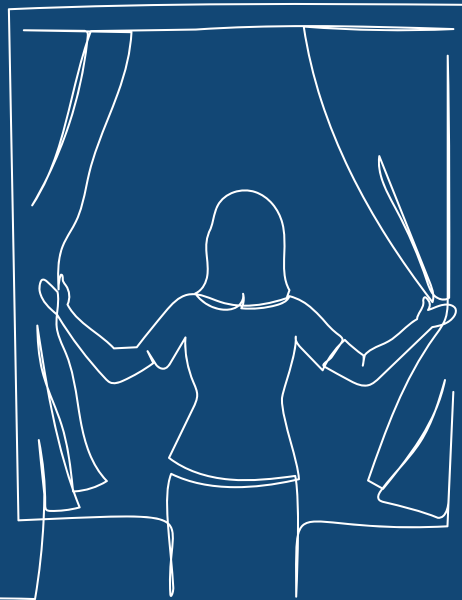
Questions to **ask before** making an appointment:

Does this therapist take my **insurance**, or would I be paying out of pocket?

What are my options for where I will be receiving care? Do they offer **virtual appointments** if that is my preference? If I prefer **in-person appointments**, is the commute feasible?



Don't Feel Stuck If You Are Thinking Of Switching Therapists



The most important step towards addressing your mental health if the thought of therapy is even crossing your mind is to make an appointment. At the end of the day, if you are on the fence about which clinician to pick, don't let that be a boundary to you seeking care. Once you are able to connect with your mental health professional, and if you ultimately decide they are not a great fit for you, they are trained to help you and would be more than happy to facilitate referrals to another clinician who may be a better fit for you.

How to **approach switching** clinicians:



Give yourself **two to three sessions** before deciding to switch. The first few sessions of opening up to a therapist can be very anxiety provoking. Once you get over that initial introduction period, you can better evaluate your connection with your therapist.



Don't feel the need to over-justify why you want to make a change. **Therapy is not about the clinician, it's about you.** Explain to the clinician how you feel and ask if they have referrals for someone else. Or just simply thank them for their time and help.





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