

# Key Facts

## 3. How do I choose a therapist?

The term 'therapist' is used throughout the information to cover both counsellors & psychotherapists.

### Introduction

Before you decide on a therapist, it is useful to know that most therapists can work with a wide range of problems. A lot of therapy can be obtained for free from a GP, some voluntary organisations, your employer, school or college, but these tend to be very busy and may only be able to offer a limited number of appointments. Some therapists work privately from their home or an office and you will have to pay for these, so you need to think about how much you can afford.

### Where to look for a therapist

Is there someone who could suggest a therapist to you? A friend, GP, or a professional body such as BACP. You can find a list of therapists on the BACP website: [www.bacp.co.uk](http://www.bacp.co.uk), or the BACP Client Helpdesk team will help, telephone: 01455 883316

At the moment there are no laws about who can say they are a therapist. It is important to check that this person is a member of a professional body such as BACP.

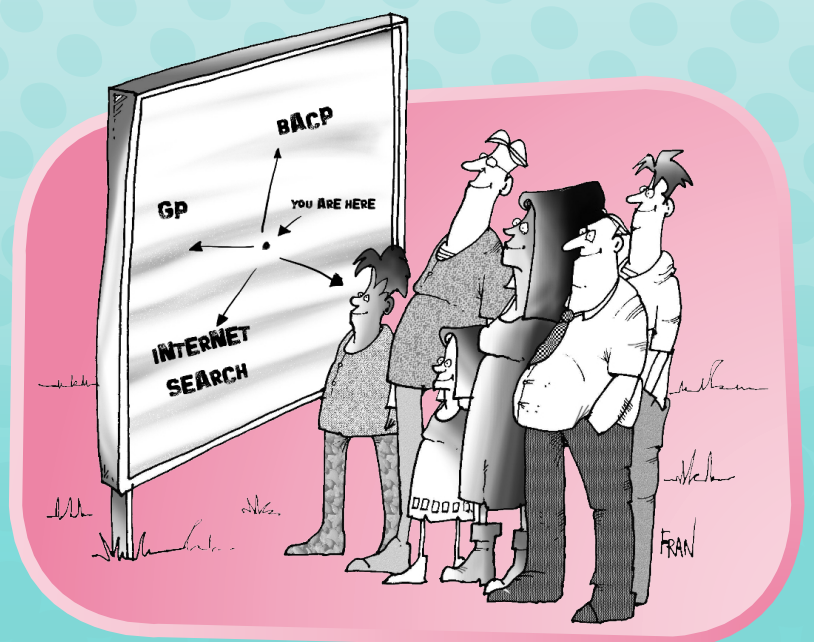
BACP require therapists to meet certain standards before they approve them. Therapists have to agree to certain membership rules. If they do not follow these, there is a way for you to make a complaint if things go wrong.

When you find a therapist it is important that you feel they understand you. If you do not feel this, you are free to find someone else.

Questions you can ask the therapist before you decide to work with them:

- ➔ Have you helped people with similar problems to mine?
- ➔ What happens in a session? How long does it take?
- ➔ How often would I need to come?
- ➔ Can I stop at any time?

continued overleaf...



- ➔ What qualifications and training have you got – what does that mean?
- ➔ Have you got sufficient experience to help me?
- ➔ How can you help me?
- ➔ Do you belong to a professional therapy organisation and can I check you are a member?
- ➔ What if the therapy is not helping me?
- ➔ How confidential is what I discuss with you?
- ➔ How much do I need to pay for each appointment?

**When you find a therapist it is important that you feel:**

- ➔ you could trust them
- ➔ you warmed to them
- ➔ that the counsellor could help you to talk about your thoughts and feelings

If you don't feel this you should feel free to find someone else.

## Contact information...

**Some of the main professional counselling & psychotherapy organisations and their contact details:**

**British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy (BACP)**  
[www.bacp.co.uk](http://www.bacp.co.uk) Tel: 01455 883300

**United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP)**  
[www.ukcp.org.uk](http://www.ukcp.org.uk) Tel: 020 7014 9955

**COSCA**  
[www.cosca.org.uk](http://www.cosca.org.uk) Tel: 01786 475140

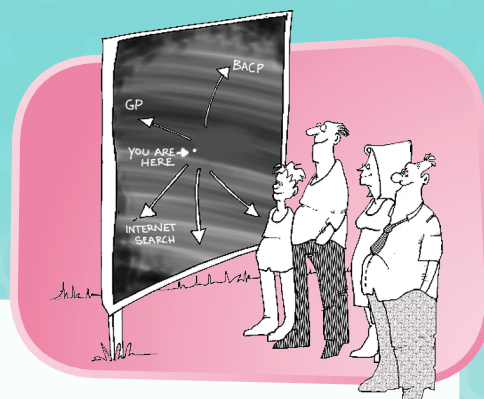
**British Association of Behavioural & Cognitive Psychotherapies (BABCP)**  
[www.babcp.com](http://www.babcp.com) Tel: 0161 797 4484

**British Association of Psychotherapists**  
[www.bap-psychotherapy.org](http://www.bap-psychotherapy.org) Tel: 020 8452 9823

**British Association for the Person-Centred Approach**  
[www.bapca.org.uk](http://www.bapca.org.uk) Tel: 01989 763863

**British Association of Sexual & Relationship Therapy (BASRT)**  
[www.basrt.org.uk](http://www.basrt.org.uk) Tel: 020 8543 2707

**British Psychological Society (BPS)**  
[www.bps.org.uk](http://www.bps.org.uk) Tel: 0161 797 4484



## Other helpful reading...

**Key facts 1** – How can counsellors & psychotherapists help?

**Key facts 2** – Qualifications of counsellors & psychotherapists (still in preparation)

**Key facts 4** – What happens in your first session with your therapist

**Information sheet C1** – How to get the best out of your therapist



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**Counselling & Psychotherapy**

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