



INTEGRATIVE THERAPY

Essentials of Integrative Therapy

Individualized therapy:



Integrative therapy is tailored to you. Instead of one set method, your therapist pulls techniques from different approaches to fit your unique needs. For example, if you're dealing with anxiety and relationship stress, an integrative therapist might use a calming breathing exercise (from mindfulness) and also help you explore past experiences (a psychodynamic approach) - whatever best suits you.

Holistic approach:



This therapy looks at the whole person. Your mental, emotional, and physical well-being are all considered, since they're connected. Feeling stressed? An integrative therapist might ask about your sleep, health, medical, or even school environment, not just your thoughts.

Therapeutic partnership:



You and your therapist work together. Integrative therapists often see therapy as a collaboration - your preferences, personality, and feedback guide the process.

You have a voice in what happens in sessions.

Flexible techniques:



Because it's flexible, integrative therapy can include many activities. One session might involve filling out a thought journal, another might include a mindfulness meditation, or even creative outlets like drawing how you feel. There's no one formula, and if something isn't helping, your therapist will switch gears.

What will I do in Integrative Therapy?

In integrative therapy, you'll likely try a variety of activities and see what resonates.

You might spend one session practicing a new coping skill (like a breathing exercise or a grounding technique), and the next session you could be role-playing a difficult conversation or doing a guided imagery exercise.

Feedback is key:

You'll talk with your therapist about what works for you. For example, imagine you often feel angry but hate journaling; your therapist might instead use a more active technique, like having you act out or talk through a scenario, to help you express that anger. You won't hurt anyone's feelings by being honest about what's helping or not - integrative therapy is meant to adjust to you. There may be some gentle homework (like trying a small relaxation exercise at home), but it will be personalized - no generic worksheets that don't apply to your life.

What can I expect from my Integrative Therapist?

Your integrative therapist will:

- Adapt to your needs: They don't stick rigidly to one theory. If mindfulness exercises aren't your thing but art therapy helps, they'll go with that - they merge different therapy styles to best help you.
- Look at the "big picture":
 - Expect them to ask about various parts of your life – thoughts, feelings, behaviors, even habits like sleep or diet – because they aim to treat you as a whole person (not just a list of symptoms).
- Collaborate with you:
 - They'll treat you as a partner in your therapy. They might ask, "How did you feel about that exercise?" or "What do you think you need?" - your opinions help shape the therapy.
- Explain their approach: A good integrative therapist will tell you why they're doing something. For instance, they might say, "Let's try this visualization to help with your anxiety because it worked for others with similar feelings," so you're never in the dark.
- Be creative and open-minded:
 - Since they draw from many methods, they're often open to trying new things. You can expect a therapist who is curious and not afraid to use unconventional but safe techniques (like maybe bringing in music or movement if it might help). And if something isn't effective, they'll pivot rather than blaming you - flexibility is the integrative mantra.

