

CONNECT

(with a therapist)



COPYRIGHT AND PERMISSIONS

Please feel free to print this guide for your personal use. No parts of this guide may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted by any means without prior permission from the publisher and author.

If you would like to use this document for any reason other than matching with a therapist please send requests to the publisher and author to discuss: oumou@nycbloomtherapy.com

I hope users of this guide are mindful of the time and labor that was put into its creation.

Limitation of liability/disclaimer of warranty: While the publisher and author have used their best efforts in preparing this guide, they make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this document.

This guide is not a substitute for professional mental health care. The advice and strategies might not be suitable for your life situation or context. Consult with professional when appropriate. Neither the publisher nor author shall be liable for any damage.

Wassup y'all,

This therapist matchmaking guide was created with the belief that “we are all born worthy of care and protection, love and safety, justice and accountability.” (Mckensie Mack).

I've been on both sides of the couch (the couch in my office happens to be blue) and I wish that finding a therapist, especially one that practices from an anti-racist + anti-oppressive framework, wasn't as complicated of a process. This guide is meant to make things easier and provide info on: therapist search directories, insurance support consult call questions, therapeutic modality and much much more.

At the end of this, I'll leave you with information on how to have me be the one to do all of the work! I hope to link you with the contact information of three therapists in your area that may be a match made in therapy land.

Regardless of what purpose this lil ebook is gonna serve in your life you deserve to find a therapist you love or at the very least provides you a safe space to work through whatever - hope this resource helps.

Best,

Oumou Sylla

MA, MFT-LP, CAS

CONNECT
WITH OUMO

CONTENTS

1	CRISIS LINES/HOTLINES
3	FAQ
6	PAYING FOR THERAPY
8	INSURANCE SUPPORT
14	TYPES OF THERAPISTS
16	TYPES OF THERAPY
20	DIRECTORIES
23	TELEHEALTH
26	NYC COMMUNITY RESOURCES & GRAD SCHOOL CLINICS
31	POC AND/OR LGBTQIA+ AFFIRMING PRIVATE PRACTICES
33	SOCIAL AND WELLNESS CLUBS
35	PREPARING FOR YOUR FIRST CONTACT WITH A POTENTIAL MATCH
41	CONNECT WITH THESE FOLX ON IG
43	@CONNECTWITHOUMOU THERAPIST MATCHMAKING SERVICES
46	ABOUT ME

CRISIS LINES/ HOTLINES

CONNECTION 

Below you'll find a list of a few crisis lines/hotlines that I've come across .

In danger or need immediate medical attention? Call 911.

National Suicide Prevention Crisis Line	1-800-273-8255
Crisis Text Line	Txt HELLO to 741741
NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Health) Helpline	1-800-950-6264
Human Trafficking Hotline	1-888-373-7888
PostPartum Depression	1-800-773-6667
RAINN (Rape, Abuse, & Incest)	1-800-656-4673
Trans Lifeline	1-877-565-8860
Victims Connect Resource Center	1-855-484-2846
Domestic Violence	1-800-799-7233
NYC Well Hotline	1-888-692-9355
Nisa Helpline (Muslim Women)	1-888-315-6472
SAMHSA (Substance Abuse & Mental Health)	1-800-622-4357

FAQ

CONNECTION

This FAQ will only feature these two questions because I think these are the ones that really impact the therapeutic search the most.

Why is therapy so expensive?

Fees are based on a number of factors including but not limited to: therapist education (becoming a therapist cost a ton of money), therapist experience, the type of therapy, provider type (non-profit agency vs. private practice), the cost of running an office, and the increasing influence of capitalism. Depending on where you live, sessions can range from \$20 to \$250 with insurance coverage totalling your current co-pay (avg. \$20 to \$50). Therapists do want to help you and so you will find therapists who offer sliding scale, work at mental health clinics that offer free services, work pro-bono (aka free), participate in insurance networks to advocate for clients rights to affordable therapy, or who take some clients who pay with insurance. I say all this to say that capitalism is at fault for the fees you see when you're searching for therapists.

Wassup with insurance?

Of all practicing medical professionals, therapists are the least likely to take insurance because insurance systems don't support therapists' diagnoses, the gap between a therapist's hourly fee and the reimbursement rate they receive from insurance companies can be wild, and filling out insurance paperwork is like a full-time job (in addition to being a therapist and sometimes business owner). In addition to the aforementioned, to have mental health insurance covered by insurance, your therapist has to give you a diagnosis based off a book called the DSM which treats mental health concerns as a pathology (something being wrong with you). So one of the reasons therapists choose not to be on panels is because insurance panels don't align with their values or theoretical framework.

Another concern with insurance is that insurance panels are able to review individual cases and determine for both client and therapists whether or not coverage is still needed.

So basically, insurance panels are losing in-network therapists due their racist and oppressive practices. This contributes to the overall shortage of therapists generally and in health plan networks - which results in you all having to pay out-of-pocket for therapy or decide that you can't or don't want to go at all. Larger scale systems at play impact both you and your potential therapist matches.

If you'd like to learn more about this kind of stuff follow me on IG: @connectwithoumou.

CONTENT TO SUPPORT FAQ

Below you'll find a list of some articles that I've come across that may answer any other questions you have. Please feel free to type these article titles into your preferred search engine to gain access to them.

Huff Post: Why Is Therapy So Expensive by Nicole Pajer

Better Help: Can I Afford To See A Counselor by Sarah Fader

Thervo: How Much Does Therapy Cost (Cost Guide)

Talkspace: How Much Does Therapy Cost by Joseph Rauch

The Atlantic: Not White, Not Rich, and Seeking Therapy by Olga Khazan

Good Therapy: How Much Does Therapy Cost by Therapy FAQs

PsychCentral: Why Do Therapists Charge So Much by Patrick Bryant, LCSW

Practice of the Practice: One Therapist Journey Through The Insurance Jungle by Melissa DaSilva, LCSW

PsychedInSanFrancisco: Psychotherapy Insurance Panels The Good and Bad of Being In Network

PAYING FOR THERAPY

CONNECTION  CT

Session Fees

Therapy session fees typically range between \$80 - \$150 in smaller cities and \$100 - \$250 in big cities like Boston, New York City, and San Francisco; session fees are typically higher for psychiatrists.

What do session fees go toward?

1. Therapist development (trainings, continuing education and conferences)
2. Business costs (office space, office supplies, directory listings, etc.)
3. Therapeutic services (time, energy and brainpower)
4. Time spent out of session (therapy notes, supervision regarding case needs, reading/research etc.)

Below, you'll find a list of ways to pay for therapy:

In-network therapists

These are the therapists that "take your insurance". This may be the most affordable way to get therapy and is a good option if you want to keep therapy costs under \$50 per session (this is where your co-pay or co-insurance will come into play).

Out-of-network therapists

These are the therapists that are not in your network. Consider seeing an out-of-network therapist if you have decent out-of-network health insurance benefits or you have a high deductible.

Sliding scale, HSA, FSA

These are good options if: you have a high deductible plan and want to find alternative ways to keep therapy costs down or if you're looking to use your employee benefits.

Private Pay

This is an option if you don't have insurance or any other systems in place to help pay for therapy. Being a private pay client means paying the amount that you and the therapist agree upon: either their "regular" rate or sliding scale rate.

INSURANCE SUPPORT

CONNECTIONS

Below you'll find a glossary of common health insurance terms. These glossary terms and definitions are intended to be educational and may be different from the terms and definitions in your specific insurance plan/policy. (See your Summary of Benefits and Coverage for more accurate information)

Claim

A request by a member, or a member's health care provider, for the insurance company to pay for mental health services.

Coinsurance

The amount you pay to share the cost of covered services after your deductible has been paid. The coinsurance rate is usually a percentage. For example, if the insurance company pays 80% of the claim, you pay 20%.

Copayment

One of the ways you share in your medical costs. You pay a flat fee for certain medical expenses (e.g., \$25 for every visit to the therapist), while your insurance company pays the rest.

Deductible

The amount of money you must pay each year to cover eligible medical expenses before your insurance policy starts paying.

Explanation of benefits

The health insurance company's written explanation of how a medical claim was paid. It has information about what the company paid and what portion of the costs you are responsible for.

In-network provider

A healthcare professional, hospital, or pharmacy that is part of a health plan's network of preferred providers. You will generally pay less for services received from in-network providers because they have negotiated a discount for their services in exchange for the insurance company sending more patients their way.

Network

The group of therapist or psychiatrist providers that insurance companies contract with to provide services at discounted rates. You will generally pay less for services received from providers in your network.

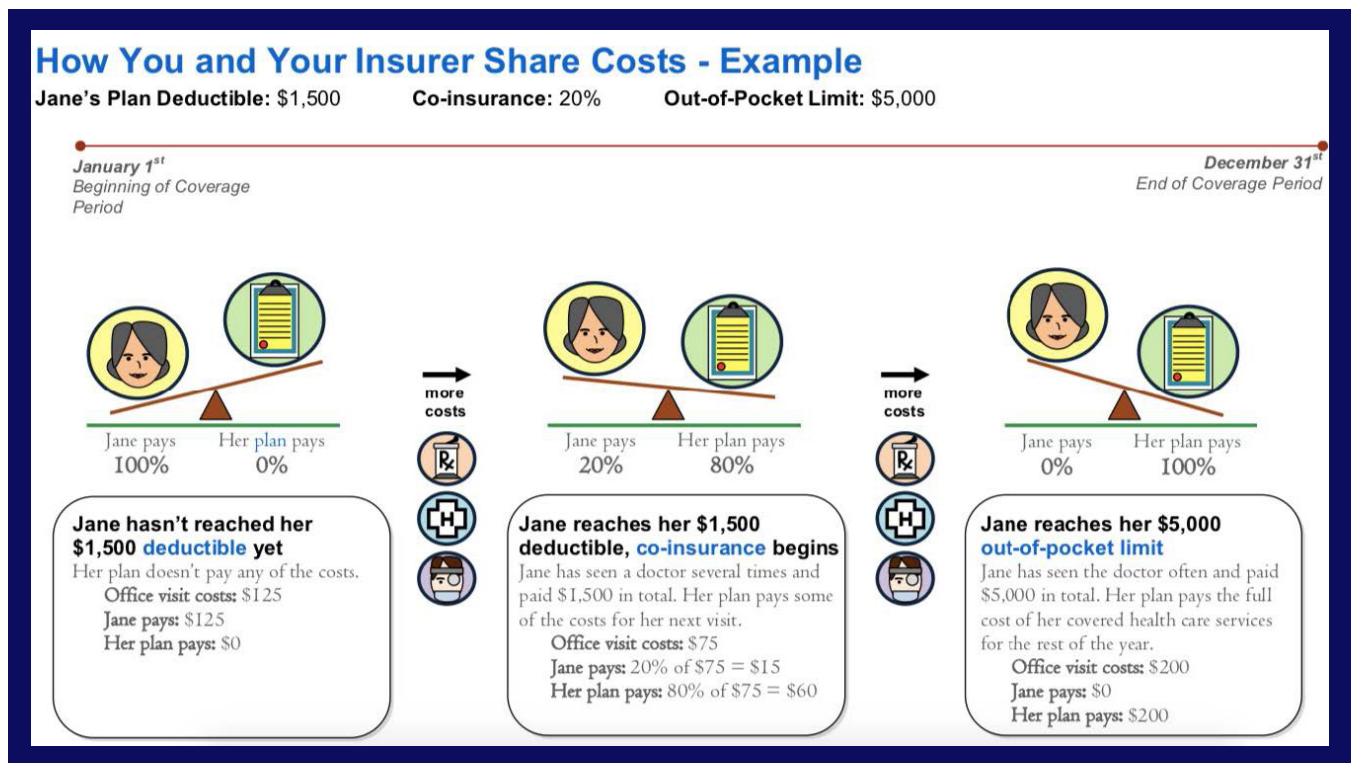
Out-of-network provider

A healthcare professional, therapist or psychiatrist that is not part of a health plan's network of preferred providers with your insurance provider. You will generally pay more for services received from out-of-network providers.

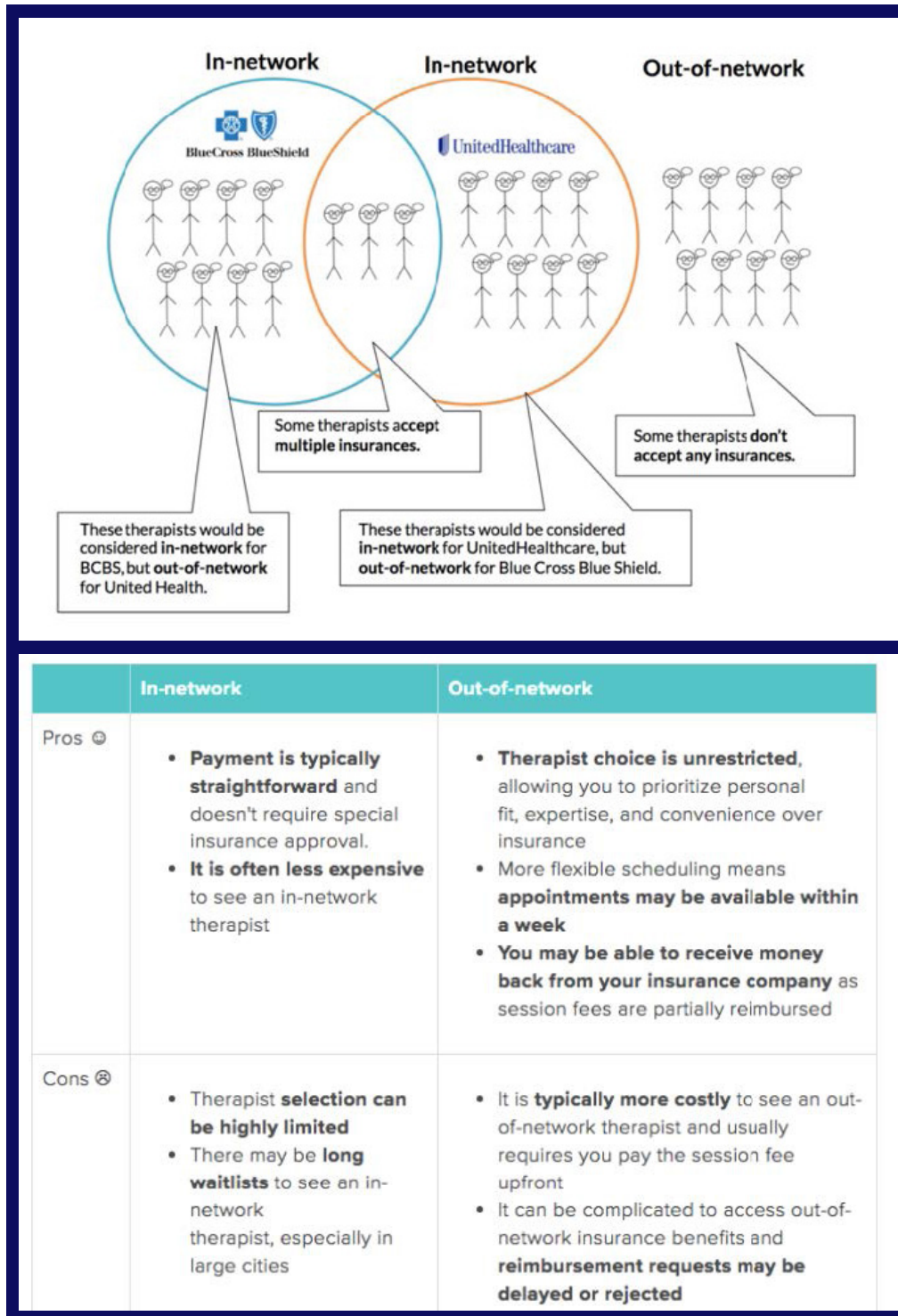
Out-of-pocket maximum

The most money you will pay during a year for coverage. It includes deductibles, copayments, and coinsurance, but is in addition to your regular premiums. Beyond this amount, the insurance company will pay all expenses for the remainder of the year.

Below you'll find an image that highlights an example of how you and your insurer share costs. Image was obtained from a Santa Barbara based Health Insurance Brokerage named Peters & Milam Insurance Services via the web.



Below you'll find two images that highlight what it means to be in-network vs. out-of-network. Image was obtained from the Zen Care article titled *How Health Insurance For Therapy Works: A Comprehensive Guide* by Yuri Tomikawa and Maggie Jordan.



Don't know your insurance benefits? Set aside 15-30 minutes of your time to call your insurance company. ***Make sure to have this information ready before your call:***

Insurance card
Name, date of birth, address, phone number,
SSN
Pen and paper/notepad

The following are some questions you will want to ask your insurance company, if possible, before starting treatment;

1. Do I need a referral from my doctor to see a mental health professional?
2. Do I need any pre-approval from the insurance company?
3. Do I need to see a mental health professional who is on a list provided by my insurance company (in a "network") or am I free to choose any qualified professional?
4. What is the difference in the amount paid or percent reimbursement for "in network" vs. "out of network" providers? How much is my co-pay?
5. Do I have a deductible for in-network mental health benefits? If so, what is my deductible AND do I have out of network mental health coverage, If so, do I have a deductible and what is it?
6. Are there dollar limits, visit limits, time limits (60min vs 45min) or other coverage limits for my mental health benefits?
7. Is there a specific list of diagnoses for which services are covered? If so, is my diagnosis one of those covered by my policy?
8. Is there a specific list of diagnoses for which services are covered? If so, is my diagnosis one of those covered by my policy?

That Was a lot of Information...Now What?

1. Know that you're not alone in your frustration with accessibility (despite having insurance that's SUPPOSED to make it easier to access therapy).
2. Choose the route that works and is manageable for you right now.
3. Call your insurance up, ask questions, and demand the changes you want to see.
4. Talk to your (potential) therapist and ask for support as appropriate.

Below you'll find a list of Zen Care articles to support you in thinking about how to use insurance for therapy. Please feel free to type these article titles into your preferred search engine to gain access to them.

8 Reasons to See an Out-of-Network Therapist by Maggie Jordan

How Health Insurance for Therapy Works: A Comprehensive Guide by Yuri Tomikawa and Maggie Jordan

Why It's So Hard To Find A Therapist Who Takes Your Health Insurance by Yuri Tomikawa

step-by-Step Guide to Out of Network Benefits by Yuri Tomikawa and Maggie Jordan

Insurance Doesn't Cover Couples Counseling. Here's How to Use It Anyways by The ZenCare Team

Note: Zen Care has a bunch of other articles about therapy that I love...the section titled Therapy 101 has a number of articles that might be helpful in your search for a therapist.

TYPES OF THERAPISTS

CONNECT

Below you'll find an infographic of the different types of therapists. Image was obtained from Life Spark Weekly.



TYPES OF THERAPY

CONNECT

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)

ACT focuses on accepting and embracing life's challenges, rather than attempting to eliminate distress. Mindfulness skills and strategies are taught to live a life that reflects your values and goals.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

CBT is a skill-based treatment that focuses on the connection of one's thoughts, behaviors, and emotional experiences.

Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT)

DBT is a skill-based treatment that values both self-acceptance and change. Focuses on awareness, acceptance and action related to uncomfortable thoughts and feelings.

Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing Therapy (EMDR)

EMDR is a trauma treatment that helps process distressing memories and restore the brain's natural healing abilities. In addition to other therapeutic techniques, the therapist leads the client in a series of lateral eye movements while focusing on a difficult memory. This reduces any overwhelming feelings connected to past experiences, and allowing for emotional healing.

Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy

A structured approach that helps couples reduce stress and conflict and foster a secure and loving bond. The therapist helps clients identify and understand their emotions, communicate their needs to one another, and practice change strategies.

Gestalt Therapy

Gestalt therapy focuses on achieving personal growth and freedom by increasing self-awareness in present moment experiences.

Gottman Method

A branch of couples counseling designed to help couples foster closeness, manage conflict in a constructive manner, and create shared meaning in their relationship.

Health At Every Size (HAES)

HAES is a non-diet approach to wellness that aims to strengthen an individual's relationship to food by reducing the focus on weight. It promotes balanced eating while maintaining respect for the natural diversity of body shapes and sizes.

Internal Family Systems (IFS)

IFS increases self-awareness by exploring the different subpersonalities or "parts" of the mind and nurturing and deepening the connection to the self.

Narrative Therapy

Narrative therapy offers the opportunity to examine the meaning people make of their experiences. The therapist supports people to explore, expand, and deepen their understanding of themselves.

Psychoanalytic Therapy

Psychoanalytic therapy (or psychoanalysis) is an in-depth talktherapy based on uncovering and understanding how the unconscious mind impacts a client's thoughts and behaviors.

Psychodynamic Therapy

Psychodynamic therapy is based on Freud's psychoanalytic theory that thoughts and behaviors are influenced by our unconscious mind and past experiences.

Sensorimotor Therapy

Integrates awareness of the body + the processing of thoughts and feelings related to difficult or traumatic experiences. The therapist uses techniques to regulate and calm the body.

Sex therapy

A specialized way of treating concerns around sex and sexual satisfaction from a psychological perspective, including addressing any mental health conditions that may relate to or arise from these concerns.

Somatic therapy

Incorporates the narrative aspect of therapy by observing each individual's body movements and becoming attuned to the body.

Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)

TF-CBT is an evidence-based and time-limited therapy designed for children and adolescents experiencing emotional effects of trauma.

Yoga

The use of specific postures, breathing practices, and meditation techniques to promote health and relaxation. A therapist trained in yoga and psychotherapy will work with the client to tailor the yoga practice to enhance and support the health and healing process.

Note: these types of therapy occur in the following therapy formats: individual, couples (polyamorous folx too), and group.

DIRECTORIES

CONNECTIONS
WITH COMMUNITY

CONNECT

A small, stylized graphic of a leafy branch, positioned above the letter 'E' in the word 'CONNECT'.

Below you'll find a list of some directories that I've come across. Like with any other service, please do your own research and find a provider that fits your specific needs.

Inclusive Therapists	Therapy for Black Girls	Therapy for Latinx	National Deaf Therapy	Cultural Therapy
National Queer & Trans Therapists of Color Network	Lighthouse. lgbt	Open Path Psychotherapy Collective	Samata Health	TheraMatch or MyTheraFund
Psychology Today	Zen Care	Therapy Den	Zoc Doc	Good Therapy
My Tru Circle	The Sukhi Project	Asians for Mental Health	InnoPsych	Institute for Muslim Mental Health

Word of mouth is sometimes my favorite way to find out about therapists. Tap into your community and find out who your friends and chosen family are seeing!

Note: having a therapist of a similar identity DOES NOT guarantee a therapeutic relationship that features/fosters safety, understanding, healing, or wellness. It is just one of the many factors that can be really helpful and radically transformative for therapy seekers + goes with marginalized identities. Your therapist should always remain curious about your unique life's experiences.

Directory Search Support

1. Look at the list of directories and choose one to start from
2. Use your location as a reference point
3. Narrow your search by focus, insurance, etc.
4. Use the directory filters to narrow your search
5. Look at therapist specialties/modalities are a good fit for your needs
6. Locate therapist contact information
7. Schedule a consultation call

TELEHEALTH

CONNECTION WITH COMMUNITY

What is Telehealth?

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines Telehealth as health care services that use telecommunications and virtual technology to deliver health care outside of traditional healthcare facilities.

What are the benefits of Telehealth?

Convenience: you can connect with your therapist from the comfort of your own home/MTA won't impact whether or not you show up to session on time.

Greater Access: allows for a wider range of people to have access to care (folx with disabilities, folx in rural communities). Flexibility: some therapists offer non-traditional hours which may potentially remove some barriers to attending sessions.

Quick Tips + Tricks + Reminders:

Be patient and remember to breathe. Glitches are gonna happen.

Prepare. Download software ahead of time and practice if that feels helpful. Set aside 5 minutes before and after session for grounding.

Keep essentials close (water, journal, pen, tissues)

Consider Internet reception and charge your device.

Try to maintain privacy (use headphones) and let your therapist know of any safety or privacy concerns.

Set up a comfy area for sessions (in your PJ's and sitting on your yoga mat or whatever you'd like lol)

Telehealth should not be considered if:

You have thoughts of hurting yourself or others.

You are a minor or you are under the care of a legal guardian.

You are in an urgent crisis or an emergency situation.

You have been diagnosed with a severe mental illness, or if you have been advised to be in psychological supervision or psychiatric care.

You were required to undergo therapy or counseling either by a court order or by any other authority.

You do not have a device that can connect to the Internet or you do not have a reliable Internet connection.

Below you'll find a list of some telehealth apps that I've come across. Like with any other service, please do your own research and find a provider that fits your specific needs.



*cost of counseling ranges from \$40 to \$70 dollars weekly

Below you'll find the name of a service that provides online therapy for marginalized and intersectional communities.



CONNECT
WITH OUMOU

**NYC COMMUNITY RESOURCES &
GRADUATE SCHOOL CLINICS**

CONNECTIONS

IHI Therapy Center

A NYC-based non-profit psychotherapy and training center dedicated to fostering personal growth free of traditional gender, sexual orientation, and cultural biases.

Cost: Insurance & Sliding Scale.

Institute for Contemporary Psychotherapy

Offers individual and group psychotherapy. ICP is dedicated to providing high quality therapy at low to moderate cost, offering post-graduate training for therapists, and educating the public about mental health issues.

Cost: Insurance, likely reimbursement for out-of-network insurance, and sliding scale. Discount for students.

PSI

An inclusive organization that serves and affirms people of all faiths, economic levels, ethnic backgrounds and sexual orientations. Staff includes a wide array of helping professionals.

Cost: Sliding Scale. Low cost.

Callen-Lorde Community Health Center

Provides sensitive, quality healthcare and related services targeted to New York's lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities." Cost: Insurance & Sliding Scale.

Cost: Visit co-pays can range from \$0 to \$100.

Adelphi University

Center for Psychological Services The Center provides high quality, low-cost services at three clinics : Garden City Campus, Adelphi's Manhattan Center, and Hempstead.

Cost: Sliding Scale.

CUNY

The Psychological Center at The City College of The CUNY A community-oriented outpatient psychological and behavioral health center. They offer individualized therapy as well as psychiatric care and support for our patients.

Cost: Sliding Scale.

St. Johns University

The Center strives to provide the highest quality psychological care to the ethnically, racially, religiously, and economically diverse Queens community.

Cost: Sliding Scale.

The New School

Operated by the Clinical Psychology program at the New School. They offer individual psychotherapy provided by Clinical Psychology PhD candidates under the supervision of licensed psychologists.

Cost: Sliding Scale. \$20.00-\$50.00 per session and is based on family size and income.

Ackerman

Ackerman Institute for the family is a program that offers family therapy provided by psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers on the Ackerman faculty, and by clinicians in post graduate training and supervision at Ackerman. Cost: Fees are on a sliding scale based on income.

Cost: Ackerman is an in network provider for Oxford, HIP, MetroPlus, and Health First.

KIP Therapy

Mental health clinic that offers therapy from therapists who are at various stages in their career...KIP offers varying pricing based on therapist experience levels. 2 locations: Williamsburg and Chelsea.

Cost: ranging from \$75.00-\$145.00

National Institute for the Psychotherapies

The treatment center of NIP is a clinical training program. All clinicians are graduate or post graduate students working under the supervision of a licensed professional.

Cost: NIP is an in network provider for Aetna, HealthFirst, Emblem and others. Sliding scale available.

NYC ALTERNATIVE
HEALING CENTERS

CONNECTION

Minka Brooklyn

Community led wellness center for wellness and harmonious living. Offers a lineage of healing practices. Center features workshop foyer, mystical shop + library, and private studio.

Cost: Look to social media or website for updated information.

Maha Rose

Center for healing, inspiration, creativity, and transformation that offers group workshops, classes and activations to expand your mind, body, and spirit into a more connected you.

Cost: Cost: Look to social media or website for updated information.

**NYC POC AND/OR LGBTQIA+
AFFIRMING PRIVATE PRACTICES**

CONNECTION 

Bloom Psychotherapy**Location:** New York, NY**Cost:** Between \$180-\$205. Sliding Scale Available. Practice website should feature updated fee and insurance information.***The Gender & Sexuality Therapy Center*****Location:** New York, NY**Cost:** Between \$175-\$400. Sliding Scale Available. Practice website should feature updated fee and insurance information.***NYC Affirmative Psychotherapy*****Location:** New York, NY**Cost:** \$100-\$160. Sliding Scale Available. Practice website should feature updated fee and insurance information.***Therapy Brooklyn*****Location:** Brooklyn, NY**Cost:** In network for Blue Cross Blue Shield and out of network provider for all other insurance providers. Practice website should feature updated fee and insurance information.***MCM Collaborative*****Location:** New York, NY**Cost:** Between \$135-\$250. Sliding Scale Available. Practice website should feature updated fee and insurance information.***Get Right Wellness Collective*****Location:** Ridgewood, NY**Cost:** Practice website should feature updated fee and insurance information.

NYC SOCIAL AND WELLNESS CLUBS

(if you fancy fancy lol)

CONNECTION

Ethel's Club

Private social and wellness club geared toward people of color- built so you can thrive. The club features on site htherapy consultations for a fee.

Location: Brooklyn, NY

Cost: Inquire with each therapist

Heal Haus

A wellness space and cafe designed to inspire community that offers a modern and accessible approach to wellness. Offers individual, couple and family therapy.

Location: Brooklyn, NY

Cost: All HealHaus therapists take out of network insurance. Rates are determined on a case by case basis.

**PREPARING FOR YOUR FIRST
CONTACT WITH A POTENTIAL MATCH**

CONNECTION

I Found Some Names, Now What?

Step 1: Reach out to the potential therapist via phone, email or on their website and let them know you'd like to schedule a consultation call for you, your family, or your partner(s) etc. Have a list of dates and times readily available to offer in the initial contact. Some therapists have booking websites to schedule consults on. Don't get discouraged if you don't hear back immediately, it's okay to follow up!

Step 2: Refresh yourself on the reason you're looking for a therapist to begin with.

Step 3: Think about questions you'd like to ask them (I have a few that I think are generally helpful to ask that you can reference if you'd like).

Step 4: Do the consultation call with the potential therapist(s) and keep track of how you feel talking to them, how your body feels talking to them, whether or not it was "awkward" + why and how they answered your questions/asked you questions.

Step 5: Choose a therapist and follow through and schedule an intake/initial appointment.

Step 6: Attend your weekly sessions until y'all decide y'all done. Note: please don't feel discouraged if you do not find a therapist that you are aligned with immediately. You might have to meet a few therapists before you meet your "perfect" match (corny, I know).

Ways To Avoid Wasting Your Coin

1. Get a journal, frfr.
 - a. Do some thinking before your consultation/first session about: goals + what you'd like to see shift + L's you'd like to stop taking + relationships you'd like to see grow/change.
 - b. Utilize the journal in whatever way you see fit to help track progress, homework assignments, sessions, quotes from your thereapist etc.
 - c. take some time before sessions and think about what you wanna focus on
2. If you've been in therapy before, let your therapist know what you liked and didn't like.
3. Collaborate with your therapist! If something they recommended didn't work or wasn't helpful LET THEM KNOW. Let them know about what works too!
4. Ask your therapist if they have any outside resource suggestions that you can commit to between sessions. Sometimes they might ask you to think of what you'd like to work on.
5. Commit to connecting to yourself and those around you to become your most authentic self.
6. If you're not receiving quality or appropriate service/treatment give yourself permission to pause and either advocate for appropriate care or let the therapist know you want to stop sessions. It's okay if y'all gotta break up - your match is out there.

Questions To Ask A Potential Therapist

Who is your ideal client?

What is your approach to therapy and how might it be different to other therapists?

What should I expect in a typical session? Is there any room for adjustments in what happens in the room?

Given what I've told you, to what extent do you believe the therapy you offer is going to be helpful for me?

If I ever feel like I'm struggling with something in my relationship with you, how should I address it?

How will we know when therapy is no longer needed?

How does culture inform your treatment?

What is the hardest part of your job?

How much of your practice involves (my specific issue)?

Bonus questions if you bout that life:

Can you please share with me your thoughts about the psychological impact of white supremacy/racism/oppression?

How might aspects of your identity + your personal experiences be limiting or helpful in our work together?

How do you consider someone's documentation status/sexuality/gender orientation in your treatment and plan of care?

What is your experience in working with clients with marginalized identities (LGBTQIA, religious minority, race, ability status etc.)?

How will you hold space for me when we discuss oppression?

Things to Talk About in Therapy

Personal or professional goals
 Political climate + oppression (internal and external)
 Activism
 Dreams
 Any of the -isms (racism, ableism, anti-semitism etc.)
 Your relationship with food/exercise/drugs/rest
 Anxiety or feeling on edge
 "Grind" culture
 Love or loneliness
 Feeling overwhelmed
 Your relationships with friends, family, co-workers
 Self-esteem or sense of self
 Your relationship with friends, family, co-workers
 Work-life balance
 The last intense emotion you felt
 Progress (of any kind/magnitude)
 Relapse (of any kind/magnitude)
 Self care + community care
 Feeling "Off"
 Coping skills
 Sleeping patterns
 Body image + Body dysmorphia
 Phobia (think: fat phobia, Islamophobia etc.)
 Pandemic
 Religion
 Grief

Giving Your Therapist Feedback

Ideas originally suggested by The New York Times by Juli Fraga and Hilary Jacobs:

- Be direct about your concerns (or praise)
- Collaborate toward a solution
- Check-in regularly
- Recognize empathy in your therapist's response

Ideas generated during my practice as a therapist and client:

- Be clear on your intention
 - Think: clearing up a misunderstanding, enhancing the relationship, helping you get back on track, or ending the relationship*
- Prep and write down what you want to say if you think it'll be helpful
- Use Non-Violent Communication Tips + Tricks
 - Think: I statements, impact statements*
 - Focus on: observations, feelings, needs, and requests*

Ideas originally suggested by Dr. Kameelah Rashad:

- Give yourself permission to pause If feedback needs to be provided in session and you aren't sure exactly what feels off/hurtful say "wait, something just happened, let's stop for a sec?"

The Mighty posted an article titled *5 Ways to Give Your Therapist Feedback Rather Than "Ghosting" Them* by Araya Baker that provides readers with information on how to offer feedback "about awkward, disappointing or uncomfortable moments in therapy." Check it out!

Therapists **should** be able to address/validate/normalize your feedback but guess what, sometimes therapists have their own work to do and may not be able to hold space for you.

CONNECT WITH THESE FOLX ON IG

CONNECT

Below you'll find a list of **some** my favorite therapists on Instagram. If you are a social media user, I think sprinkling in a few therapists onto your feed that specialize in the things that you may be struggling with helps strengthen some of the stuff YOUR therapist is saying in session. I totally get if you don't use IG and/or did and don't intend on going back. The publisher and author of this guide is not liable for the content that these therapists and/or providers post on their respective instagram pages.

Disclaimer: posts do not substitute therapy.

@the_queer_counselor (Fat Liberation + HAES + Trauma + LGBTQIA)

@nataliegutierrezlmft (Trauma + Anti-Colonialism)

@dr.marielbuque (Relationships + Trauma + Healing)

@somaticwitch (Somatic + LGBTQ + Kink + BDSM + Trauma)

@dra.zamiracastro (Dichos for...+ Psychoanalysis + Acceptance)

@josierosarionyc (Healthy Relationships)

@justdavia (Mental Health and Wellness)

@connectwithmorganjohnson (Relationships)

@sitwithwhit (Empathy + Boundaries + Holding Space + Infographics)

@lizlistens (Healthy Relationships +Resources)

@lisaoliveratherapy (Prompts for self compassion + acceptance)

@kenyatherapy (Anti-Racism + Gender + Sexuality)

@mswjake (Compassion + Trauma + Innerself + Healing)

@minaa_b (*Healing + Reminders + Checkins*)

@livedexperiencecounselor (*Lived experiences + Client guides*)

@CONNECTWITHOUMOU
THERAPIST MATCHMAKING SERVICES

CONNECT



'Tis the Season For A Therapist

Therapist Matchmaking Services

This service is meant as a matchmaking service to help you find a therapist. My role is to remove some of the hassle of weeding through the directories mentioned at the beginning of this guide + reading through the hundreds of therapist profiles that are available and linking you to a perfect match.

So, basically:



What you'll get:

Three therapist matches in YOUR area

*you have to like one of them enough to schedule an intake with or I provide you with more options (2 more)

Explanation as to why I put the three on your list

Write up of matchmaking process Q&A

Email of the therapist matchmaking guide

Rate:

Community (Discounted) - \$5

Sustainer (Pays For You) - \$20

Supporter (Supports Others As Well As Yourself) - \$30

To schedule email: oumou@nycbloomtherapy.com

CONNECT
WITH OUMO

Other Therapist Matchmaking Services

Alma

helloalma.com

Directory and a website that offers tailored recommendations and one-on-one support from their client matching team.

Ivy

talktoivy.com

A therapist matchmaking style website that happens over the phone. Basically lets you chat it up with different therapist to see who you like before going in person. Think speed dating but for therapists.

My Wellbeing

mywellbeing.com

Complete their free, confidential questionnaire to easily and quickly match with 3 personalized therapists in NYC.

TheraMatch

<https://mytherafund.com/match>

An organization focused on making therapy more accessible for people of color.

In response to the many challenges they're seeing globally, they're starting a video collection of licensed Black and Latinx therapists in key US markets via social media (Facebook Live and iGTV).

ZenCare

<https://zencare.co>

Zencare removes the guesswork to ensure you have a personalized, smooth, and comforting therapy experience. All clinicians are vetted by their team so you receive the highest quality care. They're currently in New York City, Boston, Chicago, Rhode Island, Los Angeles, Washington DC, Seattle, Connecticut, and New Jersey.

ABOUT ME

CONNECTION

Who are you?

A foreign-born African Muslim woman practicing as a Limited Permit Marriage and Family Therapist living in a number of different contexts trying to put all my people on to therapy.

What type of work do you do?

Gender and Sexuality Expansive Therapy for Queer and Trans people of color because we are all, in one way or another, impacted by gender and sexuality. As we live in a society founded on systemic oppression, racism, and Anti-Blackness I am mindful of the ways that oppression and racism can impact you and your identities on a day-to-day basis. I get paid to speak about stuff like this too.

Do you have any social media handles?

YES! Follow me on Instagram at the following account: @connectwithoumou.

Are you accepting any new clients or offering any other services?

Please feel free to connect with me via email at oumou@nycbloomtherapy.com for any inquiries about service offerings.



Thanks for connecting with me!

CONNECT