



A Journey to heal

2017

*Sitting in the waiting room
Struggling with my inner gloom
Feeling scared and vulnerable
With an ever increasing sense of doom*

*What if, I can't express myself
What if, someone comes to know
What if, I get called 'mad'
What if, my sadness fails to show*

*Or pills is what I get
What if, I change after the session?
Oh my... being here, how much I
regret*

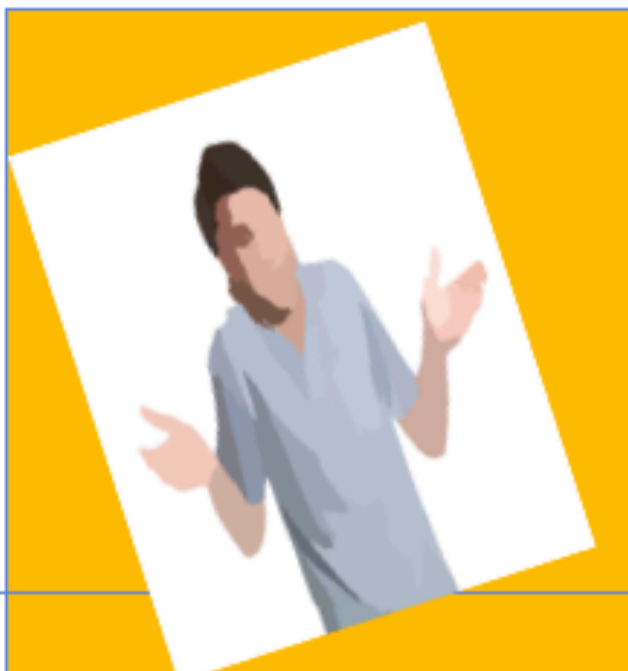
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Meeting mental health professional

Meeting a mental health professional for the first time can feel daunting and scary. There are many thoughts that come to mind when someone decides to see a therapist. These thoughts vary from the fear of opening up in front of a stranger, to feelings of being judged or being scared of the consequences in case someone comes to know about it.

What if the therapist thinks of me as an evil horrible person? Or what if someone sees me enter the clinic and everyone comes to know about it. The worst, what if the entire Google search about my symptoms is true. No one is alone in experiencing these thoughts.



Family versus therapist

If we look at our traditional practices, family has played an important role in providing support in case of difficulties. In such a context, getting out of the comfort and safety of family to seek professional help for mental health concerns is a big ask. Identifying the need for the same and getting it when needed, is the first step in the right direction. It is an acknowledgement of a difficulty you or your loved one is experiencing that you plan to overcome.



cont.

What to expect

If someone is embarking on this journey, for themselves or for their loved ones, here are a few things to expect (or not to expect) while dealing with the professionals and the services. Let us start with the common problems for which people come to seek help.

1. Concerns

The concerns vary from an emotional one like feeling sad or depressed to behavioral concerns such as not being able to do things, amotivation, and aggressive behaviour. It might be easier for the person to understand and work on the difficulties

family member who is not very inclined to get help, it can be an exhausting and a frustrating experience.

2. Therapeutic relationship

Through therapy individuals modify their behavior, experience and environment to overcome their problems with the help of the clinician. The relationship between the therapist and the client plays a key role in achieving this. A therapeutic relationship is a purposeful partnership that goes beyond being positive and nice to facilitate a meaningful change. In an effective treatment alliance, the therapist is warm, interested and respectful in her or his approach and relates with honesty, trustworthiness and openness. The therapist also helps to set realistic, achievable goals, where all decisions are genuinely and explicitly negotiated.

3. Non-judgemental approach

Another important aspect of therapy is the non-judgmental approach of the therapist. The mental health professionals are emotionally supportive and listen to the problems without blame. They tend to demonstrate an empathic understanding of the situation. This creates a safe environment in which painful events and intimate details of life can be shared with utmost ease. Sometimes there could be doubts about sharing sensitive information with the therapist. It is important to be honest for any therapy to work and be aware that the professionals don't share the information with anyone without the permission of the client.

Barriers to treatment

There are times when people don't want to get help as they are wary of jeopardizing their future prospects related to marriage or job. It is important to note that in these situations worsening of the problems in absence of any professional help leading to difficulties on personal and work front is a more likely possibility. The earlier the problem is addressed with an appropriate treatment, the better the outcome is.



Sometimes, cost aspects play an important part in preventing people from seeing a professional.

We tend to forget that timely management of the problem is likely to save us more money than that lost by being unproductive and unwell if the problems continue. One of the worst fears for someone visiting a mental health professional is to get prescribed with a medication. It is important to note that there are specific situations in which qualified mental health professionals with medical background such as psychiatrists prescribe medicines. Most often, it is done after an extensive discussion with the client and taking into account their preferences. Other mental health professionals are from backgrounds such as psychology, psychiatry, and social work. The most commonly used forms of treatment modalities for mild to

To summarize, going to a mental health professional can be a challenging and a scary experience. However, it is important to remember that getting help is the first step in the journey of feeling better. A journey shared by many, some who are on the road to get better while others are serving as a guide for them to find their way...

