

**Question 2: What is the main job or role of a Psychologist (Counselor, Therapist or Psychiatrist)?**

There are many roles that a psychologist provides. Generally speaking the role of a psychologist is to help reduce psychological stress and promote psychological wellbeing. This includes facilitating psychological awareness, growth and development of the client. The therapist is responsible for building rapport with the patient through empathic listening, caring and warmth. It is understood that the rapport between therapist and patient is one of the most consistent predictors of successful treatment. As trust builds between the therapist and the patient so does self-knowledge and understanding for the patient.

Most often a psychologist may specialize in a particular population such as children, adults or perhaps those suffering from chronic illness. Psychologists work with many types of mental health issues including depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, neurological disorders such as Alzheimer's disease, adjustments to physical illness, addictive behaviors, eating disorders and personal and family relationship problems.

Psychologists can assist in the diagnosis and treatment of patients with chronic illnesses. They utilize interventions such as psychotherapy, behavioral techniques, and biofeedback to help individuals make behavioral changes, and help individuals in developing coping strategies. They also teach clients the skills necessary to face life's challenges in all walks of life.

Because psychiatrists hold a medical degree and are trained in the practice of psychiatry, they are one of the few professionals in the mental health field able to prescribe medications to treat psychological disorders. They assess and treat mental illnesses through a combination of psychotherapy, psychoanalysis, hospitalization, and medication.