

**Question 10: Isn't therapy just for serious issues? How will I know it is working?**

Some people believe that you must be diagnosed with a psychological disorder or be profoundly struggling in order to seek therapy. In fact, research has shown that most couples, for example wait about six years before getting help. Waiting only exacerbates problems and makes them that much harder to untangle and resolve. There are many reasons people see a therapist. According to a 2004 Harris poll, 27 percent of adults received mental health treatment within two years of that year, 30 million of whom sought psychotherapy. People seek counseling to help improve relationships, deal with stress or grief, to figure out who they are and to learn how to live life to the fullest. All of this helps people have a better life.

At the outset of therapy, your therapist may have talked to you about what you would like to focus on. Other issues may come up during the course of therapy, of course. But, a good indicator of successful therapy is whether you are getting what you wanted and moving in the desired direction. In deciding on the efficacy of therapy, you may find it useful to ask the following questions:

Are you gaining more clarity and understanding of what is troubling you and why?

Are you feeling better?

Are you getting clarity concerning relationships and are they improving?

Is your quality of life improving?