



Everyone Can Benefit from Therapy

■ by Kim T. Pronoitis, MA, LCPC

God cares about our mental and emotional wellbeing, as our body, mind, and spirit all work together. We were put here for a purpose and are always changing and evolving through the journey of life. Oftentimes, therapy helps us with our journey.

God cherishes us, loves us, and is concerned about what goes on in our mind. Scripture has made it clear that God cares about our thinking process. In Proverbs 3:13, it states, "Blessed is the one who finds wisdom, and the one who gets understanding."

In the past, there was a stigma attached to being in therapy. It was thought that one would have to have a serious mental health issue or a major life crisis to talk to someone. Today, and especially since COVID, there has been a shift in how mental health is perceived. We have seen an increase in anxieties and depression, especially in our children. As a society, we are starting to talk about it more, and going to therapy has become more normalized. Churches are now talking about it in their Sunday services, and we are hearing about mental health more in the media. Schools and places of employment are also starting to give mental health days off.

Is It True...?

In truth, anyone could benefit from therapy. However, there are concerns, misconceptions, and even myths that people sometimes struggle with. Some of them are:

- ◆ **"The cost of therapy is expensive."** Most insurances cover behavioral health and therapy. If someone does not want to use insurance, there are many agencies that have sliding fee agreements. Sometimes there are interns on staff who work at reduced rates.
- ◆ **"Talking about problems makes them worse."** This is simply not the case. If we keep things locked up inside our head, they tend to get worse. It is much healthier to externalize and process feelings and emotions. In working with a professional, oftentimes we get a different perspective, which can help us reduce our symptoms.
- ◆ **"Therapists like to dig up the past."** Also not true, although we don't want to be stuck in the past. If someone is still affected by engaging in unhealthy behaviors because something has never been processed, it ought to be talked about.
- ◆ **"Therapy takes a long time."** This depends on the issue at hand. Sometimes someone just needs to talk to a therapist for only a few sessions.
- ◆ **"I will be judged."** It is not the therapist's job to judge their clients. As trained professionals, we are taught to look at things through an objective lens. Therapists are to look at what is in the client's best interest.

- Continued on Page 2 -

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- Continued from Page 1 -

As Christians, we need to be honest with ourselves about how we are feeling. We can't always fix things alone. In Romans 7:22-23, it states, "For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members." It's ok to talk about it!

What About My Family and Friends?

A question one might ask is, Why can't I just go to a friend or family member to talk about my problems? Although it's very beneficial and positive to have a good support system, our friends and family are generally not trained professionals. Going to a professional will give us an unbiased, objective point of view. As clinicians, we look at what is in our client's best interest, despite our personal opinions. Even as professionals, it can be difficult for counselors to look at things with no emotion. It is only human to have feelings for those that we care about. As professionals, we are trained in the ability to have more objectivity. We are able to have the perspective to help our clients look at things from a different point of view.

As a Christian counselor, I take into consideration three things when first meeting a client: a genetic component, past history/experiences, and present-day environment. It is through these things that we become who we are. No one is perfect, and we all struggle at times in life with our thoughts. Having a counselor help guide us in a healthy manner through our life's journey, move us towards spiritual growth, and equip us with positive tools will always be beneficial. ■

"For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot." —Romans 8:5-7

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