ATRIA
PSYCHOTHERAPY

Welcome to Atria Psychotherapy!

What to Expect & More

Your Guide to Getting Started and Getting the Most Out of Therapy!

What to Expect in
The First Session

Your first session is about building connection and gathering insight. Think of it as an orientation - a gentle starting point. There's no pressure to dive into everything right away, and there's no need to prepare anything in advance. Just come as you are.

The first session is an opportunity to get to know you, explore what's been weighing on you, and to get a sense of what you're hoping for from therapy. It's also a space to start identifying focus areas and collaboratively begin shaping a treatment plan that reflects your goals, values, and pace.

Here's what the first session typically includes:

Review confidentiality & consent:

- We'll go over how therapy works, including your rights, confidentiality, and the limits of confidentiality. This ensures you feel safe, supported, and empowered from the start.

Explore your goals:

- We'll explore what brings you to therapy - whether it's a specific concern or a more general desire to understand yourself better - and outline what you hope to gain.

Understand your story:

- We'll ask a few general intake-style questions to help better contextualize your life experiences and current concerns, to better tailor the therapeutic process.

How You Might Feel After The First Session

It's completely normal to have mixed emotions after your first therapy session.

You might leave feeling relieved, hopeful, or lighter just from finally speaking things out loud. Or, you might feel a little unsettled, tired, or emotionally stirred - which is normal, especially if we're not use to talking about our emotions.

Therapy is a process, and it's perfectly normal to need a few sessions to settle in.

There's space for it all here.

So... Now What?

Now that you have an idea of what to expect from your first session, you may be feeling a bit more relaxed and confident for your first appointment.

A Few Things to Keep in Mind:

- ***Tears, silence, or laughter are all welcome.*** There's no "right" way to show up in session.
- ***You don't have to share everything at once.*** There's no rush. You're allowed to hold back until it feels safe.
- ***You're already doing something brave!*** Choosing to show up, explore is an act of courage.

Need something in between session?

Visit the Atria ToolKit for free, downloadable resources, tools, and more!

Reminder

Therapy Is a Collaborative Process

Your voice matters here. This is not a space where you're simply "talked at" or advised - it's a space where we co-create insight, healing, and change

- **We're a team:** You are the expert on your experience. My role is to ask the right questions, offer tools, and help connect the dots.
- **You're encouraged to speak up**: If something in therapy doesn't feel helpful, we talk about it. If a strategy resonates, we build on it. Feedback is welcome, encouraged, and valued!

Between Sessions

What Helps

Growth doesn't just happen in the 50 minutes we meet. To support you in achieving long lasting growth, you may receive optional reflections questions, worksheets, or strategies to try between sessions; these are meant to extend insights from sessions into your everyday life.

Try to:

- **Notice patterns**: What triggers your emotional responses? What brings you relief? What keeps you stuck?
- **Practice tools**: Grounding techniques, thought-challenging, or communication strategies only become useful with practice.
- **Track your shifts**: A simple mood tracker or journal entry can help capture progress, even when it feels invisible.

Green and Red Flags

Signs You Found The Right Therapist

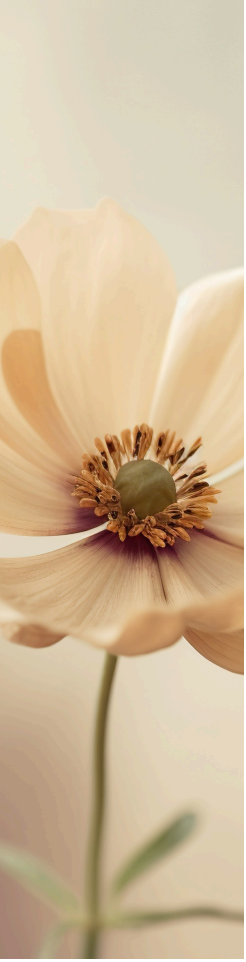
Finding the right fit in therapy is essential. A strong therapeutic relationship is one of the most important factors for healing and growth. Here's how to tell if a therapist is the right match for you—and what to notice if they're not.

Green Flags (Good Signs)

- **You feel safe to be yourself**: Even when it's hard to open up, you don't feel judged or rushed.
- **You feel seen and understood**: Your therapist reflects your experience back to you with care, curiosity, and accuracy.
- **You feel gently challenged**: Your therapist doesn't just agree with you - they help you explore new perspectives with kindness.
- **Therapy feels collaborative**: You're encouraged to share feedback, set goals, and participate actively in the process.

Red Flags (Warning Signs)

- **You feel judged, dismissed, or misunderstood**: If you leave sessions feeling worse without clarity or support, this may be a sign something's off.
- **There's a lack of structure or engagement**: If the therapist feels passive or disinterested, you may not get the support you need.
- **You don't feel emotionally safe**: Therapy should not feel like walking on eggshells or fearing how the therapist will respond.
- **Your identity or lived experience is invalidated**: Cultural insensitivity, microaggressions, or stereotyping are never acceptable.



Last Thoughts to Remember ...

Starting therapy is an act of courage. It means you're willing to turn inward, reflect on what's no longer working, and invest in meaningful change. That's not always easy - but it's powerful!

At Atria, therapy is more than just talking. It's about reconnecting with the parts of yourself that may have been dismissed, overwhelmed, or silenced. It's about understanding patterns with compassion rather than judgment. It's about making space for clarity, choice, and healing—at your own pace, with someone you can trust.

No matter where you are on your journey, you're not doing it alone. We'll take it one step at a time, together.

Reminder Logistics & Communication at Atria

Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- **Rescheduling:** If you need to cancel or reschedule, please give a minimum of 24 hours' notice to avoid late cancellation fees (i.e., session fee).
- **Between Session Communication**: For questions or logistical issues, email is the best line of communication between sessions