



NATURAL THERAPIES for MENTAL HEALTH

(352)365-2243

Central Florida Psychological
Consultants, Inc.
609 W. Montrose Street
Clermont, Florida
Phone: (352) 365-2243

How Does Psychotherapy Work?

Therapy is a collaborative relationship between the patient and the therapist. Each work to discover both the areas of concern and strengths of the patient. Then they work together to develop a plan to help make changes in behavior, emotion, and thinking. These changes help to foster an overall positive change toward a more functional life and a better future. Your therapist may propose a specific treatment. Every treatment provides an explanation for the distress that is adaptive — that is, you will understand that you can do something to improve your situation. This leads you into healthy actions in that the psychotherapy improves some aspect of your life, whether it is thinking more positive thoughts, creating better relationships, more appropriately expressing emotions, or enacting other positive changes. The critical aspect is not which treatment you receive but rather that you believe this particular treatment is effective and you work collaboratively with the therapist. Healing takes place within and outside the therapy office over time.

Herbal supplements, Remedies, and Coping Skills

By W. Steven Saunders, Psy.D., Lic. Psychologist

Many of my patients over the years have asked for alternatives to prescription medication when wanting to reduce symptoms. Please allow me say at the onset that if your physician has begun you on a medication you should continue it until you consult with them and determine it is no longer needed. However, I do understand that many people feel reluctant to begin a prescription medication without trying all the “natural” alternatives first. I have compiled this list of nutritional supplements and herbal remedies based on the latest research I have found. The list of research studies I have located is available to you by request. Supplements and herbal remedies can have powerful effects and some studies have shown that they have as much effect as some prescription medications for some symptoms. Supplements, Vitamins, and Herbs are part of a healthy lifestyle that includes healthy eating, exercise, counseling/psychotherapy, being socially supported by friends and family, having purpose-filled work and activities, as well as a meaningful spiritual life. All these components, Body, Mind, and Spirit help to relieve symptoms. In addition to supplements and herbs, here are some helpful coping skills to keep in mind.

Coping Skills

1. **Breathe.** Breath often becomes shallow and short when we are filled with anxiety following a tragic situation. Try the 6-7-8 breathing exercise. Sit up straight in a chair or lay down with your head and knees elevated with a pillow. Breathe in for a count of 6. Hold for a Count of 7. Breathe out for a count of 8. Repeat three times and rest for three-five minutes. Repeat again. Notice your breathing. Breathe out negative energy. Imagine a beautiful light filling you with positive energy as you breathe in.
2. **Sleep.** Good sleep is restorative to the brain and the body. Try Melatonin or a herbal tea for sleep if you're having trouble. Get good sleep by practicing good sleep hygiene. No electronic screens in bed. Paint your bedroom soft soothing colors or neutral colors. Use the bed for sleep or sex only. Don't use the bed for work or recreation such as watching TV.
3. **Exercise.** Minimum you should walk 30 minutes per day, at least three times a week. If you're not able to walk then talk to your physician or healthcare provider about an exercise program that suits your needs. Exercise is good for anxiety, depression and has positive effects on sleep and your overall health.
4. **Eat.** The Mediterranean diet (good fats, high in fruits/veggies) has been shown to be helpful for stress and depression. Eating healthy, staying away from excessive alcohol or other drugs in an effort to inappropriately self-medicate, is important. Drink plenty of water. Enjoy yourself.
5. **Talk.** Talking with friends or a therapist is very effective in reducing stress, depression and anxiety.
6. **Surround yourself with positive support.** Don't isolate alone. Select friends and support systems that lift you up and keep you on the path toward healing and wholeness.
7. **Engage your spirit.** Studies show that those with a strong spiritual sense and have a community of support tend to live longer, are sick less, and have fewer mental health issues. Meditate and read uplifting literature from inspired books.
8. **Take the 45 day gratitude challenge!** Keep a gratitude journal for 45 days. Everyday write at least one thing you're grateful for. Studies show an attitude of gratitude keeps you focused on the positive and sets up positive thinking and emotional habits.
9. **Get back to nature.** Spending time in nature has been shown to enhance well-being and a positive sense of one's place in the world. Those who spend a few hours every week walking in the woods, park, beach, or just outside have less depressive episodes and fewer panic attacks.
10. **Perspective.** Talk to your grandparents or trusted older person who has lived a long full life. Realize, all things pass. Nothing bad ever lasts. What's the story of your favorite hero overcoming life struggles? You're the hero of your own life. One day, you'll be telling your grandchildren about the great obstacles you overcame and how strong it made you.
11. **Beauty.** Surround yourself with beauty. Buy yourself flowers. Find some original art and speak to you and hang it up. Learn to paint or play a musical instrument. Creative activities help both depression and anxiety. Music soothes you and activates areas of your brain that lay dormant. Sing, dance, and play.
12. **Play.** Go do something fun. Treat yourself.

IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER: Some herbal remedies can interact with prescription medication or other supplements. Always consult your Primary Care Physician or other Medical Healthcare Provider before starting an herbal regimen. After medical consultation, begin supplements slowly, one at a time and see how you react over the course of several days. Discontinue supplements and seek immediate medical attention if you have a severe reaction or unexpected side-effect. This information is given for educational purposes only and is not an endorsement or prescription for any supplement. You are encouraged to take responsibility for your own health and do your research thoroughly before beginning any herbal supplement or other medication. There may be other supplements not listed that may help you.

NATURAL THERAPIES for MENTAL HEALTH

Page 2 of 2

Depression: Some of these may be taken in conjunction with anti-depressants to improve their overall effectiveness.

- ☐ Melatonin
- ☐ DHEA
- ☐ Rhodiola Rosea (R. Rosea); Roseroot
- ☐ SAMe
- ☐ L Methylfolate
- ☐ Vitamin D
- ☐ St. John's Wort
- ☐ B Complex Vitamins
- ☐ Damiana
- ☐ Golden Root
- ☐ Rosemary

Anxiety:

- ☐ Passionflower
- ☐ Valerian
- ☐ Kava
- ☐ L-lysine and L-arginine
- ☐ Magnesium
- ☐ B Complex vitamins
- ☐ Lemon Balm (as a tea)
- ☐ Limeflowers (as a tea)
- ☐ Motherwort

Dementia Prevention and Memory

- ☐ Fish Oil
- ☐ Tumeric
- ☐ Rosemary (Smelling the herb, or tea, or eaten)
- ☐ Ginko
- ☐ Sage
- ☐ Schisandran (dried powder or capsules)

ADD and ADHD

- ☐ Zinc
- ☐ Fish Oil
- ☐ Magnesium

Hypo-Libido:

- ☐ Ginseng ☐ **Male Hyper-Libido: Chaste Berry**
- ☐ Ginkgo
- ☐ Saw Palmetto (for the Bio-Male)
- ☐ Puncture Vine
- ☐ Schisandran (dried powder or capsules)

Difficulty in Sleeping:

- ☐ Passion Flower
- ☐ Californian Poppy
- ☐ Melatonin
- ☐ Valerian
- ☐ Hops
- ☐ Chamomile Tea

Add Exercise: Studies have shown that exercising for 30-40 minutes a day, 3 times a week, or as you are able, can help relieve the symptoms of many mental illness symptoms and improve the quality of daily life.

Chronic Stress and Exhaustion:

- ☐ Siberian ginseng
- ☐ Withania
- ☐ Skullcap
- ☐ Oats
- ☐ Ginseng
- ☐ Licorice
- ☐ Vervain

Bipolar Depression:

- ☐ Lithium Orotate
- ☐ Valerian
- ☐ Vitamin C (1000mg)

Alcoholism:

- ☐ Lithium Orotate
- ☐ B Complex Vitamins

Paranoia & Psychotic Symptoms:

- ☐ Ginkgo Biloba Extract
- ☐ Protein supplement with free form amino acids
- ☐ B Complex Vitamins

Chronic Stress and Exhaustion:

- ☐ Siberian ginseng
- ☐ Ginseng
- ☐ Withania
- ☐ Licorice
- ☐ Skullcap
- ☐ Vervain
- ☐ Oats

Bipolar Depression:

- ☐ Lithium Orotate
- ☐ Valerian
- ☐ Vitamin C (1000mg)

Alcoholism:

- ☐ Lithium Orotate
- ☐ B Complex Vitamins

Notes: