

# Newman Avenue Associates

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## *Selecting a Therapist*

### **Selecting the Right Therapist**

Selecting the right therapist can be difficult. Below are some guidelines that may help you select a therapist that is a good fit for you.

First, check to see if the therapist is licensed by one of the Boards within the Virginia Department of Health Professions. Go to their web site at [www.dhp.virginia.gov](http://www.dhp.virginia.gov), and click on "License Look Up." Enter the name of the therapist to find out the status of their license. This will tell you if there have been any disciplinary actions against the licensee.

Next check with your family, friends, primary care physician, physician assistant, school counselor, minister or other person you trust and ask them for the name of any therapist they know or would recommend.

Finally, ask yourself some questions about therapist characteristics that are important to you, such as:

- Is the gender of the therapist important to me?
- How many years of experience does the therapist have?
- What is the theoretical orientation of the therapist?
- How many clients has the therapist treated that have the same problem as me?
- Will the therapist coordinate my treatment with my primary care physician?
- Is the therapist a provider in my insurance network?

When you are ready, select two or three therapists to call and see if the therapist is willing to answer some of your questions over the phone, prior to scheduling an initial session. Based on how the phone calls go, select a therapist to see for an initial session.

At the initial session, you are trying to see if the therapist is a good fit for you. Trust your gut. You want to feel comfortable with the therapist and that they are competent to help you with your situation. If you do not feel like it is a good fit, select the next therapist and schedule another initial session. It is very important that you feel a good fit with the therapist you choose from the beginning because you are going to talk to this person about difficult emotions and relationship issues.