

# First Session

## What can I expect from my first appointment?

- When attending a first appointment it is normal to feel anxiety, check out my guide for beginning therapy, for some helpful points about how to reduce your anxiety before attending the appointment.
- In the first appointment you will most likely complete a verbal or written contract where the therapist will explain the code of ethics they adhere to and explain the limits to the confidentiality of your sessions. You may also agree on the frequency and cost of the session, how to cancel an appointment and the therapist may share with you some information about how they generally work with clients.
- The therapist will explain to you how they work with clients and the different modalities they use in therapy, this should give you an opportunity to find out more information about different types of therapy and ask any questions you have about how the therapist works.
- In the first session it is common to set some form of 'goals' for the therapy, or collaboratively decide on a focus for the therapy. This should also lead to an agreement on when to review the progress towards the goal and a review of how you are finding the therapy.



- The first session is sometimes referred to as an assessment session. This is important because just as the therapist assesses how to help you, you also should assess the therapist and if you feel that they can help you. Assess their skills, how you feel when you are with them and if you feel comfortable to open up to them. It is common for therapists to offer an introductory meeting and to allow the client time following this meeting to decide if they are the right person.
- It is common to feel emotional and tired following the first session, I would recommend that you keep time following all appointments to relax. The first session can be difficult because it is the start of the therapeutic relationship and you may share a significant amount of information to help the therapist understand what has brought you to them. Some clients express a sense of relief following the first appointment, however, you may need further session before you begin to feel better.

*Every therapist will work in a different way, the information presented above is intended as a guide. if you wish to clarify any aspects of therapy you should speak directly to the individual therapist you are wishing to see.*

