



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS WHEN SEEING A PSYCHOLOGIST FOR THE FIRST TIME

People tend to see a psychologist when they feel stuck or are 'hurting' in some way. Perhaps they know what the problem is, but not what to do about it. Perhaps they simply feel bad. This brochure addresses some commonly asked questions when seeing a psychologist for the first time.

WHAT IS YOUR BACKGROUND?

I am an organisational, health and counselling psychologist with a PhD in behavioural finance (AKA economic psychology). I am also a credentialed eating disorders clinician (CEDC). I have an interest in schema therapy and Ericksonian hypnosis. I have been in private practice for 30 years. I am a member of the Australian Psychological Society. I am also a fellow of the APS College of Organisational Psychologists, APS College of Health Psychologists and the APS College of Counselling Psychologists.

HOW DO YOU WORK?

I use our first one or two consultations to get to know you and what brings you to my consulting rooms. I will also ask you about your goals in coming to see me. As part of this process, I may ask you to complete some psychometric questionnaires. These questionnaires have been selected to help me to help you. Depending on the nature of your concerns, you may be seen in my consulting rooms or via an online portal. [See also: *Frequently Asked Questions when Seeing a Psychologist under Telehealth*].

After we have completed the assessment phase, I will formulate a diagnosis and prepare an evidenced-based treatment plan. The treatment plan will incorporate your own goals in coming to see me. In subsequent consultations, I will go through the diagnosis and its accompanying treatment plan. Depending on what might be needed in remaining consultations, I may provide supportive counselling, information, skill-building, in-session activities, adjunct hypnosis, vocational rehabilitation/return-to-work help, (and towards the end of our work), relapse-prevention strategies. I may also ask some standard questions to track your progress from consultation to consultation as well as invite you to do certain homework tasks between consultations.



WHAT CAN I EXPECT FROM OUR RELATIONSHIP?

My goal is to help you reach your therapeutic goals. I practice psychology in accordance with State and Commonwealth laws, and the Australian Psychological Society's *Code of Conduct*. As such, I do not accept gifts from clients. I also do not socialise with my clients if I bump into them in public forums (such as parties or shopping centres). I treat everything you tell me as confidential. Any records I hold on file, whether written or electronic, are treated confidentially. I will not release any information and will not hold any discussions with other helping professionals without your written informed consent. If I cannot help you with a particular problem, I will refer you on.

WHAT DO I DO IF I AM SEEING YOU UNDER MEDICARE?

You will need to bring your GP's referral letter plus Mental Health Care Plan to your initial appointment. I will provide you a receipt that has all the details Medicare needs to provide you your rebate.

WHAT ABOUT APPOINTMENTS? AND WHAT HAPPENS IF I CANCEL OR MISS AN APPOINTMENT?

Appointments are normally given on the hour and take approximately an hour. Please allow more time if you are completing psychometric questionnaires. Appointments are initially scheduled on a weekly basis. Appointments are then spaced out to fortnightly and then monthly. At the end of each consultation, we will book your next appointment.

There is no fee if you cancel or miss an appointment. However, if you find that you cannot make your appointment, please contact me as soon as possible to arrange an alternate time. Similarly, if you find yourself running late, please phone or text me to let me know.

Some clients find their concerns have resolved between appointments and no longer need their next scheduled appointment. Other clients find that they need additional help between scheduled appointments. If either of these situations happens to you, feel free to let me know. In the former case, it will feel like a graduation day conversation. In the latter, we can bring your next scheduled appointment forward or provide interim help over the telephone.

WHAT ARE YOUR FEES?

My fees are \$179.00 for face to face and online consultations. For face to face appointments, fees are payable at the time of consultation by cash or EFT. Fees for telehealth appointments are payable via EFT 24 hours beforehand. Where third parties are directly paying for my services, fees will reflect the standard TAC rate for psychologists.

If you have any other queries or concerns, feel free to contact me on 0418 149 506.