

Getting What You Need From Therapy

Good therapy is something you do with a professional, not something done to you. Six ways to make sure the work actually serves you — with any practitioner.

You are allowed to expect things from therapy. In fact, the best therapists **want** an engaged client — it is how good work happens.

1 • Agree what you are working towards

In the first session or two, you should agree together what a good outcome looks like. It can change over time — but if there is no shared aim, there is nothing to steer by.

2 • Expect progress to be reviewed

“How will we know this is working?” is a fair question at any point. Good practitioners build in reviews and welcome the conversation; drifting on indefinitely without one is a warning sign.

3 • Understand the approach

You should be able to say roughly what kind of therapy you are having and why it was chosen for you. If you do not know, ask — a good clinician can explain it in plain language.

4 • Say so when something does not fit

If a technique, pace or comment does not sit right, say it. Skilled therapists treat this as valuable information, not criticism. Feeling unable to speak up is itself worth raising.

5 • Expect endings to be planned

Therapy should end by design — reviewed, agreed and prepared for — not fade out or roll on without purpose. There should never be pressure to continue.

6 • Know the warning signs

Vagueness about qualifications, promised cures, discouraging questions or second opinions, or open-ended commitment with no review — with any practitioner, these are reasons to pause and reassess.

The test of good care: you should regularly leave sessions feeling that someone competent is genuinely thinking about you — and that you know what you are both working on.

Ready to talk it through? Begin with a First Step Consultation — 90 minutes with Dr Millward, and a written formulation that explains what is going on and exactly what she recommends. → drclairemillward.com

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