



Quo Vadis offers therapy services to:

- Individuals
- Couples
- Families

For:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Couples/family issues
- Grief/loss
- Marriage prep & enrichment
- Personal growth

Inside this issue:

What to Expect in Therapy	2
Forms of Therapy	2
Choosing a Therapist	3
Catholic Counseling	3
Info on QV Therapy Center	4
Upcoming Workshop	4

Therapy Basics

From

Quo Vadis Therapy Center

Joseph W. Pribyl, MA, LAMFT

Psychotherapist

Volume 2, Issue 2

Summer 2009

“What Would Therapy Do for Me?”

As the title of this article implies, many people are uncertain about what therapy is, when somebody would want to see a therapist, or what it says about someone who is seeing a therapist. There are many other questions you may have about therapy, but this article will address these three items.

So, just what is therapy? In a few words, therapy is about change. Change, of course, can seem like a rather threatening thing. It often feels safer to stay with what you know, even when what you know isn't particularly satisfying. However, throughout our lives, change is happening all the time within and around us. We must adapt to new information and conditions, which we do more often than we realize. Yet, some changes are harder to make, and it's not always clear what changes need to be made. Therapy can be very beneficial to you at these times to reduce or prevent stress.

You may wonder what types of changes therapy would help you to make. Essentially, therapy can assist you

in adapting patterns of behaviors, thoughts, and/or emotions to lessen stress and its negative effects.



Given this brief description of what therapy is, it is natural to ask when, or even why, someone would go to a therapist. We all encounter stress in our daily lives. When we do not adapt well enough to the situations that cause stress, stress accumulates and can affect mental and physical health, which can in turn impact job or academic performance, relationships, parenting, emotions, self-esteem, overall wellbeing etc. If you find that these or other areas of your daily life are becoming more of a struggle, or you are just stuck and not getting the satisfaction you believe you should from them, then therapy could be helpful for you.

Many people will still ask, “Why would I see a therapist

and talk about my personal life or problems?” A short answer is that a therapist is trained as a specialist in human behavior and relationships, and is experienced in helping people find and create opportunities to improve their daily lives.

What do we think of people who see a therapist? Unfortunately, we often think, wrongly, that people who work with a therapist are “too weak” to manage their own concerns or have to be “crazy.” While it is true that some people may be in greater need of therapeutic services than others, therapy can benefit a broad range of people. Everyone experiences stress, and no one can control all the things that lead to it. Whether you're facing depression, anxiety, relationship problems, or just looking for a new way forward, therapy can give you tools you need to find strength through change. It's not weak or crazy to ask for help.



Where are you going?

“What Can I Expect in a Therapy Session?”

When people think of therapy, probably many have an image in mind of someone, the client, laying on a couch or sitting on a chair talking away while the therapist sits out of view of the client listening and occasionally interpreting some meaning from what the client has just related. This meaning usually has something to do with the client's feelings toward his or her parents, some subconscious drive, or one or another “complex” that is managed by some variety of “defense mechanisms.” Although therapy still happens in this manner to some degree, this kind of classic Freudian psychoanalysis is not the most common form.

Most therapy does involve a fair amount of talking, but it tends to be more of a collaborative effort between you and the therapist. You and the therapist explore together what is

happening in your life that is causing a sense of things not being as they should and what may help to make things better. You and the therapist attempt to pinpoint the events, thoughts, and/or emotions that seem to trigger symptoms of depression, anxiety, relationship conflicts, physical symptoms, or what have you. Many times, those triggers can be relatively easy to identify, and designing a course for countering those triggers with alternative thoughts, behaviors, or emotions to learn and practice between sessions can lead to relief and recovery from various struggles without great difficulty. However, sometimes those triggers are linked to extremely stressful experiences, things of a more deep-seated tendency, or events of long ago. The course of therapy may still resemble that of a less complex concern, but

exploration of more distant events and relationships with relatives and others may give you insight to make sense of your present experience.

What about the actual look of the therapy office? Therapists generally try to make the therapy setting as comfortable as possible. They know that many people are nervous when coming for therapy, so they often use décor to create calm surroundings. Regarding furnishings, instead of having the client lay on a couch, you and the therapist will often sit in comfortable chairs facing one another to facilitate a more collaborative effort in addressing your concerns. Also, therapists are very concerned about protecting your confidentiality, so the office may be fitted with more or less subtle furnishings or other accoutrements to ensure your privacy.



Quo Vadis
Therapy Center

www.qvtherapy.com

651-398-5847

“Is All Therapy ‘Talk Therapy’?”

It's understandable to think a conversation with a therapist for a 50-minute session is a long time to talk about anything. However, that time often passes relatively quickly, and a lot can be accomplished. However, not all therapy is done through extended conversations.

Some exceptions to traditional talk therapies include those involving play

therapy with children, art therapy, and forms of behavioral therapy such as those for treating autism, phobias and other anxieties, or teaching new parenting skills. A therapist may have general skill in a variety of these forms of therapy, though many therapists will focus on one form or another.

Oftentimes, certain concerns like depression and

anxiety can be treated at least in part with medications. However, most therapists are not medical doctors, and cannot write prescriptions. Therapists can work in conjunction with your medical doctor if you want to coordinate your health care among your providers. Medications, however, are often a better complement to than substitute for therapy.



“How Do I Choose a Therapist?”

Of all things, selecting a therapist who is a good fit for you is perhaps the most important step to getting the most out of therapy and getting to where you want to be. Choosing a therapist with whom you feel comfortable sharing your concerns and who works skillfully with you at a pace and in a way that meets your needs is essential.

There are a lot of therapists with different approaches to therapy and specialties, so it can be worth your while to compare a few counselors. You might get recommendations for certain therapists through friends or family, your physician, your insurance provider, or find a therapist on the internet. However

you find a therapist, your next step might be to contact a few of them and ask if they offer a low cost or free consultation for you to get to know them and how they would work with you. Many therapists offer this opportunity with no obligation to start therapy with them. At your first meeting, here are some questions you can ask:

- 1.) What is your background as a therapist? (i.e. education, professional experience, theoretical approach to therapy)
- 2.) What kinds of client concerns do you see most?
- 3.) Given my concerns, do you think you can help me? If so, what will that look like, how often would we meet, and how many sessions can I expect?

4.) Do you accept my insurance? Are there benefits to me in not using insurance? How much is your fee?

- 5.) Are there additional resources you would recommend to me?

There are other questions you can ask, of course, and it is fair for you to do so since therapy does require an investment of your energy and money. Despite these costs, choosing a therapist is an investment in your health that may save you more time and money later.



“What Is a Catholic Therapist?”

My use of the term, “Catholic therapist,” encompasses the scientific and spiritual approach that guides the work I do.

As a therapist, I am trained in the social science of psychology. This discipline is concerned with the study of human behavior and learning. I use the findings of this discipline to help people alter thought, behavioral, and emotional patterns to alleviate the effects of stress.

However, there is a certain art to psychology that makes it more of a “soft” science. Human behavior cannot be neatly described by mathematical equations—our ability to think and choose allows even the most routine person to surprise us. Psychology is also full of theories that can't adequately be tested through the scientific method.

In a sense, there is an element of faith embedded in psychology. This faith affirms that human beings are greater than the sum of their parts, such that understanding who we are always takes on a spiritual di-

mension. It is here where another perspective gives direction to my work.

Catholic tradition holds, as psychology asserts, that humans are social beings. Even the most isolated of persons remains social in nature. Catholic tradition also affirms that knowing ourselves happens through relationships with others, and ultimately with God through the person of Jesus Christ. Facilitated by our social nature, we derive a sense of meaning and purpose, which I believe are intimately tied to faith, hope, and charity, both in a generic and theological sense. This spiritual quest for meaning is vitally important to understanding human behavior and mental health, which are fundamentally linked to our interactions with others.

Putting these scientific and the spiritual perspectives together, I, as a Catholic therapist, employ scientific knowledge that points to truths affirmed by Catholic tradition regarding the nature of the hu-

man person. Further, I work with people in a way that respects their dignity according to the strict ethical guidelines of my profession as well as the wisdom of Catholic thought.

Being a Catholic therapist, however, does not mean that I work solely with Catholic individuals, couples, and families. Developing good relationships and discovering meaning and purpose are endeavors meant for everyone.

Thus, I work with anyone who simply shares in the human condition, respecting their spiritual background and level of comfort discussing it in therapy if they choose to do so. How I see my clients as persons and their concerns, however, is naturally through a Catholic lens. While that fact might allow me to make particular connections with Catholic clients, it does not restrict my work to only Catholics.

In the end, all therapists are guided by some philosophy. I am informed by scientific knowledge and Catholic wisdom.





Quo Vadis Therapy Center

Where are you going?

Joseph W. Pribyl, MA, LAMFT

5407 Excelsior Blvd., Suite B
St. Louis Park, MN 55416

Phone: 651-398-5847

Web: www.qvtherapy.com

E-mail: jpribyl@qvtherapy.com



About Quo Vadis Therapy Center

QVTC is the private psychotherapy practice of Joseph W. Pribyl, MA, LAMFT. Joe is a licensed associate marriage and family therapist. Joe received his master's degree in counseling psychology with a concentration in family psychology from the University of St. Thomas. Prior to that, Joe worked as a lay minister for several years in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of St. Paul & Minneapolis, and also earned a master's degree in Catholic Studies from St. Thomas.

Joe currently has openings for individuals, couples, and families interested in receiving therapy to address difficulties related to depression, anxiety, family and marital stress, grief/loss, and personal growth. Joe also works with couples on pre-marital counseling/education and marriage enrichment.

Attend an Upcoming Workshop on the Impact of Religion on Family History and Relationships

Like physical traits, many thought processes, behavioral patterns, and emotional tendencies are passed down through generations. There is not necessarily anything good or bad about this occurrence, but having some knowledge of where certain individual or familial patterns of interaction develop can help you to identify skills you already possess to strengthen existing relationships, develop positive new ones, and/or make it easier to change certain patterns that are problematic.

Joe Pribyl, MA, LAMFT of Quo Vadis Therapy Center, LLC is hosting an informative seminar for those interested in learning more about how certain family behavioral traits, particularly those related to one's religious background, are passed on to subsequent generations. This seminar will include an opportunity for you to create a multigenerational diagram of family traits that you can use to develop further insight into your life and relationships.

The seminar will take place on August 12, 2009, from 6:30-8:00 PM at the Quo Vadis office in St. Louis Park. The cost is \$15 per person or \$20 for a couple/family. Contact Joe Pribyl directly by phone or e-mail (see above) to register. Space is limited, so don't wait long to sign up.

Joe has presented on mental health and relationship dynamics at retreats and to various groups. Inquire about discounted seminars for parish/church groups interested in knowing more about the causes of and help for depression, anxiety, couples/family difficulties, and other therapy topics. Permission to reproduce/distribute this newsletter is granted by Quo Vadis Therapy Center, LLC. Color copies are available on the website.