

2016

2021

DISSONANCE

Celebrating 5 years

*Dissonance has a mission to build healthy community in and through the arts. This nonprofit organization is based in the Twin Cities and connects people to resources around mental health, wellness, and recovery. All are welcome to attend their events and take part in support groups or to find support using the Get Help Directory:
www.dissonance.website*

HAVING
HEALTHY
CONVER
SATIONS

SMASHING
STIGMAS

CREATING
SAFE
SPACES

SHARING
AUTHENTIC
STORIES

HAVING HEALTHY CONVER SATIONS

HOW TO HAVE CONVERSATIONS ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

Talking about mental health presents challenges and opportunities. When we stay silent, we run the risk of perpetuating stigmas and overlooking concerns that can grow and eventually put someone at further risk. It is often unclear whether someone is struggling while at other times it will seem obvious a person is going through a hard time. Additionally, although there are common symptoms of some mental health disorders, no two people exhibit them in the same way. You may notice changes in mood or behavior if you know a person well, but some people function at a very high level even with symptoms. There is no simple way to test for a mental health problem, but talking about it is a first step to helping people find help. Here are some tips for broaching the subject with a loved one.

HOW TO FRAME THE CONVERSATION:

- Approach the person with a non-judgmental, curious attitude and remain open to anything they have to say.
- Start by saying that you care about the person. Then point out that you are curious about something and/or have noticed some changes in them that you want to check in about. First sentence starters:
 - I have noticed...
 - It seems like _____ has changed lately...
- Use open ended questions. This means to ask things in a way that cannot be answered with a binary or yes/no. For example:
 - Close-ended: Do you think you might be depressed?
 - Open-ended: What depression symptoms do you think you might have?
- As you listen, try not to jump in too quickly. Silence is ok! Listen, wait, and then restate what you have heard to check for understanding.
- Validate their feelings and experience. Remember, no two people have the same experience!
- Refrain from making your own guesses at a diagnosis or offering solutions.

DISSONANCE IS...



STEPS TO TAKE TO DECREASE YOUR NUMBER OF CHOICES:

1. Do a Google search for the kind of therapist you are looking for. Some examples: “Family Therapy [enter your zip code or city name],” “Teen Therapist [zip code or city],” “Couples Counseling [zip code or city].” If you find any therapists who you seem to like, write down their name or bookmark their site.
2. Read some blurbs. Make note of therapists who stick out to you.
3. If you intend to directly use your insurance for therapy, you can look up (usually online or by phone) who is in-network with your insurance company. They will probably have a very long list of people in your area. Those of us who do not directly contract with insurance companies will not be listed here.

HOW TO FIND A GOOD THERAPIST

**BY SARAH SOUDER JOHNSON,
CO-FOUNDER AND BOARD CHAIR**

**READ THE FULL ARTICLE AT:
[HTTP://COUNSELINGMN.COM/HOW-TO/HOW-TO-FIND-A-GOOD-THERAPIST/](http://counselingmn.com/how-to/how-to-find-a-good-therapist/)**

This requires some time and patience.

There is one very obvious reason that a good therapist can be hard to find: There are A LOT of us! If you do a Google/Bing/Yahoo search for a therapist in your area, you will find page after page after page listing all of us. You will also find many of us listed on certain paid sites (such as Psychology Today). These sites are great, but you will be bombarded with blurbs that we have written. Eventually the blurbs kind of sound the same and you do not feel that you know who to call.

OKAY. NOW DO YOU HAVE A COUPLE THERAPISTS SELECTED?

Call or email the therapist. See if the therapist will meet with you for a short time. This kind of a session is usually free. This will allow you to see how you feel when you sit down with your chosen therapist as well as ask any questions you might have. The connection you feel with your therapist is going to be very important as the relationship between the two of you is one of the main pieces that will help you make change in your life.

If the therapist does not offer a free meet-and-greet, see if they are willing to have a brief phone conversation with you. You can ask them questions such as:

- A. What is your educational background?
- B. Are you licensed?
- C. Are you an interactive therapist or are you more of a quiet therapist?
- D. Do you have experience working with _____?
- E. What kind of session times do you currently have available?

LOCAL AND NATIONAL RESOURCES

Wellness and community support:

<https://backline.care/> (national)

<https://www.grammy.com/musicares> (national)

<https://springboardforthearts.org/> (local)

<https://passengerrecovery.com/> (national)

<https://www.mnmusiccoalition.org/#/> (local)

<https://mentalhealthmn.org/support/community-resources/statewide-mental-health-resources/>

MORE LOCAL RESOURCES

[National Alliance on Mental Illness- MN Chapter](#)

[Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health](#)

[Reclaim!](#)- Accessible healthcare for queer and trans youth

[SAVE MN](#)- Suicide awareness and education

