

MENTAL WELLNESS is a team effort.

who should i see?

Iceland edition*

The intention of this is to help consumers of mental healthcare and wellness choose a professional that meets their goals. This is a working document that will change and evolve with new information.

Though all of these titles are valid and helpful, it is important to investigate professional qualifications of each practitioner to be sure the professional meets the educational and ethical standards of your struggle or exploration. Many practitioners have multiple titles that influence how they work. You may even want to see more than one of these to meet your goals.

This is for you, the consumer.

ÞERAPISTI - THERAPIST?

This is an extremely general and broad title for someone who treats a specified type of mental or physical illness or struggle. This ranges from massage therapist to speech therapist to mental health therapist. Be sure to check that the professional qualification meet your needs.

RÁÐGJAFI - COUNSELLOR?

Looks at current challenges or emotional struggles, develops plans to learn skills to cope. *The professional qualifications could be a certification and/or diploma or neither. Does not require an advanced degree. However, the practitioner may have an advance degree.*

MARKÞJÁLFI - COACH/LIFE COACH?

Helps identify and achieve goals as well as develop skills and explore beliefs, values, expectations and assumptions. (Emotional experiences and past not explored.) *The professional qualifications could be a certification and/or diploma or neither. Does not require an advanced degree. However, the practitioner may have an advance degree.*

SÁLMEÐFERÐARFRÆÐINGUR - PSYCHOTHERAPIST?

Similar to counselling, but more in-depth as emotionally buried past experiences are discussed. Uses holistic approaches to therapy, which can include how the client's environment, life events and other factors influence their behaviours and mental health. Tend to work with individuals and groups. They are not trained in couples, family, nor relationship therapy unless additional certifications have been acquired.

The professional qualifications for this title require an advanced degree. Most practitioners will have additional certifications and diplomas with focus on specific struggle or exploration. This title also has a professional association in Iceland guiding ethical standards.

SKAPANDI MEÐFERÐIR - CREATIVE ARTS THERAPIST?

A psychotherapist that may incorporate creative arts in the process. Example: Art Therapist, Music Therapist, and Drama Therapist. Tend to work with individuals and groups. They are not trained in couples, family, nor relationship therapy unless additional certifications have been acquired.

The professional qualifications for this title require an advanced degree. Most practitioners will have additional certifications and diplomas with focus on specific struggle or exploration. This title also has a professional association in Iceland guiding ethical standards.

SÁLFRÆÐINGUR - CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST?

Aim to reduce psychological distress, specific to mental disorders, often adopting a medical model. Typically, they focus on how brain function relates to human behavior. Tend to work with individuals and groups. They are not trained in couples, family, nor relationship therapy unless additional certifications have been acquired. They do not prescribe medicines. But they may work with another provider who can prescribe medicine, if needed.

The professional qualifications for this title require an advance degree. Most practitioners will have additional certifications and diplomas with focus on specific struggle or exploration. This title also has a professional association in Iceland guiding ethical standards.

FÉLAGSRÁÐGJAFI - SOCIAL WORKER?

Similar to psychotherapist, social workers offer in-depth therapy, assessment, counselling and a range of other services. What services they offer depends on their training. Social Workers work with various resources of support within the community. They do not prescribe medicines. Depending on their qualifications, they may work with another provider who can prescribe medicine, if needed. Tend to work with individuals and groups but, may also work with couples and families.

The professional qualifications for this title require an advanced degree. Most practitioners will have additional certifications and diplomas with focus on specific struggle or exploration. This title also has a professional association in Iceland guiding ethical standards.

FJÖLSKYLDUFRÆÐINGUR - FAMILY/COUPLES/RELATIONSHIP THERAPIST?

A marriage and family therapist is trained in individual, couples, relationship, and family therapy. This type of therapist can help you overcome relational struggles with family, intimate relationships, co-workers, relationship with self and more. Similar to social worker and psychotherapist in offering in-depth services. Additionally, looks at the space between people. Communication and connection. They do not prescribe medicines. Depending on their qualifications, they may work with another provider who can prescribe medicine, if needed.

The professional qualifications for this title require an advance degree. Most practitioners will have additional certifications and diplomas with focus on specific struggle or exploration. This title also has a professional associations guiding ethical standards.

Both Social Workers and Relationship Therapists take a more systemic approach with an awareness of the system around the clients.

PSYCHIATRIST?

Medical doctor specialised in diagnosing and treating mental illnesses, focus on physical impacts and medication management. A psychiatrist is a physician, doctor of medicine or doctor of osteopathic medicine. Specialises in mental health. This type of doctor may further specialise in areas such as child and adolescent, geriatric, or addiction psychiatry. This provider can identify and treat mental health conditions and prescribe medicine. A psychiatrist sometimes offers brief talk therapy.

The professional qualifications for this title require an advance degree (PhD). This title has a professional associations and Department of Health guiding ethical standards.

IMPORTANT NOTE: There is a lot of intersection in all these professions and this information is general. All have access to the same models and theories of psychology.

Psychotherapists, clinical psychologists, social workers and family/relationship therapists all incorporate scientific evidence-based treatment plans. One major difference is the lens they look through... or, at least, start with. This is a personal choice in approach by each practitioner.

The clinic psychologist and psychiatrist have propensity towards a medical model. They greet the journey with an eye on symptoms and behaviours. This is a strict scientific approach. The role of a clinical psychologists or psychiatrists will be to take more of an expert stance in the relationship with clients.

The psychotherapist, social worker, and family/relationship therapist starts from a human space with a holistic eye on the human condition and the system around the client. The psychotherapist, family therapist, and social worker lead with the art and mystery of life then lets science find its way into the work. They have propensity towards a guide and “we are in this together” approach with clients.

Research has confirmed that the therapeutic relationship itself is essential to the success a clients experiences. Some studies have even called it the most important factor in successful outcomes. Your relationship with your therapist is more important than the theory or treatment method being used. Though discomfort could be a part of the process, if you do not feel safe and heard, you have a right to terminate the work. Your journey and concerns should always be handled with care and respect.

Wellness is a team effort. ADDITIONAL SUPPORT to consider:

- Massage Therapist
- Yoga Instructor
- Naturopathic Doctor
- Acupuncture
- Nutritionist
- Sex therapist
- Hypnotherapist

**These titles may vary in meaning country to country.*