



# ONLINE THERAPY FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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PLEASE FIND BELOW A LIST OF FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND OUR RESPONSES. IF YOU STILL HAVE QUESTIONS AFTER REVIEWING THIS, OR IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE DETAIL ON SOMETHING, PLEASE GET IN TOUCH WITH US.

**1. What is online therapy?**

Online Therapy, also known as teletherapy, web-based therapy, e-therapy or e-counselling is therapy delivered by a licensed psychologist or counselor through a virtual platform.

**2. How does it work?**

Online therapy sessions work the same way as traditional therapy sessions with only one difference – the therapist and the client are not in the same room and are meeting in an online room. At confirmation of your appointment, you will receive an e-mail from your therapist with their Zoom username credentials. You can also add any Zoom user as a contact by specifying their email address. After they approve your contact request, you will be able to meet instantly.

**3. Why should I consider online therapy?**

**Health & safety:** Online therapy allows us to limit social interaction as we collectively work towards keeping clients, their families, our team, and the community safe during the COVID 19 pandemic. This is in alignment with safety measures issued by the Dubai Health Authority, Ministry of Health, and the World Health Organization.

**Comfort & convenience:** You can have sessions from the comfort and safety of your home.

**4. Are there any benefits to online therapy?**

Yes, there are many benefits to online therapy. Clients have reported that they really prefer the ease of access of online therapy. It saves them travel time and it's less disruptive to their schedule. Parents have also found it helpful for themselves or their children, as it does not require them to leave the home to receive support. Professionals can also connect with their therapists from anywhere so there is continuity of care.

**5. Is online therapy as effective as face-to-face therapy?**

Research shows that online therapy is just as effective as traditional face-to-face therapy when working with a range of difficulties.

**6. Is online therapy effective for children and teens?**

Research shows that online therapy is effective for children and teens addressing many issues, such as anxiety, depression, as well as speech and language difficulties.

**7. Do you do couples therapy online?**

Yes, we have therapists that provide couples therapy online. We have received great feedback from our clients who have used online sessions for their couple's work. It works the same way as individual sessions, only it is done online.

**8. Is my online therapist licensed?**

All therapists are licensed and qualified psychologists and counselors. They are licensed by the Dubai Health Authority or the Community Development Authority. They are all experienced in providing online therapy.

**9. I really don't like online therapy and I prefer to meet in-person, can I?**

Due to COVID-19 we have closed all in-person adult and teen sessions at this time until further notice. Children under 12 are being seen in-person at The LightHouse Arabia. Your therapist will inform you right away when we start in-person sessions again at The LightHouse Arabia.

**10. Is it confidential?**

Yes. The video software we use is encrypted and confidential. Therapists are ethically bound by the same confidentiality laws as in-person sessions. Your therapist makes sure they are in a closed and private room before engaging in online sessions. Online sessions are not recorded or shared. To maintain your confidentiality, it would be important for you to be in a closed and secure room.

**11. Will it feel strange?**

If you're used to in-person sessions, it will be an adjustment, but most clients find the transition to online therapy easier than they expected. After the initial few minutes, you're likely to forget about the medium you're using and will focus on the work.

**12. Will the therapist be less able to understand my situation online?**

All the therapists are experienced in providing online therapy. If they need clarity on something you have said or if they feel that they are unable to connect with you online, they will surely share this with you.

**13. What are the technical requirements for online therapy?**

You will need a camera enabled device such as a laptop, computer, smartphone, iPad, or tablet with Wi-Fi/data and audio connection. For best connectivity, you will need Wi-Fi. It is also helpful to have headphones so that you can hear clearly, while maintaining as much confidentiality as possible. You will need to download the free Zoom application from the App store or online at <http://www.zoom.us>. It is very easy to download and use. If you have any problems, please call The LightHouse Arabia and someone will be happy to help.

**14. Can I pay online?**

Yes, you will get a payment link which you can use every time to make the payment. Our system does not allow for appointments to be confirmed unless payments are made so we advise you to make the payment by 12pm one day before to the appointment, in order for your appointment to be secured.

**15. What if the session gets disconnected?**

If for some reason your video connectivity is poor, or you get disconnected, your therapist will call you or use a different platform that is accessible to both.

**16. Is the price of online therapy the same as in-person?**

Yes, the price of online sessions is the same as in-person sessions. The rationale behind doing so is that your therapist is still providing you with an hourly appointment, as well as being 100% committed to offering their expertise as they would if your session were in-person. The structure of the session remains unchanged during online therapy sessions. Your therapist will continue to do the necessary paperwork of updating your file, completing medical insurance forms and preparing for your sessions.

The online therapy sessions that you may notice on the internet that are lower costs are provided by professionals who are freelancers and do not have an office space and only provide online therapy. Those are typically not covered by insurance.

**17. Will my insurance provider reimburse me for online therapy sessions?**

If your insurance currently covers individual psychotherapy, they should continue to cover services – without disruption. Please speak to your therapist if you have further concerns.

**18. How do I make the most out of my online therapy session?**

- Download the Zoom App the day before and get familiar with it so you are rushed at the last minute.
- Treat your online session the way you would treat an in-person session. Please wear work or leisure clothing during your session. Kindly refrain from wearing pyjamas, as this takes the seriousness out of the therapy. Give yourself 5 – 10 minutes before the session commences to check in with yourself, the same way you would while seated in a waiting room.
- Confidentiality: Sit in a quiet and confidential space where you can focus, engage, and express yourself. Consider locking the door and sitting far from it, so you do not feel worried about someone walking in.
- Limit distractions: Turn off or mute all other apps or notifications on your device that may distract you. You can make the environment soothing and calming to help facilitate the therapeutic process.
- Clean your webcam: This helps your therapist see you clearly.
- Check connectivity: Make sure your Wi-Fi is working, device is charged, and audio and video are working prior to the session.
- Eye contact: Position yourself and the camera in a way where you and your therapist are making eye good contact. This will make you feel connected to one another.
- Sit close to the camera: This helps you and your therapist remain engaged and communicate clearly with each other.

**19. How can I make the most out of my session?**

It is important to leave some time before and after the session to process all the thoughts and feelings that can come up as a result of engaging in therapy. You may also want to journal your thoughts. If you have any concerns or comments about being online, please bring them up with your therapist so he/she can address your concerns.

**20. What if I want to shift from online to in-person therapy at some point?**

Yes, of course. Once it is safe for us to be back in the clinic, you are more than welcome to come into The LightHouse Arabia for an in-person session.