

## **Is Therapy Right For Me?**

**By Jeffrey Bornstein, MS, LPCC**

People often ask me how to know if therapy is right for them. They say that they are stressed or sad or anxious but that they are not “crazy” so, therefore, therapy is not right for them. They fear that, if they are in therapy, they will be labeled or judged, which might prevent them from getting the help that they need. I often use the comparison of going to a medical doctor. If you had a pain in your stomach for an extended period of time, you would probably go to the doctor to seek treatment. Likewise, if your stress, sadness, or anxiety lasts for an extended period of time or is significantly impacting your life, therapy may be beneficial. In order to simplify the decision process, I prefer to ask people the following three questions to determine if therapy may be right for them:

**Are you distressed?** Everyone has worries, gets sad, or feels “out of it” from time to time. However, sometimes people become worried about worrying too much or become sad because they are often sad. If you find yourself preoccupied with these symptoms or these symptoms are lasting longer or are of a greater intensity than they usually are, you might get relief from therapy.

**Is your functionality impacted?** Our lives have many aspects to them including work, family, social, and leisure. Are your worries, sadness, or other symptoms impacting how you function in these aspects of your life? If your work is suffering, your relationships are troubled, or you do not have the energy or interest to take part in your usual life activities, you might benefit from therapy.

**Are you looking for personal growth?** Some people seek out therapy even when there is nothing particularly distressing in their lives and they are functioning well in the many aspects of their lives. If you are interested in learning more about yourself including identifying recurring patterns in your life, examining relationships and life choices, and making meaning of life events, then you might gain from therapy.

Therapy is an opportunity to discuss the issues in your life in a safe and confidential environment with a caring, nonjudgmental professional who has experience and training. I have found that people seeking therapy have an awareness that something is not quite right in their lives and they have the courage to do something about it.

When you would like to learn more about therapy, give me a call. I am located in the Silver Lake neighborhood of Los Angeles. Please contact me on my confidential voicemail at **(323) 362-6555** to see if therapy is right for you.