

Understanding Different Types of Mental Health Support

One in five people in the U.S. faces mental health challenges, with effects that ripple across every area of their lives. Although high-quality care can help mitigate those effects, less than half of people who need support actually get it due to a host of persistent barriers, according to the [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#).

One common barrier to accessing care is the belief that your symptoms aren't severe enough or important enough to deserve one-on-one attention. But the truth is everyone can benefit from support, and waiting until things get worse can lead to additional issues.

As employees, colleagues, managers, and friends, we all have a role to play in helping each other break through these barriers. Pursuing mental health care early can help alleviate symptoms of anxiety and depression, improve personal and professional relationships, and build skills to address mental health problems that may arise in the future.

Mental health care can serve everyone, but the right kind of support depends on your unique needs, circumstances, and life experiences. The good news is that help is available.



The differences between mental health coaching and therapy

What is mental health coaching?

Mental health coaching is a method of care that involves meeting regularly with a certified coach to address challenges such as anxiety, stress, relationship issues, or parenting questions. During each session, an ICF-certified coach will work with you to identify challenges, get to the root of the issue, and help you learn new strategies to feel better and stay on track. In between sessions, your coach will assign exercises so you can develop lasting change and feel more like yourself again.

Coaching is most beneficial for people who need support with mild to moderate challenges such as stress, burnout, or relationship issues.

What is therapy?

There are many different kinds of therapy, ranging from psychodynamic to cognitive and behavioral. Regardless of which approach is used, all techniques should be evidence-based, meaning they are proven to help you develop new skills and strategies for dealing with problematic thoughts, emotions, and behaviors.

Therapy is beneficial for people with a mental health disorder or clinical condition, such as anxiety or depression, as defined by the [American Psychological Association](#).

Mental health coaching vs. therapy

	Mental health coaching	Therapy
Care recipients	Adults 18+	Kids aged 0–13, teens, adults, couples, families
Provider	Mental health coach	Licensed therapist
Symptoms	Mild to moderate	Moderate to severe
Focus	Building skills and addressing goal-oriented challenges (e.g., parenting support, work-life balance, life transitions)	Supporting clinical conditions and addressing emotional challenges (e.g., depression, PTSD)

Lyra will suggest the best care options for you based on your answers to a guided questionnaire, which helps match you with the level of care that will be most supportive.

Supporting well-being in the workplace

It can be hard to know if or when you should seek support from a provider, but a common sign is that your distress is starting to affect your quality of life. If you find that your thoughts, emotions, or behaviors are making it difficult to function at work or home, you might consider additional support.

Here are a few common concerns that a mental health expert can effectively address:

- Chronic self-criticism
- Crisis (e.g., death of a loved one)
- Decreased motivation
- Difficulty concentrating
- Excessive alcohol or substance use
- Excessive anxiety or sadness
- Major life events or transitions
- Persistent irritability
- Relationship conflict or withdrawal
- Sexual orientation questions
- Sleep problems
- Stress management

Sometimes people may not realize they need help, while those around them can see the warning signs clearly. If you notice a colleague exhibiting signs of distress, know that there are several ways to support them in the workplace:



Normalize conversations about mental health at work. Doing this together has several benefits: It lessens the burden on those affected, it increases health literacy, and it promotes a safe and healthy workplace.



Be a friend, not a hero. Lend a non-judgmental ear, but don't try to diagnose or tell others how to proceed.



Remind colleagues that help is available. Encourage them to take advantage of their employer-sponsored benefit by asking, "Have you thought about talking with a mental health expert?"

3 myths about mental health care, debunked

Knowing how to separate fact from fiction when it comes to therapy can help you make those first crucial steps toward getting care. Below are a few common misconceptions that often prevent people from understanding how mental health care can help.

- 1 Myth: Your colleagues will think something is wrong with you.**
The truth: Mental health care is for everyone. Since the goal of all mental health care is to provide support, build skills, and achieve personal goals, pursuing care doesn't make someone "crazy," nor does it mean something is "wrong" with them.
- 2 Myth: You'll spend your session lying on a couch.**
The truth: In pre-pandemic times, most mental health care was provided face-to-face, but even then, you'd meet in a private space with your provider. Nowadays, video calls have become more common. Teletherapy and virtual coaching make it faster and more convenient for people to access help from home.
- 3 Myth: All mental health care is the same.**
The truth: There are many different types of mental health care and providers. However, you should pay close attention to whether the type of treatment is evidence-based. Evidence-based care uses treatments that are backed by research, and it is tailored to meet people's needs, preferences, and cultural expectations.

You can expect your first visit with a Lyra mental health provider to include the following:



Active participation: Though you may be looking for guidance, mental health care is not a passive experience. You'll be encouraged to actively identify and reflect on your needs, behaviors, and challenges.



Collaboration: Mental health care should be a joint effort, not a prescriptive one. Together with your coach or therapist, you will discuss the key reasons you're seeking support, as well as a few goals for future sessions.



Individualized care: You and your coach or therapist will develop a personalized plan that helps you reach the goals you established and accounts for your unique background, life experiences, and personal values.



Discover which type of care is right for you

At Lyra, we think about mental health on a spectrum and understand that there is no one-size-fits-all solution.

Take Lyra's clinical assessment to get matched with a personalized list of high-quality providers who have diverse identities and backgrounds, with next day appointments available.

[Learn more about Lyra, today](#)