



## **Challenging Myths or Bias Against Therapy Done Online**

Are you living overseas and don't have access to high quality therapy, but want to do therapy? Are you not sure how online therapy would work for you? Are you put off at thought of doing online therapy because you think that in-office is better? Are you getting frustrated because your heavy travel schedule and time away is making doing therapy difficult, yet you really want to get help?

Many people have unexamined biases or beliefs that are actually getting in the way of them getting help through therapy done online. Many people have a feeling that online therapy is less effective than in-office therapy although they never stopped to examine where that feeling is coming from or whether it's true.

It's interesting how people can have a strong feeling about something even though they have no firsthand experience of what they are judging. Instead, they will use rationalizations of other things to help them manage a feeling that presents as a decision. Like deciding about therapy, we do the same feelings examination in therapy to help people see how their feelings are driving their decisions or behaviors.

I want to challenge some of those negative beliefs or biases about online therapy.

**#1: People refuse online therapy because they say they want to meet me.**

**Reality:** You are meeting me, the therapist, Tammy Fontana. Whether we meet at the office or we meet online, you are meeting me. I do not send in a surrogate avatar version of me. It is always the real me. Either way we sit in front of each other and have a conversation and we talk, whether it is you are sitting on my sofa or you are sitting across from me via video. You are meeting me and there is no touching, there is no contact. All the feelings, the emotions, everything is exactly the same.

**#2: Many people have negative experiences sitting in on conference calls in big groups or business meetings and they think their business experience will be the same experience during online therapy.**

**Reality:** Conference calls and business meetings are not the same as doing therapy. Conference calls and business calls are about business problems and about what's going on. It is on groups or problems not the individual.

In therapy we are forming a relationship, we're talking about you. The focus is on you: your feelings, your reactions, your body language, and us building a relationship. So, they are not the same thing. Therefore, using the experience of a conference call and thinking that's what online therapy would be like would be a mistake. Online therapy is a completely different application of using the technology.

**#3: Many people think they need the commute time to or after therapy to prepare and plan for therapy and process.**

**Reality:** You can do that whether or not you come into my office. People need to consciously plan for their therapy, not let the meeting drive their behavior. Planning is a skill all people need to develop whether they are going to do therapy that is online or in the office. People need to set aside time to prepare what they are going to cover in therapy and then have time after the therapy to process what we did. So, it is not coming to the office that causes you to plan, but rather it is you choosing to use the time that way, and you can do that on your own whether you are doing in-office or not.



#4: Many people think you won't be able to pick up the body language or the subtle differentiations over the video.

Reality: Body language is mainly conveyed through the face. As we are sitting on a sofa, people make eye rolls, they make sighs, they look away, they can't hold gazes... All those things are visible online or in the office, and they are all addressed the same way no matter the mode of communication.

Online therapy and in-office therapy do not differ in terms of the clinical outcomes. What is needed for therapy, regardless of online or office, is consistency in the ability to build a relationship, think about your thoughts, answer questions, reflect. The same thing occurs in-office or online.

If you would like to explore therapy, and your schedule makes it difficult, All in the Family Counseling offers both online and in-office, intensives and retreats. We have the flexibility to meet your needs. We can provide whatever solution you need so that difficulties of the past such as traveling, being overseas, two people living apart, can be overcome now with the new advance of technology. If you would like to learn more, contact us at All in the Family Counseling +6590307239. Thank you.