

Sitting down at Momentum Health Mission with our Psychologist, Diandra Lewis



What do psychologists do?

Psychologists bring education, training, professional and personal experience to work with you to come up with a treatment plan fitting your unique needs. Additionally, psychologists motivate people, challenge them to aim higher, and provide encouragement and support whenever that is needed. Each psychologist uses various counselling theories to inform the work they do. For example, some psychologists use a cognitive behavioral therapy approach that will look at the connection between our thoughts and how they impact our feelings and behaviors. I use a variety of approaches to inform my work including cognitive behavioral and emotion-focused therapies, mindfulness, and self-compassion.

Who goes to counselling?

We are all human and as human beings, we're imperfect. As a result, we experience problems and challenges. Individuals, couples, families of all ages access counselling when they feel they need support. People face common issues when accessing counselling including: depression, low self-esteem, trauma, anxiety, stress, chronic pain, burnout and many more.

It's normal to go to the doctor when you have a cold, but there isn't the same acceptance when our mental health has been affected. Unfortunately there's a stigma attached to getting support for your mental health. I'm trying to normalize getting support when we need it both physically and mentally.

What are the benefits of counselling?

There are many benefits to accessing counselling. You may experience increased self-awareness and coping skills. Hopefully you'll have a reduction of your symptoms. A significant part of a psychologist's job is to help people gain insight into why they are facing the problems they are facing, to help them resolve unresolved issues and to come to terms with lingering disappointments and losses in their lives. A very critical part of a psychologist's job is to help people build skills like increased communication, boundaries, self-regulation and self-compassion.

What are the risks of counselling?

Because we are often exploring some challenging topics, you may notice an increase in symptoms as a result of attending counselling. This is common when we decide to make life changes. I hope that through the process of counselling you will notice

relief and a reduction of symptoms. When we are working through difficult areas, it's helpful to have a psychologist there as a support. I continue to monitor how you're doing and can work with you to make a plan if you are struggling.

Will my insurance cover the sessions?

Most insurance policies cover a registered psychologist if the policy includes counselling under the extended health coverage plan. It's important to contact your insurance policy if you're not sure.

Some helpful questions to ask your insurance company include:

- How much coverage do I have?
- What type of professional is covered (i.e. registered psychologist)
- What portion of the fee am I responsible for?

How much do the sessions cost?

The sessions cost \$180 for a 60-minute hour, which is slightly lower than the recommended rate set out by the Psychologists' Association of Alberta (PAA). Please see the PAA website for more information. Momentum does offer a sliding fee rate if there are barriers to accessing services. Please contact us for more information.

There are 2 options for payment. You can pay Momentum Health directly for the sessions at the time of each visit or Momentum health can direct bill your insurance company if the company is on our list of direct billing insurance companies.

How many sessions will I need and how often do I need to come?

This depends on what issues you're wanting to work on. Various factors will influence how many sessions you need including: your presenting problem, your level of motivation, how long the problem has been happening, current coping skills and positive support in your life.

The amount of time between sessions is influenced by the above and also finances. People often come every two weeks to give time between sessions to process what you've learned and practice any interventions. Some people may be in high crisis and need to come weekly. Others will come for maintenance or check in sessions whenever they feel they need them, which could look like coming once a month or just calling in to book a session when they need support. Finances also influence the number of sessions. If finances are an issue, we can incorporate things into your healing process like recommended readings.

What if I'm nervous about booking an appointment?

This is really normal! Many people feel uncomfortable about starting the counselling process, which is why I think it's so brave to start. The counselling process is a vulnerable one and we often talk about difficult things. I think it's important to

acknowledge that it's often hard to get started and we can move at a pace that works for you.

Do I need a referral to book an appointment?

You don't need a referral to book an appointment unless a referral is required by your insurance policy for coverage.

What happens in my first session?

The first session is used to review and complete paperwork. I will review the consent forms with you and answer any questions you have. Each client has different needs during their first session. The first session is used to get to know you and to build the counselling relationship. It's also used to explore your goals for the therapy process. It's okay if you're not sure what your goals are because we continue to explore this.

What if I have more questions?

It's normal to have many questions about counselling. I am offering a free 15-minute phone consultation for new clients to access. It's a great chance to ask more questions and to meet me.

***For more information or to book an appointment with Diandra,
please call Momentum Health Mission at (403) 228-7968***

Diandra uses a variety of approaches to inform her work including cognitive behavioral and emotion-focused therapies, mindfulness, and self-compassion. No one client is the same, and Diandra will tailor her approach to what works best for you. She specializes in working with trauma and the impacts of trauma, including depression, anxiety, grief/loss, relationship issues, low self-esteem and stress. For Diandra, the most important part of healing is building a strong counselling relationship and providing a safe place to process your experiences. Diandra is a Registered Psychologist with the College of Alberta Psychologists and a member of the Psychologists' Association of Alberta. She graduated with her Master of Counselling degree from Gonzaga University.