



Facing Uncertainty
with Flexibility:

Taking Your Practice Online



Although life is unpredictable, the flexibility offered by online therapy can provide a constant to lean on for both clients and clinicians.

The global pandemic might be persistent, but this new frontier of therapy shows sustainable promise to support clinical careers and mental health struggles.

Caseloads that can grow or remain stable even though in-person sessions are no longer an option, a paycheck to depend on in the face of unpredictable employment. Taking your practice online is a step out of uncertainty and into the stability we all deserve.



When considering the many options for what your online practice could look like, you don't have to start from ground zero. Things are challenging enough these days. Let your online therapy platform take the start-up costs and infrastructure away, so you can focus on therapy.

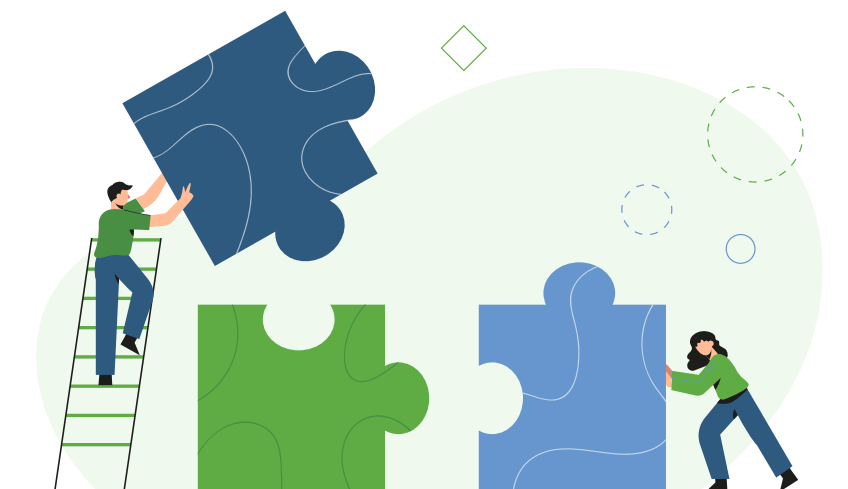
An Evolutionary Boost in Psychotherapy

The field of mental health has come a long way toward advocating for the effectiveness of mental health treatments and decreasing stigma and barriers to care. This evolution has opened up the possibility of care for people who would not previously have sought out mental health services. The Internet has certainly played a role in this, as people are able to find information themselves, as well as search for clinicians with specific emphases and read reviews. The pace of this evolution and blending with technology has intensified in the face of a global pandemic, and it does not show signs of slowing.

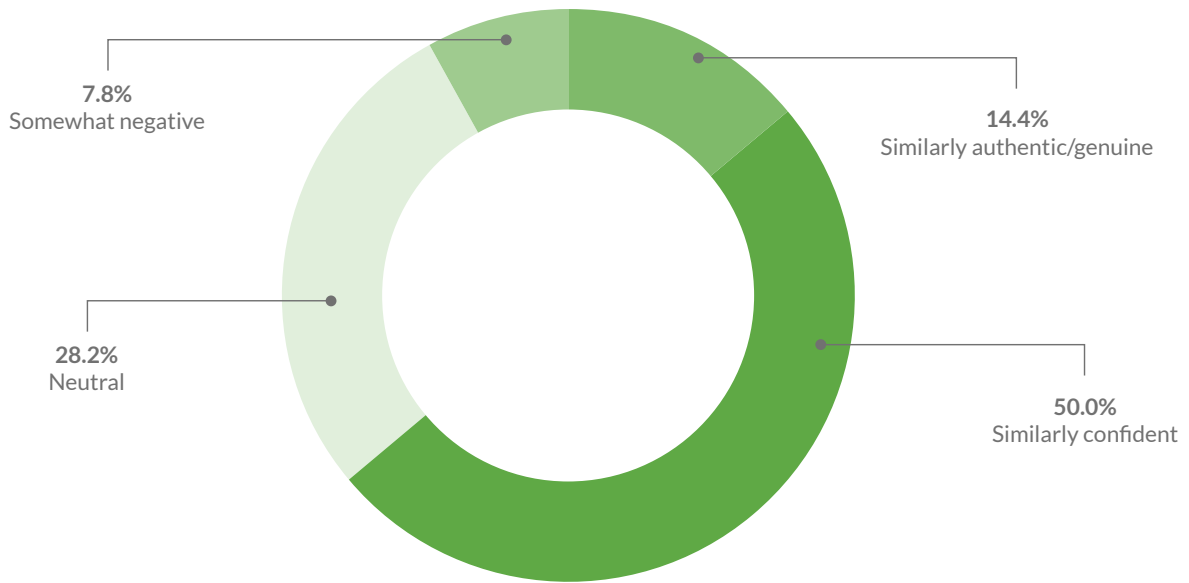
The use of technology to bridge gaps between clients and mental health services is not new. Studies spanning the past twenty years in telemental health have proven the efficacy of online mental health services for many populations, including rural locations (5), post-disaster areas (2), veterans (6), global communities (4), and youth (1). What started out as an opportunity for behavioral health agencies, private practitioners, mental health nonprofits, and veterans assistance programs to expand their options for delivery of services, has expanded into all areas of the general population. Technologically-assisted therapy may not be novel, but its current proliferation is unprecedented, and so are the attitudes toward it.

Pre-COVID-19, online therapy was growing in popularity across the country, but it was not a necessity for many (7). Almost immediately, the pandemic pushed therapists to move their offices from in-person to online. True to the adaptability that has always characterized the foundation of the field, mental health professionals have been making their online practice work and even thrive in this new realm. While many components of peoples' lives may return to pre-pandemic 'normal,' this evolutionary boost in the mental health field offers a new perspective on 'normal.'

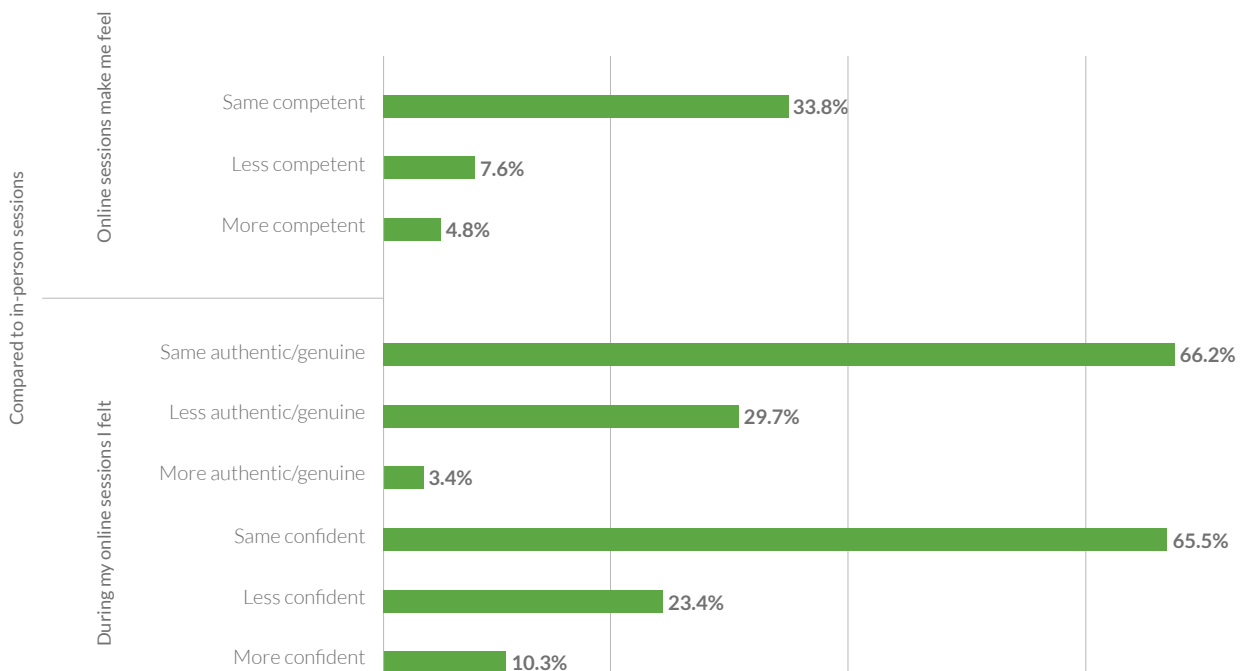
According to the Journal of Psychotherapy Integration's 2020 study on attitudes toward online therapy during the pandemic, "despite the forced and abrupt transition and the stress associated with the global crisis situation, psychotherapists had a reasonably good experience with online psychotherapy" (3). Highlights from this research underscore the impact and sustainability of online therapy.



Therapists report on client experience of online therapy:



Therapists compare online sessions to in-person sessions:



Overall, the data collected show that despite some fears or misconceptions surrounding online therapy, therapists and clients alike generally have somewhat positive to extremely positive attitudes toward this modality.

Flexibility in the face of uncertainty

With these trends in the field, options for what your online practice can look like have exponentially multiplied. Since 2013, BetterHelp has been obsessing over how to provide the most effective and flexible model of online therapy for therapists and clients.

In 2019 we surveyed 2,258 BetterHelp therapists, and 41.9% reported that their most important reason for providing therapy on BetterHelp was the flexibility offered from being able to work from home.

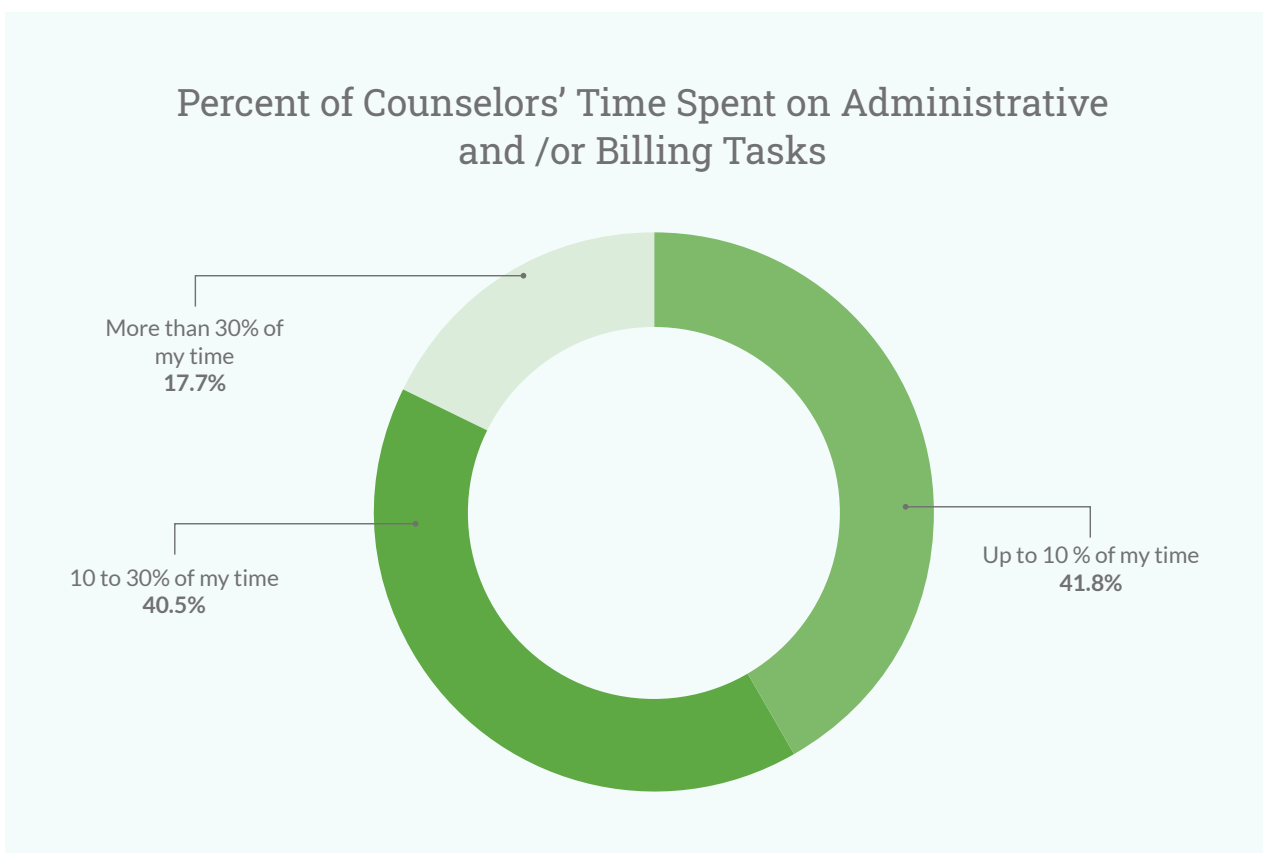
The ability to work from home has taken on new significance. Although BetterHelp has seen increasing numbers over the years, since the pandemic, the number of active therapists on BetterHelp has risen drastically.

Flexibility in your therapy career is being able to:

- ✓ Eliminate your commute
- ✓ Set your schedule and let clients book available sessions
- ✓ Regulate your caseload size
- ✓ Respond to client messages throughout the week, on your own time
- ✓ Reach clients outside of your zip code without leaving it
- ✓ Match with clients without your own marketing efforts
- ✓ Let someone else handle the billing
- ✓ Send fillable worksheets to your clients from a therapeutic library

Rewarding yourself with the flexible therapy lifestyle offered by BetterHelp gives you more time to focus on the important things. We don't mean just your clients; we mean you. BetterHelp is proud to give time and energy back to therapists that they would have spent writing billing codes and submitting documentation for reimbursement or providing free consultations to clients to determine fit. We're also proud to offer a complimentary client account to all active therapists and encourage them to spend some of that extra time and energy on their own self-care.

In 2020, we started temperature-checking the therapists applying to BetterHelp to see how much of their time they were currently dedicating to administrative and/or billing concerns. Nearly 20% of these therapists who responded reported that they spend more than 30% of their time tending to administrative or billing tasks. What if we could give those therapists 30+% of their time back? That's the type of world BetterHelp likes to imagine for mental health providers.

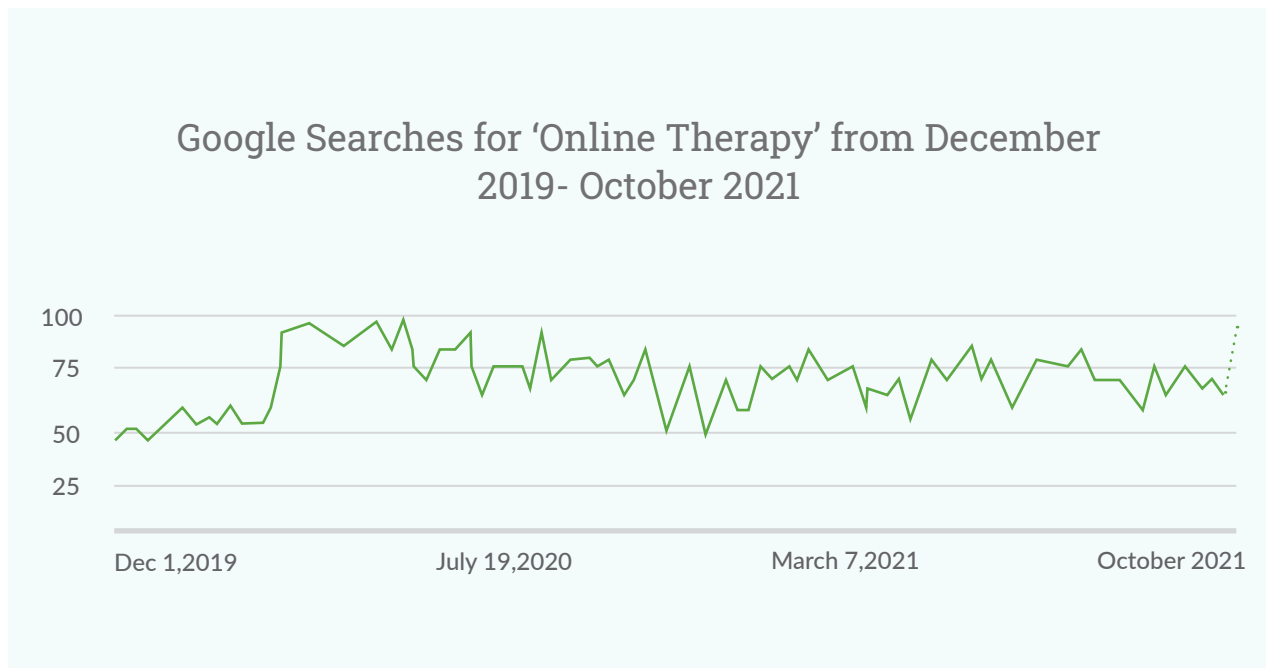


Surveying therapists returning to BetterHelp after some time away has revealed that “the clients” and “flexibility” tie for first place in response to why they are coming back.

We have a whole team dedicated to supporting our therapists so they can better show up for their clients and themselves. When confronted with the challenges within society right now, why not let our team do what we do best, so you can focus on the important things?

Stability to depend on

The need for therapy services has increased simultaneously with the demand for those services to be accessible.



The above graph demonstrates the search interest for “online therapy” between December 2019 and October 2021 in Google within the U.S. *Numbers represent search interest relative to the highest point on the chart for the given region and time.*


Data source: Google Trends (<https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?date=2019-12-01%202021-10-17&geo=US&q=online%20therapy>)

Financial accessibility and immediacy are foundational values of BetterHelp services, and they have perhaps never been more important.



Over 10,000 people sign up on BetterHelp every day looking for a therapist to help with life's challenges.

BetterHelp vs Traditional *In Office* Counseling

		<i>In Office</i>
Provided by a licensed therapist?	✓	✓
In-office visits?	✗	✓
Messaging any time?	✓	✗
Chat sessions?	✓	✗
Phone sessions?	✓	✗
Video sessions?	✓	✗
Easy scheduling?	✓	✗
Digital worksheets?	✓	✗
Group sessions?	✓	?
Smart provider matching?	✓	✗
Easy to switch provider?	✓	✗
Get help from anywhere?	✓	✗

With more attention focusing on the online therapy space, it pays to be a part of the world's largest online therapy platform. Whether you're curious about transitioning online and would like to build a part-time caseload, or you're wanting to dive into full-time work, BetterHelp has referrals for you. After progressing through our application and credentialing process, BetterHelp therapists are able to turn on their availability for new clients and watch their caseloads grow.

BetterHelp is proud to offer affordable therapy options for a range of needs. We are equally focused on providing compensation for therapists that does not fluctuate based on each client's particular payment plan. During such fraught financial times, affordability for clients and dependable pay for therapists are both critical components of the progress of mental health.

Don't just take our word for it...

Meet our incredible therapists, and see what their clients are saying about them!

Video link to therapist promotional video.



Jay Swedlaw
(MS/Ed.S.LPC, LMHC)



My experience on the BetterHelp platform over the past 4 and 1/2 years has truly been life-changing. Not only have I been able to significantly enhance my own clinical skills, but I have been able to make a profound difference in the lives of thousands of people all around the world.



Rebecca Wilson
(MSW, LCSW)



BetterHelp has provided me the opportunity to have no overhead working from home part-time while also having more time to spend with my family and children. It's also been a professional growth experience for me to offer therapy through this online format.



Jason M. Adams
(MA, LPC, NCC)



BetterHelp provides a simple, efficient platform that empowers counselors to provide services autonomously, based on their own professional judgement. That autonomy is backed up by responsive support from BetterHelp staff, and a robust community of counselors offering peer support and consultation.

References

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