



HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR THERAPY SESSIONS WITH LOTTIE

1. Make a list of issues you want to discuss. It would be good to have an outline of your goals for therapy, what you think are your difficulties and how they affect you.
2. It is helpful to keep a journal so that you are able to write down your most pervasive negative thoughts and feelings experienced during the week, including when, where, and with whom they occur. These automatic and unhealthy “scripts” can be highly unconscious, and so prevalent you may be unaware of their existence.
3. Bring a notepad to sessions to jot down ideas, exercises, or resources suggested by Lottie. There’s a lot going on in sessions and with so many different ideas floating around your head, you may not remember some of the important points discussed.
4. Lottie may give you homework to do in the form of exercises to do or books to read so it is important to do your homework. Her sessions are challenging and can go by fast. Homework is a way of augmenting the hard work done in session, and most importantly, it keeps you connected to your mind and body.
5. Self care is an important aspect of therapy. Small lifestyle changes can significantly increase emotional and physical well-being. Lottie may from time to time suggest exercise, deep-breathing, relaxation and visualisation exercises that are designed to help your mood and energy levels. She may also suggest reducing your intake of caffeinated beverages, alcohol and drugs, and making sleep a priority. Any difficulties in these areas should be brought to sessions.
6. It is helpful to tell your GP that you are having sessions with Lottie, especially if you are taking any psychotropic medications (or any other medicines). Be open and honest about results, side effects, and compliance. Lottie will need to know what medications you are on, as this will influence assessment and ongoing work with her. Sexual difficulties can sometimes be caused by some medications.
7. Lottie has a warm and friendly style but she can be challenging so it is important for your feelings to be known by her. If you disagree with her, or experience a particularly strong emotional reaction to something she said during the previous session, please bring it up. Whilst Lottie is trained to observe different forms of communication, she is not a mind reader. It’s empowering for you to initiate an uncomfortable conversation, and address negative feelings about therapy.
8. The therapeutic alliance between you and Lottie is paramount. Be prepared to work hard and feel uncomfortable. Therapy is often the first place where disturbing, distressing and perhaps traumatic memories and events are acknowledged. Be honest about the material you feel comfortable working on, yet be open enough to trust Lottie. A good clinician is attuned to their clients’ experiences, and knows when to alter the pace and direction of the intervention.
9. Lottie can be forthright and frank in sessions, so it may be that you need to be willing to accept the truth. We all use denial as a defence mechanism from time to time, but one can only deny reality for so long. You’ve already made a vital and possibly life-altering decision to have some therapy, so give yourself the opportunity to see your relationships and circumstances in a more honest light.
10. Lottie has a great sense of humour. Often our situations are very troubling but it is important not to take life too seriously. Laugh. A sense of humour helps every situation.
11. Therapy is all about change. Changing those things that we can and acceptance of those things that simply cannot be changed. Once you have an awareness and understanding of why things are happening in your life you have the opportunity to take ACTION. For whatever reason you decided to have therapy with Lottie, positive change will occur when you commit to changing your thoughts, feelings, and behaviours.