

ask Dr Roshan Jain

Your *mental and emotional health* questions answered

Q **What is the difference between a psychiatrist and psychologist? Should we see both for our 20-year-old son, who is rude, difficult or cut off from people?**

This is one question that won't leave us psychiatrists alone! Nevertheless, I am quite happy to answer it again. Though both a psychiatrist and a psychologist evaluate mental health issues and conduct psychotherapy, there is a significant difference between the two professions. Essentially this will be in their

education and training background.

A psychiatrist is a licensed physician, a medical doctor, with expertise in assessment, diagnosis, treatment and prevention of mental illness. Psychiatrists obtain medical degree (MBBS) upon attending medical college for five years followed by a further year of clinical internship in medical specialties. They then receive basic residency training and qualification in psychiatry for 3-4 years (MD or MRCPsych). Thereafter, some begin work in specific specialty or

pursue higher specialist training in areas of interest, such as general psychiatry, addictions, child psychiatry and geriatric psychiatry and psychotherapy, followed by higher specialist certification depending on the country they choose to work. Additional qualification like Diploma in Psychological Medicine (DPM) or Masters of Medical Sciences in Clinical Psychiatry (MMedSc) depends on individual interest. Treatments used by psychiatrists may include range of talking treatments (psychotherapy) and/or medication.

On the other hand, a psychologist will have a doctoral-level degree in psychology. They will receive graduate training in psychology and then either pursue a Ph.D. (Doctor of Philosophy) or Psy.D. (Doctor of Psychology) in clinical or counselling psychology. They may specialise in one of many areas such as education, as well as memory, personality and psychometric testing or mental health problems. While assessing mental health problems, they may use a range of talking therapy treatments.

I think your son should first see a psychiatrist for detailed evaluation and diagnosis before the nature of treatment can be planned.



Q **Please can you tell me more about talking therapy or psychotherapy?**

In simple words, psychotherapy is an interaction between a professional and a client (who are not necessarily patients, therefore termed differently) that leads to changes - from a less adaptive state to a more adaptive state - in the client's thoughts, feelings and behaviour. Importantly, it raises self awareness, which is a prerequisite for any desired change. Remember, it is much more than counselling or interaction with family/friend.

There is a large range of psychotherapy which can be directive or non-directive. The former (like CBT) teaches you effective strategies to conquer your problems and bring about lasting change in thoughts, emotions and behaviour, or the latter (like psychoanalysis) where emphasis is on reaching deeper recesses of mind and on exploration/understanding of past issues as well as its impact on current manner, reaction, behaviour and relationships. Both can be conducted on individuals or groups and to address range of problems such as low self-esteem and confidence issues, to illnesses such as schizophrenia, obsessive-compulsive disorder and depression, through to personality problems including anger management and impulse control issues.

We all need to look inside for reflection in order to make coherent sense of the world outside. Happiness is a journey not a destination and must begin from within, and starting from a calm space may be the greatest gift and advantage

Our doctors will answer all queries on emotional and mental health. Got mind trouble of your own? Drop us a mail at bpositiveQA@apollolife.com

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BPositive magazine,
Lifetime Wellness Rx International Ltd,
5th Floor, Life Science Building,
Apollo Health City, Jubilee Hills,
Hyderabad-500033

Dr Roshan Jain,
Senior Consultant Psychiatrist &
De-addiction Specialist,
Apollo Hospitals, Bangalore.