

CLIENT RETENTION



Clients are considered **retained** after 8-12 sessions

- There is a strong correlation when it comes to the “right fit” between client and therapist to therapy outcomes
- Review your individual client list monthly to determine who has not attended sessions that month and reach out to those clients directly about scheduling. **Warm touches** such as this go a long way in establishing long-term rapport.
- Make an **end of session ritual** of confirming your next appointment with the client.

REASONS WHY CLIENTS ARE NOT RETAINED

- Not establishing **rapport**. Not much validation in the first session, or it felt too clinical.
- Clarifying issues. Are you clear on **WHO** the client is, **WHAT** they want/need and **HOW**, treatment-wise, you can support them to that goal?
- Poor **boundaries or fear** of feeling awkward about holding the boundary about not being liked... the client giving you a hard time or “yelling” at you.
- **Scheduling limitations** on the clinician’s end (not much availability, etc).
- Belief that following the cancellation policy is the **only issue** and that it’s not a clinical issue.
- Not taking time off to ensure **self-care & wellness**
- Relief that you don’t have to show up for them – or **feeling personally overwhelmed**.
- Clinician’s struggle to earn client’s **buy in**, what the clients’ confidence in the clinician’s **competence** looks like, how well they instill **optimism** in clients that treatment will be effective.
- Unconscious **avoidance**.
- **Shame** about not feeling prepared.
- Not providing clients psychoeducation on **how therapy works**. For example, “We will meet weekly for a while so we can get some momentum going, then discuss from there.”
- Poor client/therapist **fit**
- Coming across as too flexible. Leaving things too open-ended.
- High percentage of clients with ADHD or chronic illness.

REASONS WHY... CONTINUED

- **Not taking a leadership role** in establishing treatment expectations.
- Clinician struggles to set **boundaries around cancellations**. Clients aren't satisfied or don't feel like they're making progress, causing them to consider canceling.
- **Not checking in** with clients to see how the sessions are going. Asking what they have learned and review.
- Low **social support for accessing services**, such as transportation barriers, single parents, financial concerns, etc. Anything that would create a higher likelihood of 'emergencies' or attendance barrier.
- **Clinician initiated cancellations** and reschedules that clients begin to mimic.
- Not going over the cancellation no show policy **directly**.
- Letting **sessions run long**. This causes you to start your next session without feeling grounded or prepared.
- Emails not responded to **promptly**, with authentic tone, or out of business hours
- Being **TOO focused on "doing therapy"** rather than being with the client as they present.
- Lack of **engagement** by client and lack of therapeutic frame building by clinician.
- Not asking clients to state what felt **most valuable/useful** at the end of each session. This simple prompt is a meaningful way to convey value to your client.
- Inappropriate amount of **clinician sharing/clinician talking**. Anecdotes of others or of self should be very limited
- Assigning homework, but **not following up** at next session about it
- Only cheerleading clients, not **challenging** them
- Greeting clients with with **low-energy or passive approach**. Warmth and idea of "hosting" client in the therapy space is stronger.
- If you are Out of Network, sessions need to feel valuable and worth paying for. No one wants to feel like they wasted their money or time.



WHAT CLIENTS THINK A SESSION FEE COVERS

50 Minutes of your time, where you engage your:

- Education (Bachelors, Masters, Doctorate)
- Training (Continuing Education and Certifications)
- Skill Set (Supervision, Various modalities, Sacred space holding)

WHAT A SESSION FEE ACTUALLY COVERS

- Office Staff: Clinical Director, Office Manager, CEO, Intake Coordinator
- Phone System
- Email
- Marketing
- Staff Meetings & Retreats
- Malpractice Insurance
- Psychology Today Listing
- Professional Associations
- Taxes
- Legal Supervision
- Continuing education
- Licensing fees
- Business registration fees
- Electronic Health Record
- Rent for Office Space
- Furniture and Furnishings
- Office Supplies
- Social Media Management
- SEO and Website Management

