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Exploring the Benefits and Drawbacks of Online Therapy and ABOH's Commitment to Accessible Mental Health Services



Online therapy has become an increasingly vital component of mental health care, especially in recent years. Its capacity to connect individuals with licensed professionals regardless of location offers promising opportunities for expanding access to mental health services. As our nonprofit organization,

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ABOH: A Breath of Humanity, prepares to launch its own online therapy platform, a tiered payment system based on income, it's important to understand both the advantages and limitations of this mode of treatment.

The Benefits of Online Therapy

1. Improved Accessibility

Online therapy removes geographical barriers, allowing individuals in rural, underserved, or remote areas to access mental health care. It also benefits those with physical disabilities or mobility challenges, ensuring they can receive support from the comfort of their homes.

2. Greater Convenience and Flexibility

Clients can schedule sessions at times that fit their busy lives, including evenings and weekends. This flexibility helps maintain consistent treatment, which is crucial for effective outcomes.

3. Anonymity and Reduced Stigma

Seeking mental health support can be stigmatizing for some individuals. Online platforms provide a level of anonymity, helping to reduce shame and encouraging more people to seek help without fear of judgment.

4. Cost-Effectiveness

Online therapy can often be more affordable than traditional in-person sessions due to lower overhead costs. For organizations like ABOH, offering sliding scale fees further increases affordability for clients across income levels.

5. Continuity of Care

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For individuals who travel frequently or have unpredictable schedules, online therapy ensures ongoing access to mental health support without interruptions.

6. Accessibility to Diverse Resources

Digital platforms enable access to a broad range of mental health professionals and specialized therapies, allowing clients to find providers suited to their specific needs and cultural backgrounds.

The Drawbacks of Online Therapy



1. Limited Non-Verbal Cues

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Despite advances in video technology, online therapy can restrict access to full body language and facial expressions. These cues are often essential for accurate assessment and understanding in therapy.

2. Technical Difficulties

Connectivity issues, software glitches, or device limitations can disrupt sessions, creating frustration and potentially hindering progress.

3. Privacy and Security Risks

While many platforms prioritize data encryption, concerns about data breaches or unauthorized access persist. Clients may also struggle to find a private, quiet space at home, which could compromise confidentiality.

4. Suitability for Severe Conditions

Individuals experiencing severe mental health issues, such as suicidal ideation, psychosis, or requiring crisis intervention, may need more intensive, in-person treatment for safety reasons.

5. Legal and Licensing Barriers

Therapists are licensed within specific jurisdictions, which can limit their ability to offer services across state or national borders. This can restrict access for clients in regions with fewer local providers.

6. Limitations of Physical Presence

Certain therapeutic approaches—especially those relying on physical interventions, environmental cues, or tactile techniques—are not fully replicable online.

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ABOH's Commitment to Equitable Access Through Tiered Online Therapy

In recognizing the profound need for equitable mental health services, ABOH: A Breath of Humanity is excited to announce that we will soon be offering online therapy with a tiered fee structure based on income. Our goal is to ensure that financial barriers do not prevent individuals from receiving high-quality mental health care.



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How Our Tiered System Will Work:

- **Income-Based Pricing:** Clients will be assessed on their income level and placed into appropriate tiers, with lower-income individuals receiving subsidized or sliding scale fees.
- **Flexible Payment Options:** We will offer sliding scale payments and affordable subscription models tailored to various financial situations.
- **Connecting Communities:** By working with local organizations and community groups, we aim to reach marginalized populations that typically face significant barriers to access.
- **Partnerships and Funding:** We will seek grants, donations, and partnerships to subsidize costs further, ensuring sustainability and ongoing service expansion.

This model aligns with ABOH's mission to promote mental well-being for all, regardless of socioeconomic background. By providing accessible, affordable online therapy, we hope to reduce disparities and empower individuals to prioritize their mental health.

Conclusion

Online therapy offers valuable benefits, such as increased accessibility, convenience, and affordability, making it a powerful tool in expanding mental health support worldwide. However, it also has limitations, including

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technological barriers, privacy concerns, and suitability for severe mental health issues.

At ABOH: A Breath of Humanity, we believe that everyone deserves access to compassionate and effective mental health care. Our upcoming tiered online therapy program aims to remove financial barriers, ensuring that treatment is accessible to all, regardless of income. As online therapy continues to evolve, our commitment remains to providing equitable, high-quality mental health services that meet the diverse needs of our communities.