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# What to Talk About in Therapy: 50 Prompts When You Feel Stuck

A printable guide to help you choose a starting point before or during therapy.

What to talk about in therapy is a common question, especially when you sit down for a session and your mind suddenly goes blank. You may have had a hard week, or you may feel like nothing “big enough” happened. Sometimes the most useful therapy sessions begin with a simple question: Where do I feel stuck right now?

If you are not sure what to bring into session, these prompts can help you organize your thoughts before you meet with your therapist. They can also give you a starting point once you are already there.

This guide is educational and is not a substitute for mental health care. If you are looking for support in Central Ohio, Lumin Counseling offers individual therapy in the Columbus Ohio area, including support for anxiety, trauma, grief, relationships, and life transitions.

## When You Do Not Know Where to Start

- What has been taking up the most space in my mind lately?
- What have I been avoiding thinking or talking about?
- What emotion have I felt most often this week?
- What felt harder than it should have?
- What did I need this week but not ask for?
- What do I wish someone understood about me right now?
- Where do I feel stuck?
- What keeps coming up again and again?
- What am I tired of carrying alone?
- What would feel relieving to say out loud?

The National Institute of Mental Health describes psychotherapy as a treatment that can help people identify and change troubling emotions, thoughts, and behaviors. In practice, that often starts with honest, ordinary details from your week.

## Prompts for Anxiety and Overthinking

- What am I most afraid might happen?
- What do I keep replaying in my mind?
- What situations make my body feel tense or unsafe?
- What thoughts feel true even when I know they may not be?
- What do I do when I feel anxious?
- What helps me calm down, even a little?

- What am I trying to control?
- What uncertainty am I struggling to tolerate?
- What would I do differently if anxiety were quieter?
- What does my anxiety seem to be protecting me from?

If anxiety or overthinking is a major theme, you may also find our anxiety treatment protocol and CBT therapy resources useful. CBT can help you notice how thoughts, feelings, body sensations, and actions influence one another.

## Prompts for Relationships

- Where do I feel disconnected from others?
- What relationship feels most complicated right now?
- What do I wish I could say but keep holding back?
- Where do I feel resentful?
- Where do I feel unseen or unheard?
- What patterns do I notice in my closest relationships?
- What boundary do I need but feel guilty setting?
- How do I respond when I feel criticized?
- What do I need more of in my relationships?
- What do I need less of?

Relationship prompts can be useful in individual work and in marriage counseling or couples therapy. They help turn vague distress into specific patterns that can be discussed and changed.

## Prompts for Grief and Loss

- What loss am I still learning how to live with?
- What do I miss most?
- What feels unfinished?
- What memories feel comforting?
- What memories feel painful?
- How has grief changed my daily life?
- What do I wish people would stop saying?
- What kind of support would actually help?
- What am I afraid will happen if I move forward?
- How can I honor what mattered without staying stuck in pain?

Grief is not always linear. If loss is part of what you are carrying, Lumin offers Christian grief counseling in Columbus Ohio for people who want emotional support that can also respect faith, meaning, and spiritual questions.

## Prompts for Trauma and Painful Memories

- What memories or experiences still feel unresolved?
- What situations make me feel younger, smaller, or less safe?

- What do I avoid because of what happened?
- What does my body remember, even when I do not want it to?
- What beliefs about myself came from painful experiences?
- What would I want my therapist to understand before we go deeper?
- What helps me feel grounded in the present?
- What does safety feel like to me?
- What pace feels manageable for this work?
- What part of me needs compassion right now?

Trauma work should move at a pace that supports safety and choice. SAMHSA's trauma-informed care guidance emphasizes safety, trust, collaboration, empowerment, and voice. Those principles matter when you are deciding what to share and when to slow down.

If trauma is a central concern, you may want to read about trauma-focused CBT or EMDR therapy in Columbus Ohio.

## You Do Not Have to Have the “Right” Topic

Therapy is not a performance. You do not need to arrive with a polished story, a crisis, or a perfect agenda. It is okay to say, “I do not know what to talk about today.” A good therapist can help you slow down, notice what is happening, and find a useful place to begin.

Sometimes the thing that feels small at first is connected to something important. A tense conversation, a repeating thought, a moment of sadness, or a feeling you cannot name can all be worth exploring.

## How to Use These Therapy Prompts Before a Session

Choose three prompts that stand out. Write a few sentences for each one. You do not need to answer them perfectly. The goal is simply to notice what feels emotionally charged, confusing, repetitive, or important.

You can bring your answers into therapy, read them out loud, or use them privately to clarify what you want help with.

## When Therapy Feels Stuck

If therapy has started to feel repetitive, that is worth talking about too. You might bring up questions like:

- Are we working toward clear goals?
- Are there topics I keep avoiding?
- Do I need more structure in sessions?
- Am I afraid to be fully honest?
- Do I understand what we are working on together?

The Mayo Clinic's psychotherapy overview notes that therapy works best when clients actively participate and work with their therapist as a partner. Naming that you feel stuck can become part of the work.

## Final Thought

If you are wondering what to talk about in therapy, start with what feels present. Start with what feels confusing. Start with what you keep carrying into each week.

You do not have to know exactly where the conversation will go. You only need a starting point.

If you are ready to begin, you can contact Lumin Counseling to ask about therapy options in Columbus, Westerville, Hilliard, Newark, or online across Ohio.