

## *How can going to therapy help my career?*



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Often times we feel we need to be dealing with a “serious” mental health issue to see a therapist. What if I told you that seeing a therapist can benefit you in your career exploration and development?

I am a therapist at Counseling and Psychological Services with a special interest in career development. I will share how engaging in therapy can help you gain the tools and perspective to overcome a variety of career challenges.

First let's explore: [What is therapy?](#)

In short, therapy is a conversation. We already have conversations with our family, friends, and partners. What makes a conversation with a therapist different than other conversations?

A conversation with a therapist is:

\*Confidential (You don't have to worry about what you tell your therapist being shared)

\*Non-judgmental and Objective (No hidden agenda)

\*Focused on You (It can be hard when you are sharing something and the person listening takes it as an opportunity to make the conversation about them)

### *3 Career Challenges and How Therapy can Help*

**Not Knowing Where to Start:** In thinking about careers, many students are not sure where to start or how to really figure out what they want to do. Career exploration is complex. Career development can be influenced by many factors including family and societal expectations, feeling overwhelmed among many choices, and navigating complex identities and factors. Figuring out a path forward begins with taking a step back, turning inward, and gaining a clearer understanding of who you are. Therapy is designed to help you understand your strengths, accomplishments, interests, values and needs. All this information are the clues and ingredients to create your path forward.

**Trouble Communicating:** Once you figured out what you want and where you are going, the key is effectively communicating that to others. "Others" include potential hiring managers, your current employers, friends, and your network. Remember it is not always the most experienced person that gets the job, it is the person that can best communicate who they are, what they do best, and why they are the strongest fit for the position. Career development is a constant communication process. We communicate in networking, resumes, cover letters, interviewing, and while in the workplace. We communicate both verbally and non-verbally. Communication is how we build connection and relationships. Therapy is a safe space to explore and practice communicating who you are, what you value, what you need, and how you fit from an empowered and authentic place. Your therapist is also a neutral observer who can give you feedback on your communication skills to best help you connect to others and land the opportunity you want.

**Searching is Stressful:** Often times there are a variety of emotions and challenges related to exploring your major, trying to find an internship, or looking for a job. This can include feelings of imposter syndrome, worrying about never finding the right fit, navigating family expectations, or feeling like you have to choose between your passion and making money. All these situations can lead to feelings of anxiety, depression, and burn out. These feelings not only affect our internship/job search but can also have a negative impact on your life as a Wesleyan student. Often times how you feel affects your ability to make meaningful change and see new possibilities. A therapist can understand and validate your emotions and help you build concrete tools to work with these stressors. Increased wellness and tools provide the strength and abilities to push through the emotional and practical barriers to achieve meaningful career outcomes.