



*So, you might want to be a therapist?
(or psych-related clinical practitioner...)*

A guide to educational pathways

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Terminology: Clinical Practitioners

Title	Typical Emphasis	Degree	Yrs until Practice
Psychologist <i>clin/couns/neuropsych</i>	Assessment & Therapy	PhD/PsyD	6-10
Therapist Mental Health Pract	Talk Therapy	MA/MS/ MFCC	3-4
Social Worker	Systems Approaches	MSW	3-4
Physician/Psychiatrist	Medication Management (not trained for therapy)	MD	5-8
School Psychologist	Assessment & Therapy	MA/MS	2-4
School/Guid Couns	Career Counseling	CAS	2-4
Counselor/ Psychotherapist	"unprotected terms" could mean no training	not even BA/BS	0

Note: all degrees do NOT "transfer" - check your desired state of residence for info on certification/licensure - NY: <http://www.op.nysed.gov/>

Clinical vs. Counseling Psychology: Traditional Distinctives & Overlap

Clinical Psychologist

- Ph.D. or Psy.D.
- Focus on "Abnormal" Disorders:
 - Major Depression
 - Bipolar Disorders
 - Psychotic Disorders
 - Post-traumatic Stress Disorders
 - etc...
- Graduate training
 - in Psychology Dept
- Typical workplaces:
 - Inpatient Hospitals
 - Private Practice
- sometimes research > clinical focus
- research may focus on treating clin dis
- some programs very competitive

Counseling Psychologist

- Ph.D. or Psy.D.
- Focus on "Normative" issues:
 - "adjustment" issues
 - careers/relationships/divorce
 - grief/coping with illness
 - mild depr/anxiety/eating dis
 - etc...
- Graduate training
 - in Education Dept
- Typical workplaces:
 - University Counseling Center
 - Private Practice
- sometimes clinical > research focus
- research may focus on therapy change
- some programs less competitive

Alphabet Soup...	PhD	PsyD	MD
Meaning	Doctor of Philosophy	Doctor of Psychology	Doctor of Medicine
Emphasis	<i>theory and research</i> behind treatments	the <i>how-to</i> of talk therapy <i>treatments</i>	medical treatments, esp. <i>medications</i>
Graduate coursework & brief practicums	3-4 yrs	3-4 yrs	4 yrs
Dissertation	1-2 yrs independent research	0	0
Practical Training (supervised practice)	1 yr Internship	2 yrs Internship	4 yrs (post-MD) Psychiatric Residency
Supervised practice for state licensure	1-2 yrs (post-PhD) Postdoctoral work	1-2 yrs (post-PsyD) Postdoctoral work	0
TIME to indep practice	6-10 yrs	6-9 yrs	8 yrs
Pros/Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • versatile: good for clinical work, academia, and research • more competitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fewer statistics • less versatile • limited opportunities: mostly clinical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dramatic impacts in severe disorders • 5-15 min sessions • not fully trained to do "talk therapy"

Note: there are important differences between "professional schools of psychology" and traditional academic institutions - esp: cost, available funding, class size, training, etc

Who does what?

Clinical PhD

- abnormality
- inpatient
- research

Clinical PsyD

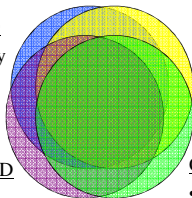
- abnormality
- outpatient
- clinical focus

Counseling PhD

- normality
- outpatient
- research

Counseling PsyD

- normality
- outpatient
- clinical focus



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What can you do to sort out career options?

1. **talk** to professionals in those careers
2. **read** books on careers in psych (see library, psych dept office, web...)
 - *Career Paths in Psychology*
 - *Graduate Study in Psychology* (yearly)
 - *Insiders Guide to Graduate School in Clinical/Counseling Psychology*
 - more at: www.apa.org/books/students.html
3. **get experience**
 - classes, internships, research assistant - volunteer on breaks
 - see <http://minerva.union.edu/andersoc/> for lists of internships
4. **join** a national organization
 - become a student member (APA '10=\$27) lots of benefits...
 - receive student newsletters info on internships, jobs, grad schools
 - join email listserv (APA: <http://apa.org/apags/resources/listservs>)
 - examples:
 - American Psychological Association (www.apa.org) - join Division too
 - American Psychological Society (www.psychologicalscience.org)
 - American School Counselor Association (www.schoolcounselor.org)