



**NOURISH**  
INTEGRATIVE SOLUTIONS

## Frequently Asked Questions for Mental Health Professionals

### **How do you work with my clients?**

First off, I don't do therapy or counseling. I work with clients to help them choose foods, supplements, and herbs that support the gut-brain axis. While I can do a lot to help your clients reduce the perception of stress (there are nutrients that have been shown to do this), I can't do anything about how they deal with stressors—that's your job.

I'm very proactive with clients, searching for ways that we can get them feeling better fast, but at the same time acknowledge that small, incremental changes are the way to go in terms of evidence-based behavior change.

There is absolutely no food judgment here, and I don't think that any food is completely off limits, though we can make good/better/best choices. For some clients, a victory means drinking one less soda every day, and for other clients, it means finally getting 7-9 servings of veggies.

I don't have any preconceived notions about "the best" diet for everyone. There is plenty of evidence in the nutritional world that bio-individuality plays a big role in success, and I am sensitive to that.

### **Do all your clients also see a therapist/counselor?**

I greatly prefer that my clients also see a mental health professional on a regular basis. Making changes in the body takes time, and often people need more direct support. I will see clients that don't have a therapist/counselor, but most often I encourage them to find someone.

### **What are your feelings on pharmaceutical interventions?**

I will be the first to tell a client to get to a psychiatrist if needed. However, I think a lot can be done with food and supplements, and that generally should be tried first. If a client is currently on a pharmaceutical medication, I will work with the client to fix the depletion caused by the

medication (a common problem), and then correct any imbalances that contributed to the condition in the first place. I certainly never judge a client who chooses to use medicine, and I would never, ever counsel a client to get off their medicine without the full involvement and approval of the prescribing physician.

### **What does a typical appointment look like?**

After the intake, which involves a detailed medical history, a nutrition-focused physical exam, and some goal setting, follow-up appointments basically walk the client through one of the areas I've flagged for attention. For some clients, this may be food choice, or it may be mindfulness or mindset.

### **How do you use mindfulness with clients?**

With most of my clients, I'm teaching mindfulness in a food-related scenario. I recognize that many mental health professionals are starting to incorporate mindfulness as part of their treatment protocols, and therefore try to stay on my side of the fence (i.e. food-related mindfulness). However, if a client doesn't have a counselor/therapist, or the therapist doesn't routinely use mindfulness, I will delve more deeply with clients because of the huge benefits to overall health and wellness.

### **How do you discuss mindsets with clients?**

I'm greatly inspired by the work of the positive psychology movement, as well as those psychologists working on mindset such as Carol Dweck and Alia Crum. I always discuss changing mindsets in terms of health and wellness.

### **Do you use supplements with clients?**

Yes, sometimes. Often, clients with mental health issues have nutrient deficiencies, either from a lack of appetite, or sometimes a pre-existing deficiency has contributed to the mental health challenge in the first place. In these cases, it often helps to replete with supplements, though I try to impress on clients that this shouldn't be a long-term solution as some supplements carry risks.

### **Do you benefit financially from supplement or lab orders from your clients?**

No. I choose not to mark up the professional-grade supplements that I provide to clients, because of concerns that profiting from sales will subconsciously change how I practice. What this means, however, is that I sometimes have to charge a client for my time searching for supplements or ordering labs, especially if they are calling in-between appointments. On the whole, I feel like this is a better solution for me.

### **Do you have a sliding scale or see pro bono clients?**

Yes, I try to reserve a certain number of appointments per week for this.