



Basics of Marketing

1. Get professional photos taken (cost varies)
2. Set up your website (\$150/yr)
 - This is non-negotiable.
 - Even one page will do to start, but add more over time for SEO. All major website platforms have great templates that are highly customizable.
 - Don't use platforms like TherapySites or Brighter Vision. They're terrible for SEO.
 - Make your domain name easy to spell and remember. Buy your name if unusual.
 - Make it VERY EASY to contact you. People who want help don't want to dig.
 - Be careful about copyrighted images. When in doubt, don't use.
 - Potential clients LOVE videos. Consider doing a short video welcoming people, talking about who you love to work with and why. It creates a sense of warmth and comfort that might prompt a hesitant client to reach out. The video doesn't need to be fancy, just good sound and image. Unedited videos are in style.
 - Having multiple pages is better to appear higher in search results because it gives more content for search engines to "crawl." Create a page for each specialty, for your "about" section, FAQ, contact, blog, etc.
 - Be sure you meet all legal requirements for how you present your qualifications
3. Set up your listings in therapist directories (generally \$30/mo ea)
 - Psychology Today, TherapyDen, GoodTherapy, specialty directories for specific populations/skills (e.g. Therapy for Black Girls, EMDRIA, Gaylesta)
 - Be selective about what populations, specialties and styles you work with.

Next Steps

- Identify your ideal client. What identities do they hold, why are they coming to therapy?
- Solidify your elevator pitch ("I help _____(ideal client) _____ (results you deliver)")
- Write some awesome copy (look to your elevator pitch and speak directly to client pain points rather than talking about yourself)
- Find a logo/visual ID/brand
 - You can get a digital logo for under \$20 on Etsy
 - Your visual brand consists of fonts, colors, and spacing/"feel" to your online presence. When someone is looking at your site or paperwork, they should know right away it's related to your practice because it's branded.
 - Consider that your office or telehealth background is part of your brand
- Order business cards/rack cards (\$20-40)
- Set up a referral tracking system (see example)
- Consider your cyber privacy and consider a service like DeleteMe (\$100/year)



Digital Marketing Ideas

Google My Business (free)

- Gets you listed on Google Maps, creates a Google business listing, improves SEO
- Requires a physical address (PO Box or even UPS/private mailbox will not work). Ask a colleague to use their office address just to get the confirmation postcard.

Make your directory listings pop (\$ varies by list)

- The first sentence of your text should speak directly to the reader's pain points
- Your **photo** needs to be professional with a pop of color, cropped VERY close to face
- Don't select too many specializations
- You should update your listings about every 6 months
- The algorithm for who appears at the top of results remains a mystery

SEO (Search Engine Optimization) – (initial large investment, then free)

- This helps you appear higher in internet searches in your location and areas of expertise
- Your website should be complete and beautiful before you do this. You can make any changes you want later (and you *should* update your site regularly) but all the major pages, niches, and information need to be there
- If you're not a tech wiz, it is *absolutely* worth paying someone to do this for you. This will run \$1k-3k, which seems high until you realize how much better it positions your website online. People are looking for help online, and SEO helps them find **you** over someone else

Google Ads (recommend \$150 budget/mo)

- This is the single best way to drive clients to your website. It *will* work if they're set up correctly (usually by a professional).
- Don't do the Google Ad Wizard. Get them set up by a professional or deeply research how to set them up yourself. The Wizard doesn't get great results because it's guessing who you want to find you and why rather than you selecting who to target and highlighting key terms (such as "trauma therapy" or "LGBT+ therapy")
- You can target specific area codes and genders
- When your practice is full, you can turn these off with a single click
- GoogleAds has strict rules about who is allowed to claim expertise in substance use. The certificate of approval for this can be pricey.



Self-scheduling Widgets (free with your EHR or through Calendly)

- Making it *very easy* to schedule a consult with you *will* increase the number of inquiries you get. Inconvenience and social anxiety discourage people from calling and emailing.
- Make links to your scheduling widget clear and present on EVERY website page
- Include it in your email signature
- Keep your availability current and accurate! Having to decline a request is big bummer.

Video Marketing (free or boosted posts)

- Don't shy away from this! Mobile video consumption grows by 100% per year, and 87% of online marketers use video
- 67% of customers are more likely to buy something if there's a video.
- Videos are particularly great if you do online therapy, as it gives people an idea of what it would be like to work with you
- Get creative with it! Show your personality and make it seem conversational. Don't read from a script. You can use humor as long as you stay professional
- Don't run through your résumé. Don't pathologize clients. Highlight their strengths
- Use clear disclaimers when necessary
- You don't need to be really tech savvy, so long as your videos have uncompromised sound and image. Unedited videos are in style!

Blogging/Writing Articles (free)

- Great for SEO (gives new content for search engines to crawl every month.)
- Great for sharing on social media (boosted posts drive more traffic to your website which boosts SEO.)
- They can be short (~300 words.)
- Get creative with it! Show your personality. You can use humor if you stay professional.
- Seasonal/topical posts and listicles do well.
- Video blogs are great. Be sure to write out a transcription and put it under a "read more" so search engines have new content to crawl.
- Consider "chunking" your blogs by writing 4 at once and posting them over the coming months so you don't feel stressed to come up with new content every month.

HARO – (free)

- Help A Reporter Out is a great way to get your name out in the media and position yourself as an expert.
- Sign up for free as a source. You'll get three emails a day.
- It's not worth responding to queries after the initial day the HARO roundup email is sent. Reporters usually have tight deadlines and way too many responses and will just



delete your email if it comes in the next day. It's fine if you don't get to it most days! Even responding to a few good queries a week will get you out there.

- Process:
 - 1. Find a query you're qualified to respond to.
 - 2. Email the reporter. Be brief and use language non-clinicians can understand.
 - 3. Set up a Google alert for your name so you see if your quote gets used; usually reporters don't actually reply to you. (You only have to do this once.)
 - 4. If you get quoted, you are allowed to add that outlet's logo to your website, which builds trust and credibility.
- There's a free training on how to use HARO at: melodywilding.com/mediasecrets. In the final 20 minutes she's selling a more expensive course, but you'll have everything you need from the free video.

Testimonials

- Guidelines in CA about soliciting testimonials from clients have changed recently, but it's probably safest to ask colleagues to write them rather than clients.
- Have colleagues write you Google reviews (after you've set up Google My Business) and then manually add them to your website to build trust and credibility.

Social Media (free or low-cost boosted posts)

- If social media marketing speaks to you, great! But it is OPTIONAL. Your online presence as a therapist need only be your website and directory listings.
- Only use platforms you're familiar with and like using.
- Create separate professional profiles. Don't make things blurry between work & personal life.
- Consider creating a monthly content calendar so you don't have to come up with ideas for new content every day.
- Certain platforms can be tricky if a client is unhappy and decides to review you
- Post weekly on Facebook, daily on Instagram
- Have a clear policy in your informed consent about NOT engaging with clients on social media, particularly in an emergency
- NEVER engage in consultation or post anything remotely client-identifying on social

Hiring Someone to Manage Your Social Media

- Someone who connects with content
- Not a big influencer
- Posts quality content
- Has a research and planning strategy
- No paid followers



Interpersonal Marketing Ideas

Building Your Helping Community; Or Networking Isn't Terrible, I Promise!

Connect with professionals you know or would like to know

- Create a list of therapists, nutritionists, coaches, acupuncturists, etc, that are aligned with your specialties, niches, and populations. Don't include MDs/psychiatrists.
- Reach out to one a week to schedule a coffee (even on Zoom)
 - Chat about the work, what you love
 - Ask lots of questions about their practice
 - Mention you have 1-2 spots open even if you have 10
 - Ask what you can do to support their practice
- Note the last time you connected and make a point to reconnect every 6-12 months

Connect with MDs and other medical providers aligned with your practice

- One doctor can fill your practice! Create a list of MDs you want to connect with
- Mail or drop off a version of the attached [letter](#), as well as some business or rack cards
- Care coordination calls are a great way to make connections
- Doctors are very busy. Make your request worth their time. If you happen to actually talk to a doctor, be direct, brief, and professional. State that you have a few openings in your practice. Use your elevator pitch.
- Doctors' offices respond positively to snacks like muffins, cookies, etc

Participation in Groups:

- Professional associations
- Grad program groups
- Newly licensed groups
- Specialty groups
- Consultation groups (forming one is a great way to build community!)
- Small business association/women in business groups



BNI:

- Business Networking International is the largest referral network in the world
- They're well organized and structured
- Often meet early in the morning before work. Can be expensive.
- Most groups only allow one person from each profession in order to prevent competition within industries. Your group will have contractors, accountants, lawyers...
- There may be some confidentiality issues, since thanking others publicly for referrals is common practice (but you can explain you won't be able to do this.)

Other Interpersonal Marketing Ideas:

- Be creative!
- Offer workshops in your community on a topic you have expertise in (e.g. mindfulness workshop at a local yoga studio, talk about exercise and mental health at your gym, etc)
- Reserve booths at community events and do something fun like "speed therapy" (like speed dating) or mindfulness-to-go. Be sure to have lots of flyers and business cards, as well as something else that makes your table stand out
- Speaking gigs and presentations for large employers or your professional association

Consider your intake process part of your marketing approach

- Your intake sets the tone and gives them a preview of what it might be like to work together
- Have a solid plan for how you conduct intakes and what needs to be communicated
- It's very clear when a therapist doesn't have a solid intake process, which doesn't inspire confidence

Referral Source Tracking Example

Date	Init.	Source	Intake	Appt	Fee	Fit	Conversion	Notes
8/23	JA	Psychology Today	Yes	Yes	200	Moderate	100%	
9/10	PD	Previous client	Yes	No		Low	0%	Referred to Cindy
9/17	ER	Psychiatrist	Yes	Yes	200	High	100%	
					200		66%	



Your Personalized Marketing Plan

Foundations (required):

- Great photos
- Great website with specialty pages
- Directory listings

Next Steps for everyone (mostly)

- Identify your ideal client & solidify your elevator pitch
- Write some awesome copy
- Find a logo/visual ID/brand
- Order business cards
- Referral tracking system
- Get a service like DeleteMe

Digital Marketing options:

- Google My Business
- Make your directory listings pop
- SEO
- Google Ads
- Self-scheduling Widgets
- Video Marketing
- Blogging/Writing Articles
- HARO
- Testimonials
- Social Media

Interpersonal Marketing options:

- Connect with professionals you know or would like to know
- Connect with MDs and other medical providers
- Participation in groups
- BNI
- Offer workshops
- Reserve booths at community events
- Speaking gigs and presentations for large employers or your professional association

Solidify your intake process part of your marketing approach

Sample Letter to Send to Doctors/Psychiatrists



Laurel Roberts-Meese, LMFT

415-504-2895

laurel@laureltherapy.net www.laureltherapy.net

Dear Colleague,

Laurel Roberts-Meese Psychotherapy - Now Accepting Referrals

I'm pleased to announce I am now accommodating new referrals in my practice.

I serve adults and couples experiencing:

- Anxiety, Depression & OCD
- PTSD & Trauma
- Grief & Loss
- LGBT+ issues
- Adjustment disorder
- Relationships & communication
- Women's Issues

Treatment Methods Include:

- CBT - Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- EMDR - Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing
- Integrative & mindfulness-based
- Interpersonal & humanistic
- Feminist
- Strength-Based & Solution-Focused

All sessions are conducted via a HIPAA compliant, secure, **telehealth** platform. I can accommodate sessions during the day and evening **M-Th**.

I accept [insurance if you take it, and] **private pay** and can provide clients with a superbill to submit for out-of-network benefits.

I'm an experienced and compassionate provider and look forward to providing high quality care to your referrals.

Sincerely,

Laurel Roberts-Meese, LMFT

www.laureltherapy.net

415-504-2895



Digital Marketing Recommendations from Colleagues:

One stop shop:
www.counselingwise.com

SEO:
www.uncommonpractices.com

How To Optimize Google My Business:
<https://go.shawnjoshi.com/google-my-business-execution-plan/>

Google Ads:
Ardenthealers.com

Other Resources:

Book Yourself Solid by Michael Port

12 Months To Your Ideal Private Practice by Lynn Grodzki

SimplePractice Learning courses, particularly those done by Ben Caldwell