

Julia Chan Psychotherapy

What is psychotherapy?

Psychotherapy offers a safe space to gain better understanding and control of one's feelings, to explore one's inner strengths, especially during difficult times, to receive support and learn new skills, and to improve relationships with others and with oneself. Talking does help. It does not make any given situation worse. Instead, it allows a person to feel more at ease with the unavoidable challenges in life, and focus the attention and energy in areas where positive change is possible.

How can people with cancer benefit from psychotherapy?

Whether it is a new diagnosis or chronic disease, cancer does not only affect the person physically. Therapy helps to process the many feelings associated with having cancer (such as sadness, fear, anger); to assess how to cope with the impact of the illness on finances and work; to decide how and what to disclose to children and other loved ones; and to navigate through potential changes in family roles and routines, spirituality, sexuality, and fertility. Through therapy, people often learn to feel more grounded, to take steps to preserve or improve their emotional wellbeing, which often enhances their effort toward physical recovery.

How can loved ones and caregivers benefit from psychotherapy?

Cancer impacts the whole family. Partners, parents, adult children, siblings, or close friends often become the primary caregiver. It can be physically exhausting and emotionally draining. Couples, even those with the best communication skills prior to the illness, can have a hard time asking for or accepting help. It is not uncommon for family members to find themselves crying alone, and being paralyzed by the fear of losing their loved one. Whether through individual therapy or family therapy, caregivers have the opportunity to address their own needs, to improve communication, to feel more in control, and to remain emotionally connected with their loved one during this challenging phase in life.

About Julia:

Julia finds beauty in our ability to transform suffering into understanding and strength. She believes in the healing power of mindfulness and reflection. She has been in the counseling field for over sixteen years, and has worked in different mental health settings and cancer care facilities. She graduated from UC Berkeley and Columbia University, and received her postgraduate training in family therapy from the Ackerman Institute. She was born in Hong Kong and is fluent in Mandarin and Cantonese. She is a licensed psychotherapist and her private practice offers individual, couples, and family therapy as well as bereavement counseling.

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