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► [What works for whom: tailoring psychotherapy to the person.](#)

Norcross J.C., Krebs P.M., Prochaska J.O. [Request reprint](#)

Journal of Clinical Psychology: 2011, 67(2), p. 127–132.

Based on commissioned meta-analytic reviews, a US task force judged that adapting psychotherapy to the patient's reactance/resistance, preferences, culture, and religion/spirituality demonstrably improved effectiveness.

Original abstract This article introduces a [special issue](#) of the *Journal of Clinical Psychology* devoted to evidence-based means of adapting psychotherapy to the patient's characteristics across patients with different diagnoses including those with substance use problems. Practitioners have long realised that treatment should be tailored to the individuality of the patient and the singularity of his or her context, but only recently has sufficient empirical research emerged to reliably guide practice. This article reviews the work of a task force and its dual aims of identifying elements of effective therapy relationships (what works in general) and identifying effective methods of adapting treatment to the individual patient (what works in particular). The task force judged that adapting psychotherapy to four patient characteristics (preferences, [reactance/resistance](#), culture, religion/spirituality) demonstrably improved effectiveness. Adapting to another two – [stages of change](#) and [coping style](#) – was judged probably effective. Two more patient facets (expectations, attachment style) were related to psychotherapy outcome, but there was insufficient research on adapting psychotherapy to these facets. This special issue provides research-supported methods of individualising psychotherapy to the person, in addition to his or her diagnosis.



Drug and Alcohol FINDINGS This article was in a [special issue](#) of the *Journal of Clinical Psychology* devoted to adapting psychotherapy to the individual patient. For other Findings entries from this issue see:

- [Adapting psychotherapy to the individual patient: Stages of change](#)
- [Adapting psychotherapy to the individual patient: Preferences](#)

- ▶ [Adapting psychotherapy to the individual patient: Culture](#)
- ▶ [Adapting psychotherapy to the individual patient: Coping style](#)
- ▶ [Adapting psychotherapy to the individual patient: Expectations](#)
- ▶ [Adapting psychotherapy to the individual patient: Attachment style](#)
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