

FREE GUIDE · MYKE COOPER, LCSW

5 Signs

You're Ready *for Therapy*

— and What to Do Next

*Most people wait years longer than they should.
This guide helps you recognize where you are
and take the first step without overthinking it.*

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Before we get into the signs.

There's a version of this guide that leads with statistics — the average person waits 11 years between first experiencing mental health symptoms and seeking treatment. But you don't need a statistic. You need someone to be honest with you.

The question most people are actually asking isn't "Am I struggling enough to deserve help?" It's "How do I know if this is the right time?" That's a reasonable question. This guide answers it directly.

None of these five signs require you to be in crisis. None of them require you to have a diagnosis. They're just honest markers — patterns that tend to show up in people who are ready to do

*"The most common thing I hear from new clients:
I wish I had started sooner."*

— Myke Cooper, LCSW

If you've been wondering whether now is the right time, reading this is a good sign. Let's go through the five.

The Sign You Keep Dismissing

You explain it away. That's the point.

There's something you keep coming back to. A feeling, a pattern, a version of yourself you don't fully recognize. And every time it comes up, you have a reason why it's not a big deal — you're just stressed, everyone feels this way, it'll pass.

The sign isn't the thing itself. The sign is how hard you're working to convince yourself it isn't a thing. When you find yourself regularly explaining away the same discomfort, that's not rationality. That's avoidance with good grammar.

"What you keep explaining away is usually worth exploring."

"Not Bad Enough" Is a Story

You don't have to earn the right to get support.

A lot of people sit outside therapy's door because they don't think their problems are serious enough. Someone else has it worse. They're still functioning. They haven't hit rock bottom.

But therapy isn't triage. It's not reserved for the most acute cases. People who start when things are hard — not catastrophic — tend to make faster progress, build more durable skills, and avoid the crisis they were quietly headed toward. "Not bad enough" is usually "bad enough, plus a year."

"The best time to start is before you need to."

The People Around You Have Noticed

You're often the last to see what others see clearly.

Has someone close to you mentioned that you seem different lately? Withdrawn, reactive, distant, checked out? Or maybe no one's said it directly, but you can feel the friction in your relationships that wasn't there before.

The people who know you well are often better barometers of your internal state than you are. Not because they know you better than you know yourself — but because they see you from the outside. When someone you trust expresses concern, that's information worth taking seriously.

"The people who love you can see what you can't."

Your Coping Has Stopped Working

There's a difference between managing and actually moving.

You've been handling things. Working out, staying busy, talking to friends, journaling, keeping your head down. And for a while, that worked. But somewhere along the way, the coping became the routine — and the thing underneath it didn't actually go anywhere.

Good coping skills are valuable. But there's a version of coping that's just high-functioning avoidance. If you're doing all the right things and still feel like something is off, that's not a failure of willpower. That's a sign the thing you're managing might need more than management.

"Managing and healing are not the same thing."

You Thought About It Today

The fact that you're here is the sign.

You read this guide. You've probably thought about therapy more than once recently. Maybe you've googled it. Maybe you've started to say something to someone and pulled back.

That recurring thought — the one you keep having and keep not acting on — is its own kind of signal. People who are genuinely fine don't spend a lot of time wondering if they need help. The wondering itself is a form of readiness.

"Wondering if you're ready usually means you are."

You recognized yourself. *Here's what to do with that.*

01 Reach out — not later, now.

The window between 'thinking about it' and 'doing it' is where most people get stuck. Close the window. Send a message today, even if it's short.

02 Keep the bar low for the first step.

You don't need to have it all figured out. A free consultation is just a conversation — 15 minutes, no commitment, no pressure.

03 Come as you are.

You don't need to be in crisis. You don't need a clear reason. You don't need to have the right words. The work starts wherever you are.

READY TO TALK?

Book a Free 15-Minute Consultation

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