



What Kind of Therapist Are You?

Recognize and Learn Your Style in 20 Questions

BY ROBERT CHUTE

Is there truth in stereotypes? The answer is debatable, but oftentimes we learn from them. Following are some questions that may give you insight into stereotypes you will probably recognize. When you see yourself in the answers it will be as irritating as sand in your bathing suit. When you let others know you see them in the following portrayals, they will be irritated—and educated.

1. HOW DO YOU SUMMARIZE YOUR EDUCATION?

- A. I can recite all origins and insertions while balancing on a Swiss ball with one leg tucked behind my ear and sketching out portal circulation in charcoal with my other foot.
- B. I did well in school. Anyway, most everyone passed in the end, even that bonehead I helped through kinesiology class.
- C. I am the bonehead from kinesiology class.
- D. I have lots of certificates on the wall. A buddy of mine has Photoshop.

2. WHAT IS YOUR MARKETING PLAN?

- A. I devote one day a week to networking. I build my contacts into an influential referral base. My plan for a chain of clinics and eventual world domination is laid out in my 236-page business plan that I meditate upon each morning in my Japanese garden. Chad, my personal assistant, will e-mail it to you once he's finished peeling my grapes.
- B. My main advertising expense is the Yellow Pages. I've done a few speeches and mail out some fliers once in a while. Hope is a plan, right?

- C. I throw my business cards out the window of a moving car. I shouldn't have to do anything besides massage, since I'm such a great therapist.
- D. I shout my name from a moving car while honking the horn.

3. WHAT LUBRICANTS DO YOU USE?

- A. I offer powder or a variety of oils, and I sell an exclusive brand of my own manufacture made from the sweetbreads and squeezings of nearly extinct animals.
- B. I use massage oils and gels, mostly hypoallergenic.



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- C. I can't afford to use oil, but I do have sweaty palms from all the palpable desperation.
- D. I'm partial to gun oil, which Mama also sells next door. You get a free assault rifle cozy with your second massage. Funny, nobody's come back to get that cozy yet.

4. WHAT IS THE ATMOSPHERE IN YOUR WORKSPACE?

- A. The rooms have an Asian feel, though all the marble is imported from Italy. The bathroom fixtures seduce with their classic Venetian stylings. I test the water pressure on the bidets daily. I prefer 500 pounds of pressure per square inch.
- B. It is clean, uncluttered, and IKEA-esque.
- C. We've set up a couple planks over sawhorses in a bedroom until we can get into a real office. Well, it's not so much a spare bedroom as it is a nursery, but the twins don't cry too loudly.
- D. We get back to nature by massaging outside, though I admit Colorado is a bit chilly in January. You can see the highway from the table, which is nice. Sometimes, as the semis blow past, the wind tears the sheets off the clients.

5. WHAT ARE YOUR RETIREMENT PLANS?

- A. My in-house broker actually lives in my house so I can manage my stock portfolio on a minute-by-minute basis. I'm deeply into platinum and plutonium futures ... and arms deals with Angola.
- B. A friend knows a guy who set me up with a plan that comes out of my bank account automatically. So far I haven't had (m)any NSF notices.
- C. I'll never be able to retire and will sustain myself with a telemarketing job or greeting people at a big box store until that happy day I finally drop ... unless I win the lottery, of course.

- D. I'm guessing you would need bread for something like that and, hey man, all my bread goes to like, buying bread. If I could pay for insurance, maybe I could fake my own death and collect.

6. WHAT ARE YOUR RECORD KEEPING METHODS?

- A. My clientele all fill out a 10-page case history followed by intensive grilling until they cry, at which point I look forward to treating them for the 10 minutes left in the first session.
- B. I go over an intake form, try to keep up with the SOAP notes and the income/expense ledger. It's a necessary evil, like bathing suits.
- C. I find out how much I made each year when I add it up in April. I love surprises. Rough estimates are okay with the IRS, right?
- D. SOAP? I've got something with lavender and patchouli around here somewhere. It covers up the smell of gun oil.

7. WHEN DID YOU LAST GET A MASSAGE?

- A. Within the last two weeks. I always pay for it so I can maximize the enjoyment of being hypercritical.
- B. I swap with another therapist once in a while. I feel hypocritical otherwise.
- C. What? You mean since massage school?
- D. I'm too stressed out to get a massage. Why are you looking at me like that?

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