

Marriage and Family Therapists

SOC: 21-1013 • Career Profile Report

■ Key Facts

\$63,780

Median Salary

77,800

Employment

+13.0%

Growth Rate

■ Requirements & Salary Range

Education: Master's degree

■ Automation Risk Assessment

Low Risk - 6.0% probability of being automated in the next 10-20 years.

This job is relatively safe from automation due to its creative, social, or complex problem-solving requirements.

■■ Work-Life Balance

7.4/10 - Good work-life balance

■ Personality Fit (RIASEC)

Higher scores indicate better personality fit for this career type.

| | | | |
|--------------|--------|---------------|--------|
| Realistic | 4.0/10 | Investigative | 5.8/10 |
| Artistic | 7.0/10 | Social | 9.2/10 |
| Enterprising | 5.0/10 | Conventional | 5.8/10 |

■ Top Skills Required

Communication skills, Compassion, Interpersonal skills, Organizational skills

✓ Strengths

- High Demand
- Flexible Work
- Continuous Learning

■ Challenges

- Burnout Risk
- Rapid Technological Change

■ What They Do

Marriage and Family Therapists help individuals, couples, and families **improve relationships, resolve conflicts, and address emotional or mental health issues**. They provide counseling, guidance, and support to promote healthy communication and family dynamics.

This career is well suited for individuals who enjoy helping others, problem-solving, and working with people to improve relationships and well-being.

What Do Marriage and Family Therapists Do?

These therapists assess, diagnose, and treat mental and emotional disorders within the context of relationships and family systems.

Common responsibilities include:

- Conducting interviews and assessments with clients
- Developing treatment plans and therapeutic goals
- Facilitating individual, couple, or family counseling sessions
- Teaching coping strategies, communication skills, and problem-solving techniques
- Monitoring client progress and adjusting treatment plans as needed
- Maintaining confidential client records and documentation
- Collaborating with other mental health professionals or healthcare providers

Key Areas of Marriage and Family Therapy

Therapists may focus on specific areas of practice:

- Couples Counseling: Helping partners resolve conflicts and improve communication
- Family Therapy: Addressing issues affecting family dynamics and relationships
- Individual Therapy: Supporting personal growth and mental health within the relational context
- Crisis Intervention: Assisting families during emergencies or stressful events
- Clinical Assessment: Diagnosing mental health conditions and recommending treatment strategies

Skills and Abilities Needed

Marriage and Family Therapists combine clinical knowledge with interpersonal skills.

Core Professional Skills

Personal Qualities That Matter

Education and Career Pathway

This role typically requires formal education and licensure:

- Master's Degree: Marriage and family therapy, counseling, psychology, or related fields
- Clinical Internship or Practicum: Supervised hands-on experience in therapy settings
- State Licensure: Required to practice independently as a therapist
- Continuing Education: Maintaining licensure and staying current with therapy techniques and research

Where Do Marriage and Family Therapists Work?

They are employed across settings that provide mental health services:

- Private Practice
- Hospitals and Mental Health Clinics
- Community and Social Service Organizations
- Schools and Universities
- Government Agencies

Work environments may include offices, clinics, schools, or community centers.

Is This Career Difficult?

This career requires emotional resilience and strong interpersonal skills. Therapists must handle sensitive issues, manage client crises, and maintain professional boundaries while providing effective support.

Who Should Consider This Career?

This career may be a strong fit if you:

- Enjoy helping individuals, couples, and families
- Have strong communication and listening skills
- Are patient, empathetic, and emotionally resilient
- Are interested in psychology and mental health
- Want a career focused on improving relationships and well-being

How to Prepare Early

- Take psychology, social sciences, or counseling courses in high school or college
- Volunteer or intern in mental health, social work, or counseling settings
- Develop strong communication, empathy, and problem-solving skills
- Research graduate programs in marriage and family therapy
- Gain experience in supervised counseling or therapy programs

Marriage and family therapists strengthen relationships, support mental health, and help clients navigate challenges, fostering healthier, more connected lives.