



# iflow Psychology

## Assessment Tool

Supporting mental health, resilience, and wellbeing

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<b>Client:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

### Barriers Checklist

#### Introduction to the Barriers Checklist

The Barriers Checklist is a structured clinical tool designed to help psychologists and mental health practitioners identify the factors that may interfere with a client’s engagement, progress, and therapeutic outcomes. In practice, barriers are rarely single-issue problems. They are multidimensional, emerging from a combination of personal, psychological, social, cultural, biological, environmental, and systemic influences. Systematically identifying these obstacles allows clinicians to tailor interventions, refine treatment planning, and ensure that supports are appropriate, accessible, and effective.

This checklist provides a comprehensive overview of common barriers encountered in therapy, assessment, rehabilitation, and mental health care. Each item is separated into an individual row to support clarity, data filtering, and integration with digital systems such as practice management platforms, supervision templates, and dynamic website content. While not an assessment tool on its own, it functions as a decision-support resource that enhances formulation, promotes accountability, and strengthens the therapeutic alliance by prompting targeted, collaborative problem-solving.

The Barriers Checklist can be used during intake, ongoing review, supervision, case discussions, return-to-work planning, and risk management processes. It helps clinicians distinguish between modifiable and

non-modifiable factors, ensuring that interventions are grounded in realistic expectations and that clients receive timely referrals, psychoeducation, or adjustments to care pathways when needed. Ultimately, the purpose of this tool is to support better outcomes by increasing visibility of the influences that shape engagement, performance, safety, and psychological wellbeing.

#### Category / Barrier

Category / Barrier
<b>Personal &amp; Psychological</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Low motivation or ambivalence
<input type="checkbox"/> Avoidance patterns (emotional/behavioural/relational)
<input type="checkbox"/> Learned helplessness or defeatist beliefs
<input type="checkbox"/> Shame, guilt, or fear of judgement
<input type="checkbox"/> Trauma history affecting trust/safety
<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive overload
<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty concentrating
<input type="checkbox"/> Low insight or awareness
<input type="checkbox"/> Rigid thinking styles
<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive distortions
<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty identifying or expressing emotions (alexithymia)
<input type="checkbox"/> Poor emotional regulation
<input type="checkbox"/> Maladaptive coping (substances, withdrawal, conflict, rumination)
<input type="checkbox"/> Perfectionism
<input type="checkbox"/> Fear of failure
<input type="checkbox"/> Resistance or defensiveness
<input type="checkbox"/> Unrealistic expectations of therapy
<input type="checkbox"/> Burnout or emotional exhaustion

### Health & Biological

- Sleep disturbance
- Chronic pain or fatigue
- Medical conditions affecting engagement
- Medication side effects
- Neurocognitive impairment
- Acute mental health symptoms
- Substance use impacting cognition
- Hormonal or metabolic issues

### Social & Interpersonal

- Family conflict
- Unsupportive relationships
- Caregiving responsibilities
- Domestic violence or coercive control
- Social isolation
- Lack of supportive networks
- High expressed emotion in the home
- Cultural or community stigma
- Relationship breakdown
- Workplace conflict or bullying
- Negative peer influences

### Environmental & Practical

- Transport limitations
- Financial stress
- Time constraints
- Inflexible schedules
- Childcare responsibilities
- Housing instability
- Unsafe living conditions
- Technology barriers
- Telehealth issues
- Limited privacy

Geographic barriers

Competing demands

### Occupational & Functional

- Work stress
- Burnout
- Lack of job clarity
- Role ambiguity
- Misaligned expectations
- Poor work-life balance
- Psychosocial hazards
- Fear of job loss
- Performance pressure
- Legal or insurance constraints
- Return-to-work challenges

### Cultural & Identity

- Cultural expectations
- Language differences
- Fear of shame or loss of face
- Marginalisation
- Discrimination
- Religious or community beliefs restricting help-seeking
- Identity conflict
- Mistrust of services

### System & Service-Level

- Long waitlists
- Difficulty navigating systems
- Poor prior experiences
- Lack of service coordination
- Limited access to specialists
- Restrictive eligibility criteria
- Administrative burden

Complex forms and processes

### Therapy Process

Mismatch between client needs and therapy approach

Limited readiness for change

Weak or early therapeutic alliance

Difficulty applying skills

Inconsistent attendance

Frequent cancellations

Misaligned goals

Unclear treatment planning

Session timing/frequency insufficient

Insufficient psychoeducation

### Digital & Telehealth

Privacy concerns

Lack of confidential space

Platform difficulty

Telehealth fatigue

Hybrid model confusion

### Crisis & Risk

Acute distress

Instability

Safety concerns (self-harm, DV, substance use)

Legal involvement

Housing crisis

Financial crisis

Recent trauma

Recent bereavement

The Barriers Checklist should be used as a dynamic clinical reference tool rather than a static assessment. Items identified as relevant should inform case formulation, treatment planning, session structure, and referral pathways. Clinicians are encouraged to review barriers at intake and periodically throughout therapy, particularly when progress plateaus, risk emerges, or engagement changes. The purpose of the checklist is to support clarity, accountability, and client-centred care—ensuring obstacles are recognised early and addressed through targeted intervention, collaboration, and appropriate support.