

Free Resource · Jessica Jakhar

Niche Clarity Without *Ethical* Compromise

A self-audit for therapists who want their website to attract the right clients — without breaching confidentiality, soliciting reviews, or reducing who they are to a marketing label.

A note before we begin: This guide takes the ethics of your profession seriously. Niche clarity is not about disclosing your caseload, soliciting testimonials, or making promises about outcomes. It's about one thing: **writing for the person you most want to help, so they can find you.** Nothing here requires you to compromise your professional standards.

THE TENSION WORTH NAMING

Niching your website is not the same as *limiting who you see.*

When therapists hear "niche your practice," a reasonable alarm goes off. Clients in mental health crisis don't browse directories with the luxury of perfect self-knowledge. A person presenting with anxiety may be navigating trauma. Someone seeking couples therapy may be in a coercive relationship. Reducing your practice to a marketing category can feel — and sometimes is — a disservice to the complexity of the people you serve.

This guide is not asking you to do that. It's asking something more specific: **does the language on your website help the person most likely to benefit from working with you recognise that you're the right fit?**

"Niche clarity on a website is about communication, not gatekeepers. You retain full clinical discretion over who you accept into your caseload. What changes is whether the right people can find you in the first place."

THE DISTINCTION THIS GUIDE IS BUILT ON

The colleague who pushed back on the idea of nicking with "I evaluate every client on a case-by-case basis" is doing exactly the right thing clinically. This guide doesn't challenge that. What it asks is: before that conversation even happens, is your website helping or hindering the people who need you most from reaching out?

WHAT NICHING IS NOT

- Disclosing your current caseload
- Soliciting reviews from clients
- Promising specific outcomes
- Turning away vulnerable people
- Reducing your clinical range to a slogan
- Replacing your professional judgment

WHAT NICHING IS

- Writing for the person you most want to help
- Using language your ideal client would use
- Being specific enough that the right people feel found
- Communicating your areas of deep experience
- Reducing how often the wrong-fit clients enquire
- Giving your referrers clarity on who to send

FIVE QUESTIONS · SCORE 0-2 PER QUESTION

Is your website attracting the *wrong clients*?

For each question, choose the option that most honestly reflects your current website — not the one you're planning to build. Score 2 for the first option, 1 for the second, 0 for the third. Total at the end. No judgement — this is data.

1 Read your homepage opening sentence right now. What does it actually say?

- 2 pts** — It names a specific experience, feeling, or struggle that my ideal client would immediately recognise as their own.
- 1 pt** — It describes my general approach or a broad category of work (e.g. "a safe space to explore your feelings").
- 0 pts** — It introduces me by name and lists my qualifications or modalities first.

Clients don't read your homepage to learn about you. They read it to feel understood. That needs to happen in the first sentence.

2 When you get an enquiry from someone who isn't a good fit, what's the most common reason?

- 2 pts** — IRarely happens. My website communicates clearly enough that most people who enquire are broadly right for my practice.
- 1 pt** — Occasionally. Usually a location or fee mismatch rather than a clinical one.
- 0 pts** — Regularly. I often speak to people in initial calls and realise partway through that I'm not the right fit.

Frequent wrong-fit enquiries are not just a time cost — they're a signal that your website is being vague about who you serve best. Vagueness feels inclusive; it actually creates noise.

3 Read your homepage opening sentence right now. What does it actually say?

- 2 pts** — It rarely happens. My website communicates clearly enough that most people who enquire are broadly right for my practice.
- 1 pt** — Occasionally. Usually a location or fee mismatch rather than a clinical one.
- 0 pts** — Regularly. I often speak to people in initial calls and realise partway through that I'm not the right fit.

Your referrers are your unpaid marketing team. If they can't describe who you're best for, they'll send you anyone — and you'll take them because you're afraid to say no.

4 Think of the last client you agreed to see despite knowing they weren't quite your niche. Why did you say yes?

- 2 pts** — I evaluated carefully and genuinely felt I could work effectively with them. I couldn't think of a recent example where I said yes reluctantly.
- 1 pt** — I stretched my boundaries because they seemed engaged and I had space, even if they weren't my ideal fit.
- 0 pts** — Honestly? I had an empty slot and was anxious about it. The slot pressure made the decision, not a clinical assessment.

Empty slot anxiety is not a clinical failing — it's a marketing problem. When your website isn't reliably attracting right-fit clients, every enquiry feels like one you can't afford to decline.

5 If someone googled the specific problem your ideal client is struggling with, would your website appear?

- 2 pts** — Yes — I've written content specifically around the experiences and language my ideal client uses to describe their situation.
- 1 pt** — Possibly — I mention the general area but I haven't specifically written for how a client would search.
- 0 pts** — Unlikely. My website uses clinical language, not the kind of words a distressed person types into Google at midnight.

Frequent wrong-fit enquiries are not just a time cost — they're a signal that your website is being vague about who you serve best. Vagueness feels inclusive; it actually creates noise.

YOUR SCORE

0-3

Urgent attention needed

Your website is likely working against you — creating noise, attracting wrong-fit enquiries, and making the right clients feel unseen. The good news: the fix is copy, not a redesign.

4-6

Foundations are there

You have instincts in the right direction but the specificity isn't quite landing. A few targeted changes to your homepage and how you describe your work would make a significant difference.

7-8

Working Well

Your website is communicating your niche effectively. The remaining gaps are likely in visibility — SEO, Google Business, or content — rather than core messaging.

9-10

Genuinely Strong

Your website is doing what it should. A conversation with a specialist might help you identify the final 10% — but you're not here because your site is broken.

BEFORE & AFTER

What niche clarity actually *sounds like* on a website

These examples show the difference between language that's clinically accurate but invisible — and language that makes the right person feel found. In every case, the therapist's ethical position is identical. Only the communication changes.

BEFORE · GENERIC

"I work with adults experiencing anxiety, depression, and relationship difficulties."

AFTER · CLEAR

"I work with high-achieving professionals who have built a successful life on the outside and can't explain why it feels so hollow on the inside. **If you suspect burnout but are afraid to slow down — you're in the right place.**"

BEFORE · GENERIC

"I offer a warm, non-judgmental space for you to explore your thoughts and feelings at your own pace."

AFTER · CLEAR

"Therapy with me is structured but not rigid. **I work best with people who want to understand the pattern, not just manage the symptom** — and who are ready to do the work between sessions, not just in the room."

BEFORE · GENERIC

"I have extensive training in CBT, ACT, EMDR and person-centred therapy and draw on these approaches flexibly."

AFTER · CLEAR

"I specialise in working with the anxiety that doesn't look like anxiety — the over-functioning, the people-pleasing, the inability to rest. **My clients are often surprised to learn how long they've been managing, rather than actually being okay.**"

ON ETHICS

"None of these rewritten examples disclose client information, solicit testimonials, or make clinical promises. **They communicate experience, specialism, and fit — the same things you communicate in person, now present on the page.**"

Your website should be working as hard as you are.

If your audit score suggested your website isn't attracting the clients you most want to work with — that's a solvable problem. I build websites specifically for therapists in private practice, and I'd like to take a proper look at yours.

The discovery call is 30 minutes. No pitch, no pressure. Just an honest conversation about what's working, what isn't, and what I'd change first.

Discovery call

No obligation · Fully confidential
I work with therapists in the US, UK, and across Europe.

A Final Note on the Ethics Conversation

Some of the most thoughtful pushback I receive on this topic comes from experienced clinicians who are right to be cautious about reducing complex practice to a marketing exercise. I take that seriously. The approach in this guide was built specifically in response to that concern — because the therapists who worry most about ethics are often the ones their clients need to be able to find most easily. If you have questions about anything in this guide, I'd welcome the conversation.

— Jessica Jakhar

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