

Client Rights

IN PSYCHOTHERAPY
& COUNSELLING

Interviewing
a Therapist

Questions to ask a therapist

If a therapist responds defensively to your questions rather than being supportive, it could be a warning sign that the therapist may not be open.

Here are some questions for you to consider.

FEES, SERVICES & RECORD KEEPING

- Am I charged a fee to interview you?
- What is your hourly fee?
- Do you have a sliding scale?
- Do you have regular fee increases?
- Can therapy fees be paid by insurance?
- Do you offer phone contact or crisis intervention between sessions?
- When you are ill or on vacation do you provide back-up support?
- Do you keep written records or files?
- Do I have access to them and can I negotiate what is written in my file?

TRAINING, EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

- How long have you worked as a therapist?
- Where did you receive training/education?
- Have you worked with clients from cultural backgrounds different from your own?
- Have you received anti-oppression, anti-racist or ethics training?
- What kinds of therapy do you practice?
- Please define each type.
- Do you have experience or training in the areas I want to explore?
- What is your approach to these areas?
- Do you have access to training or education in these areas?
- Have you been in therapy yourself?
- If yes, how has it influenced your work?

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SUPERVISION & CONSULTATION

- Do you receive regular supervision?
- Do you provide clients with the names of your supervisors?
- Please define the role of your supervisors.
- Are you in supervision with: a former therapist, family member or friend?
If yes, how do you manage the dual/overlapping relationship?

ETHICAL GUIDELINES

- Do you have a code of ethics you practice by? If yes, can I have a copy of the code?
- Do you provide information about the therapy process and client rights?
- Do you support a woman's right to make choices about her body? (ie. abortion)
- Do you physically touch clients?
- Have you ever had a personal relationship with a client or former client?

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Do you belong to a therapy or social work professional organization?
- Does your organization or social service agency have a code of ethics?
- Does your organization or agency have a complaints or mediation process?
- Have you ever had a complaint filed against you? What was the outcome?
- Has a client ever challenged you?
What was the outcome?
- If conflict arises when working with a client, do you have a conflict resolution process in place? Please explain process.

SOME PERSONAL QUESTIONS

- Have you had personal experience with the issues I want to explore?
- Why did you become a therapist?

Client Rights Project providing client support:

Feminist Advocates for Counselling Ethics
416-531-7182 client.rights@sympatico.ca
Toronto Rape Crisis Centre/Multicultural Women
Against Rape 416-597-1171 trcc@web.net
Women's Counselling Referral & Education Centre
416-534-7501

For support outside Toronto, please consult your local phone book or call the province-wide
Assaulted Women's Helpline 1-866-863-0511

Agency name

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