



QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN CHOOSING A THERAPIST

Your choice of a mental health therapist/counselor is very important to your well being. Interview him/her in the same way any employer would interview a prospective employee. S/he will be working for as well as with you. You are the consumer. Do not hesitate to ask hard questions and do expect complete answers. Don't be intimidated. Competent, caring therapists will not be offended by your questions and will be honest with you. After all, your mental health and recovery from the trauma of the crime is at stake.

1. What experience do you have in working with victims of crime? How long have you done this kind of counseling? With what kind of crime victims have you worked?
2. What training or education do you have specifically related to working with victims of crime? Are you licensed or are you under the supervision of a licensed therapist? Are you a student or an intern? What training or education and experience does your supervisor have in this area?
3. Do you understand the criminal justice system process, including the function of the various agencies--law enforcement, city attorney, district attorney, municipal court, county court, district court--and the differences between them?
4. What is your experience in working with the criminal justice system, with police agencies, with prosecutors, with the courts? Are you qualified in this Judicial District as an "expert witness" related to working with victims of crime? Have you ever testified in court as a witness in criminal cases?
5. What is your philosophy or clinical perspective in working with a crime victim? Is this different than when working with other clients? If so, how--in what ways?
6. What is my (client/victim) responsibility in therapy/counseling?
7. What is the length of time you usually see clients with these kinds of problems/issues? How long can I expect to be in counseling?
8. What treatment services do you offer, i.e., individual, family, group, couple's counseling, bibliotherapy (outside reading)?
9. Will you accept the fee structure (\$70 per individual session, one session/week; \$35 per group session, one session/week) as determined by the First Judicial District (Jefferson/Gilpin Counties) Crime Victim Compensation Board? Will you accept and follow the policies and process determined by that Crime Victim Compensation Board?
10. Are you willing to meet personally with the Crime Victim Compensation Program administrator to discuss the program's policies and procedures?