

APPENDIX A

CHOOSING A PSYCHOTHERAPIST

Choosing a therapist can be a challenging experience. You may feel more empowered and secure by reviewing the list of questions below, and choosing those that most fit what you want to know about an individual therapist, prior to proposing that he/she be your approved therapist.

1. Most therapists will spend from 10-15 minutes on the phone answering some of your questions and discussing your needs. Be prepared to answer some questions about yourself, about your particular problems and concerns. You can initially screen therapists over the phone by asking some of the following questions:

- A. What is the general composition of your client caseload by age and gender? Do you do family as well as individual therapy?
- B. What is your fee structure? Will you be willing to file a claim with the _____ insurance company for payment?
- C. How long have you worked with survivors of abuse? Do you specialize in any area of abuse treatment?
- D. How many abuse cases have you treated per year? How many are you currently treating? Have you ever worked with MK's (missionary kids) or other persons negatively affected by religious or clergy misconduct? What kind of training do you have in this regard?
- E. What techniques do you use in working with survivors? Do you work with both men and women? How do you work with family members, parents or spouses of survivors?
- F. Do you have any policy on "recovered memories" of abuse? What techniques, if any, do you use to do so?
- G. What is your policy regarding crisis situations which might require intervention or hospitalization?
- H. Would you support my participation in a survivor's group? Do you have referrals you could make in that regard?
- I. Can you provide me with three references in the community that are familiar with the nature and quality of your work?
- J. What role do you believe forgiveness plays in the healing process?

2. After a favorable phone interview, you should make an initial appointment with the therapists and afterwards, reflect on some of the following points:

- A. How did the therapist respond to my questions and expressed needs/goals?
- B. How did I feel talking to this person? Did I feel heard and valued? Did I feel believed, cared for and understood?

- C. How did this therapist compare to any others I have interviewed or had experience with?
- D. This someone with whom I would be comfortable disclosing private, is intimate details and painful experiences?

Courtesy Presbyterian Church (USA)

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