



## CHOOSING A COUNSELLOR

You might be looking for someone to support and guide you as you explore feelings which you may have long ago buried or hidden from. Although you may find it difficult, you have the right to 'shop' around. This also means knowing what questions to ask which will help you decide.

You may choose to go to someone who has been recommended to you and the choice is yours. Finding a counsellor who can make you feel relaxed enough to be open and honest can be really hard.

It may be useful to write down a few things about yourself that you are able to share at your first point of contact. Also, be aware that you might not get to speak to someone straight away and counsellors will often have to return your call, so remember to leave a first name and phone number.

You deserve to work with a counsellor who treats you with respect. You will also need to TRUST your gut feeling, because if you want to move along the healing journey you will need to have a counsellor and feel SAFE and comfortable.

The questions on the next page may help you to gather information when you are looking for a counsellor. Remember, this is your journey, so you might want to change or add questions.

### References:

1. Bronson, C (1989). *Growing through the pain*. Prentice Hall: New York.
2. Matakis, A (1992). *I can't get over it: A handbook for trauma survivors*. New Harbinger Publications, Inc: Oakland.

Name of Counsellor: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Explain why you are looking for a counsellor

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1. Do you mind if I ask you a few questions? It will only take a few minutes.  
No.... I don't have time, you need to come in for a session, etc..... you might hang up  
Yes....you might continue to ask questions
2. How long have you been working as a counsellor?
3. What is your experience in working with people who have experienced CSA?
4. How do you refer to such clients?
5. What are your qualifications/ training in this area?
6. What do you think about self-help groups?
7. Do you attend in-services or training programs in the area of CSA?
8. Do you use a particular 'type' of therapy?
9. How often do you see clients?
10. Do you accept phone calls between sessions?
11. What hours are you available?
12. What costs are involved?