

The Business Therapy Center

BEING A TRAUMA-INFORMED CONSUMER

What's the problem with "trauma-informed?"

Since about 2019, there has been a trend of non-clinical service providers online, such as VAs, graphic designers, life and business coaches, designating themselves "trauma-informed."

These providers are not clinically trained, nor do they have regulation or oversight.

Trauma-informed or other similar designations are not regulated or overseen in any way—not even for social service, health and mental health agencies, clinicians or therapists.

Literally anyone can say they are trauma-informed.

But there are no guarantees that they actually are.

Consumers therefore have to evaluate for themselves whether or not they want to work with a provider, beyond their claim to being "trauma-informed."

Questions to ask a "trauma-informed" service provider

- How long have you worked with this issue directly with clients?
- Do you have supervision?
- What are your plans for ongoing skill-building and continuing education?
- Have you had therapy yourself?
- Are you a trauma survivor?
- What is your motivation for using the trauma-informed designation as part of your marketing or title?
- What work have you done around the role of intersecting oppressions and trauma?
- In the context of trauma, what is your understanding of the role of power dynamics between you as a service provider and a client?
- How do you define trauma?
- How do you know it's time to refer a client to a therapist?
- What are your processes for referral to a therapist?
- Do you have a network of trained and experienced trauma therapists to whom to refer your clients?
- How do you handle complaints? What is your dispute resolution process?



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Questions to ask about a "trauma-informed" training program

In addition to asking the questions above as they relate to a training, you can also ask:

- Is anti-oppression training inherent in the program?
- Does the training include issues of consent?
- Does the training address how to address and repair harm caused by the practitioner?
- Is the training educational only or does it include supervised skills implementation? (role plays with feedback from a senior practitioner; recorded sessions submitted to supervisor for feedback, etc.)
- What are the qualifications of the trainers?
- Are the trainers supervised?
- What is the trainer's experience working with trauma and trauma survivor clients?

About the authors



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