If you practice Kink, BDSM or Consensual Non-monogamy (CNM), you may have concerns about seeking out a therapist. Perhaps you fear discrimination, or spending too much time educating someone about Kink or CNM when they should be focused solely on your health. This guide aims to help you find a great therapist!

how do you find a therapist?

Use the **Kink and Polyamory Aware Professionals (KAP)** website run by the National Coalition for Sexual Freedoms (NCSF) to find professionals in the U.S. and other countries:

www.kapprofessionals.org

You can also search for Kink and CNM aware therapists on websites such as:

- www.polyfriendly.org
- https://openingup.net/open-list/
- www.pinktherapy.com/ (UK)
- www.aasect.org/referral-directory
- www.therapyden.com
- www.psychologytoday.com

You can reach out to your local kink or CNM-related groups for referrals.

Your local LGBTQIA resource center may be another good referral source.

how you can help

The NCSF relies overwhelmingly on contributions from individuals and local BDSM, swing and polyamory groups for financial support. Ask your group to organize a fundraiser for NCSF, and contact us at **ncsfreedom@ncsfreedom.org** to find out how easy it can be!

You can also participate in NCSF activities, ranging from writing letters to the media and government officials, to joining in community outreach. Get information about NCSF actions, as well as coverage of mainstream news concerning sexual freedom issues, by subscribing to our free newsletter at **ncsfreedom.org.**

Mission Statement

The NCSF is committed to advancing the rights of consenting adults in the BDSM-Leather-Fetish, Swing, and Polyamory communities through education, advocacy, and outreach.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Vision

NCSF's goal is to better fulfill our mission through a better understanding of a diverse range of voices and experiences in our communities. We recognize the similarities and differences between people that make us all unique. We aim to be inclusive by creating opportunities for more people of various backgrounds to be respresented and heard by NCSF.

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NCSF
national coalition for sexual freedom inc.



Finding a Kink & Consensual Non-Monogamy (CNM) Aware Therapist

When evaluating potential therapists, it can be helpful to look for evidence of their Kink or Consensual Non-monogamy competency on their website(s). For example, do they explicitly identify as Kink or CNM friendly, aware or knowledgable?

when do you need a Kink or CNM specialist?

In some situations, you may not need a therapist who is a specialist in Kink or CNM. This includes concerns that have nothing to do explicitly with Kink or CNM such as alcohol or drug use, smoking cessation, life transitions, depression, or anxiety.

Sometimes you may want to work on something in therapy that is directly related to Kink or CNM. For example, if someone wanted to work on communication within their polycule or wanting to come out, they may want to seek a specialist.

The Kink Clinical Guidelines are the kind of therapy you should expect from a kink-knowledgeable therapist: https://www.kinkguidelines.come/the-guidelines

TASHRA'S Core Clinical Competencies for professionals working with kink-involved individuals: https://www.tashra.org/news

APA's Committee on CNM's resources for professionals: https://www.div44cnm.org/resources

what questions should I ask?

When you start contacting therapists for more information, it can be helpful to make a list of questions to ask them such as:

- What has been your education about Kink and CNM?
- What makes you competent to work with CNM or Kink?
- How couple-centric are you?
- How many Kink or CNM clients have you knowingly worked with?
- If you are not highly experienced in Kink or CNM, how will you educate yourself instead of expecting me to educate you?

is it okay to shop around?

Yes, you can shop around to find a therapist who is a good fit for you! Don't give up as you interview different therapists. Sometimes the fit of a therapist is best assessed by how you feel when you talk to this therapist. It is okay to meet with several different therapists when you are deciding which one makes you feel the most comfortable.

- Do you feel understood and heard?
- Do you feel like they are open to working on what you want to work on?
- Do you get along with this person?
- Do you like their style of communication?

Therapy is hard work and can provoke challenging feelings. This challenge should not be made worse by your therapist's judgements! You deserve to find a therapist who is helpful and affirming.

what else should I ask when choosing a therapist?

Make a list of questions that you would like to ask a therapist. Lead with your specific concerns and ask questions that are important to you. For example:

- It's okay to verify their license and credentials, and ask if there are any issues in the past with discrimination or mistreatment.
- How long have you been practicing?
- How do you approach therapy?
- Do you do short- or long-term treatment?
- How frequently do you meet with your clients?
- What are your fees or payment policy? What insurance do you accept?
- Do you have an area of expertise or specialty?
- Have you worked with ethnically or gender diverse (such as Black or non-binary) people?
- Do you have training to deal with psychological trauma or thoughts of suicide?