

How to Get A Therapist For Help With CEN

Tips

- First off, look for a therapist who's trained, experienced, and licensed in your state. It's best to get a referral from a trusted friend or family member or your Primary Care Doctor.
- Virtually all effective, experienced therapists understand the primary concept of Emotional Neglect. All get the importance of emotional validation and responsiveness from parents during childhood.
- But here's where it gets tricky. Because that doesn't mean that he or she will understand the whole concept of CEN that we're talking about here: it's impact on you as an adult, and how to target it directly in treatment.
- So it's very important, early in the treatment, perhaps even in your first contact to set up the appointment, that you say directly that you're specifically looking for help with Childhood Emotional Neglect. If you've had prior treatment that let it fall between the cracks, be sure to mention that.
- Ask the therapist if he or she is open to working with you on a particular concept of Childhood Emotional Neglect that you've just learned about and that resonates deeply with you.

Special Requirements

CEN folks have special requirements in a therapist. Look for a therapist with these qualities:

- Obviously you want someone who's open to listening and understanding your realization of CEN — the full picture, and what it means to you.
- Your therapist must be active (talkative and willing to challenge you in the sessions). Many therapists take a listening approach, and don't believe in talking much or challenging you. There is value in that, but when you have CEN, you need to be pushed a bit and challenged, and asked questions.
- You need your therapist to be especially empathic and understanding
- Look for a therapist who doesn't talk about themselves. People with CEN are much more comfortable keeping the focus on the other person, so you need a therapist who will require you to focus on yourself and your own needs.
- Look for someone who will have a heavy focus on emotion and teaching emotional skills.
- Now here's one of the most important ones: you need a therapist who understands the depth of your discomfort, or even shame about your own feelings and needs. This one is especially tricky because the therapist really needs to understand the full concept of CEN to really "get" this one.

Questions to Ask Before you Schedule (or at the First Meeting)

1. Are you a licensed therapist (NOTE: I recommend that you see only a licensed therapist.)

2. Are you active in sessions, or are you more of a “listening type” of therapist? (NOTE: you want them to say “active”).
3. I’m looking for help with a specific concept of Childhood Emotional Neglect that I read about. It seems to be exactly what I need to work on. Is that something you’d be open to talking with me about?
4. I need to learn how to get in touch with my own feelings, and also learn emotional skills. Is this something you are good with?
5. Do you do any cognitive-behavioral type of work? My understanding is that some of the recovery requires that kind of treatment, and I will likely need some help with it.
6. Would you be open to looking at a book about CEN which has a chapter for therapists?
7. It’s difficult for me to talk about myself, so therapy might be hard for me. Can you work with that?