a guide to finding a therapist/counsellor

as if making the decision to open up to a stranger isn’t hard enough, new terminology and an endless selection of different approaches to choose from can make therapy/counselling feel like an alien world when you’re first starting out. The good news is, simply spending a bit of time getting clear on what you want to get out of therapy and getting to know some of the basic differences between approaches, is all it takes to put yourself in a good position to choose a therapist/counsellor that feels like the right fit for you.

you may want to think about:

• What you want or need from a therapist/counsellor
• Any goals that you have for therapy/counselling.(this will most likely be discussed within your first couple of counselling sessions)
• The type of therapy/counselling you would like:

face to face therapy/counselling
This therapy/counselling takes place ‘in person.’ GINA’s counselling space is located in Birmingham City Centre.

telephone therapy/counselling
This therapy/counselling takes place over the phone. This therapy/counselling can take place from the comfort of your own home and this can be helpful if you're uncomfortable talking to someone in person, or if you have difficulty leaving the house or using transport.

online therapy/counselling
This therapy/counselling takes place online and it is usually done through a video platform. This is similar to telephone counselling and can be done from the comfort of your own home; this can be helpful if you have difficulty leaving the house or using transport. However, online therapy/counselling will enable you to ‘see’ your counsellor too on the video platform.

‘trauma informed’ – what does it mean?
This is GINA’s encompassing approach. A trauma informed approach acknowledges that trauma can be carried within ourselves. This approach recognises experience, understands responses to experiences that are overwhelming as normal, rational and often really sensible, explores stories, rejects labels, seeks to redress power imbalance and builds upon foundations of empowerment and connection. Instead of labelling you or the ways you have coped with sexual violence and abuse, it focuses on your strengths, how these helped you survive and explore how they can be built on.
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types and approaches to therapy/counselling
A part of finding a therapist/counsellor that’s right for you may involve thinking about the type and approach to therapy/counselling they use. There’s no such things as the right approach because everyone is different; some therapists/counsellors may stick to one approach but a lot of therapists/counsellors use a blend of different approaches:

common types and approaches to therapy/counselling:

• Cognitive and behavioural therapies: focusing on changing unwanted or harmful thoughts and behaviours; based on the idea that they can be learned and unlearned.
• Psychoanalytic/psychodynamic therapies: focusing on uncovering unconscious motivations to change thoughts and behaviours.
• Humanistic therapies: focusing on you as a whole person and encouraging you to realise your own strength, wisdom and choice.
• Postmodern therapies: focusing on equality by reducing the power gap; focusing on the client’s strengths and own solutions.
• Body-orientated therapies: based on the idea that we hold emotions and trauma in our bodies; focusing on the connection between mind and body.
• Expressive therapies: using the creative arts such as art, dance, movement, music and play to facilitate healing and explore self-expression.

our GINA counsellors use a range of different types of therapy/counselling and will often use a blend under the trauma informed approach. To find out more about our counsellors and the approaches they use, please visit www.gina.uk.com

we know that taking the first step can be daunting. It takes courage. If you have any questions, queries or would like some more information about GINA, our counsellors and approaches, please get in touch.