

# Finding a Private Therapist of Color

**1** Start with a platform that's preconfigured to connect you with a Person of Color (POC) therapist.

**2** Further narrow your search by determining what you want to address in therapy.

In addition to the typical questions that will guide your search for a therapist – such as cost and insurance, scheduling, and other logistical factors – think about what pressing issues you hope to address in therapy.



**3** Expand your search to include “online therapy” to increase your chances of finding POC therapists.

If you can't find therapists of color who would be a good fit near you, consider expanding your search to include therapists who offer remote sessions. Even though the sessions are online, the therapist will still need to be licensed in your state of residence.

**4** Ask questions on the initial call(s) to determine fit with your unique POC experience.

It's a good idea to have an initial call to determine a) whether you mesh, and b) if they're receptive to all the complexities (race-related and otherwise) that might arise during your time together.

- Have they had clients in the past whose experiences and life situations are similar to yours?
- If you speak a certain language that's influenced your identity, are they familiar with/versed in/fluent in that language as well?
- Would they feel comfortable – or better yet, would they encourage – discussing heavy, nuanced topics like discrimination and aggression?



**5** After each initial interaction, assess whether you feel fully seen, if not then start back at number 1.



**6** Can't find a POC therapist who's available, affordable, or a great fit?

Consider expanding your search to culturally-competent providers. Ask questions to get a sense of their level of cultural sensitivity.

- Have you treated other African Americans?
- Have you received training in cultural competence or on African American mental health?
- How do you see our cultural backgrounds influencing our communication and my treatment?
- How do you plan to integrate my beliefs and practices in my treatment?

\*These tips are adapted from Zencare.co and the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)\*

A Fairfax County, VA, publication. 3/2021

Fairfax County is committed to nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in all county programs, services and activities. Reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request. For information, call 703-324-4600, TTY 711.

