

Taking the First Step: How to Find Culturally Competent Care National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

Finding a Mental Health Provider who can align with and adapt to your needs, identity and culture is one of the keys to healing.

When you meet with a provider,
don't hesitate to ask direct questions:



- Have you worked with Black clients or received cultural competency training?
- How will you incorporate my identity, values, and culture into my care?
- What is your understanding of racial health disparities and how they affect mental health?

After each session, reflect:



- Did I feel respected and heard?
- Did this provider communicate with cultural awareness?
- Was I seen as a whole person and not just a diagnosis?

**You have the right to ask these questions.
The right to advocate for yourself.
The right to make sure your culture or identity is honored.**

Therapy should never isolate or feel like an interrogation. It should feel like liberation.

- For many minority groups, it can be difficult to seek help. Fear, access and negative experiences are common barriers.
- When a provider cannot be sensitive or prefers to deliver a “one size fits all” approach, **Advocate** by speaking up with honesty and kindness.
- Example: "I felt unheard when you interrupted me during my explanation of my cultural beliefs." or "I noticed you used a term that does not describe my background, perhaps we could discuss this."
- Do not to give up on treatment. You are worth it!