

The Inclusive Therapist Checklist

RED FLAGS & GREEN LIGHTS TO LOOK FOR

Use this quick reference guide to help you recognize signs of culturally aligned therapy. A good therapist will respect, affirm, and adapt to your lived experience—across race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability status, neurodivergence, and more.



GREEN LIGHTS

- ☒ Uses inclusive language and your correct pronouns consistently
- ☒ Asks about your cultural background and honors your self-identity
- ☒ Is aware of their cultural factors and mindful of their own biases
- ☒ Acknowledges racism, discrimination, and cultural trauma as valid mental health stressors
- ☒ Explains how their approach is culturally responsive and trauma-informed
- ☒ Open to feedback and adapts their therapeutic style to your preferences
- ☒ Demonstrates awareness of how overlapping identities (intersectionality) shape your experience
- ☒ Provides accommodations if needed (e.g., telehealth, sensory-friendly space)



RED FLAGS

- ☐ Dismisses or avoids conversations about race, identity, or lived experience
- ☐ Makes assumptions based on appearances, stereotypes, or generalizations
- ☐ Expects you to fill in their cultural knowledge gaps without taking responsibility for their own learning
- ☐ Downplays or invalidates experiences of oppression or systemic discrimination
- ☐ Treats cultural competence as a one-time training or checkbox
- ☐ Becomes defensive or visibly uncomfortable when you raise concerns
- ☐ Offers advice that feels generic or disconnected from your cultural context
- ☐ Fails to acknowledge accessibility or disability needs

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