

Client Checklist for Safe Sexual Healing

If you are considering working with a sexual healer to release the pain and suffering you experience from sexual abuse, assault, rape, or molestation, there are several things to consider before you begin having sessions. Sexual healing is not a “retail fix” solution—where you can just walk in and purchase a remedy off the shelf and be done. Be wary of anyone promising simple solutions or techniques that will miraculously “make everything better” and heal your wounds. The vast majority of sexual healers are sincere and are following a calling to help others the way they have been helped to heal from their abuse.

Survivors of sexual abuse can be confident that there is effective help available and that they can return to a sense of wholeness and wellbeing if they are prepared for the process they must go through to get there. In a way, it’s like needing surgery to recover from an accident—it will be a process that will include some pain and discomfort, but if you don’t do it you’ll continue to suffer from your wounds.

Breakthroughs may happen quickly, but it takes time to integrate the changes at a mental, emotional, and somatic level. “After-care” is as important as what happens during sessions with your healer. Some of the items in the following list are about what you can do in follow-up to your sessions to help integrate your healing.

This checklist doesn’t claim to be all you need to consider and not all of these suggestions will apply to you, but it’s a good start. Use your good sense and intuition during the entire process and when in doubt—ask. Speak up and be your own best advocate. That can be difficult to do when you feel broken or emotionally destitute, however there is no one else who will be as good at protecting your best interests. A good sexual healer will be a close runner-up to that and be vigilant in keeping you on-track with your intention to heal. But ultimately you must find the strength and determination to follow through and watch out for yourself—beginning with diligently considering the responses to this checklist.

Are you ready?

There are several factors that will affect your ability to complete your healing process:

- **Emotional – Energetic**
There will be an emotional and energetic toll that you will experience. The process of discovering, identifying, releasing and healing from sexual abuse can feel like your world is being turned upside down. Your sexual healer will help you deal with the emotions that are unleashed, but you must be prepared for their impact on your life. Take stock of your circumstances and prepare yourself to go through what may be a very difficult process. It’s important to have support besides your healer (see below).
- **Physical**
Your body is a repository for emotional memory and will likely react to the healing treatments you receive—possibly in ways you don’t expect. It’s important to compliment your sexual healing by promoting optimum physical health. See if you can improve your diet, exercise, and sleep routines to support you through the process of healing.
- **Time**
Not only do you need time to have healing sessions, you must also give yourself

adequate time to process and integrate the effects of what your healing process reveals or triggers. Realize that you'll likely need "space" to be by yourself and work with the emotions and realizations that are discovered in your healing sessions. Also, there will likely be "homework" given to you by your healer that will greatly aid, and speed, your healing. Give yourself the time you need to do these follow-up exercises, meditations, and activities.

- **Cost**

There can be a significant cost involved to complete a program of healing—which could take several months or more. Each client is uniquely different, so the time it takes and the amount of sessions you need to complete your healing process are unknown until you accomplish your goal of returning to wholeness and empowered wellbeing. What is most important is that you find a sexual healer you can work and feel confident with—and budget your expenses to accommodate the cost.

- **Find a sexual healer you feel good about.**

It's important to interview a potential sexual healer to make sure you feel he/she is a good fit for you and you have a good intuitive impression about him/her. Even though you may have an impacted or diminished sense of trust in others due to surviving sexual abuse—your gut feeling is still your best indicator of what, or who, is best for you to work with. If you have reached the point where sexual healing is an imperative for you to do, then trust that your due diligence and intuition will lead you to the right person to work with.

Ask the potential sexual healer to provide you with his/her information on where they were trained (organization, school) and by whom, as well as how many years of experience that they have. Ask if they have any references from clients that they can share with you (these may or may not be available due to the highly confidential nature of sexual healing—but it doesn't hurt to ask). At the very least he/she should have testimonials (with abbreviated names) to share with you. If he/she belongs to an affiliate association you can check to see that he/she is in good standing.

Due to the burgeoning nature of sexual healing modality and its semi-illicitness in some areas of the world, sexual healers have had to operate "in the shadows" of society to provide their healing services. This circumstance is gradually changing with more public awareness and support. But until it is completely out in the open and accepted (like massage therapy is today) complete transparency may be difficult to come by. Do your best to find out the sexual healer's qualifications, experience and reputation—and trust your intuition.

- **Have a support system.**

- **Personal**

Establish a practice of working with your emotions and the revealed thought-patterns that are associated with your abuse wounds. Doing things like: meditation, journaling, and personal-nurturing (hot soaks, contemplative walks, body pampering, create art) are important to arrange and make time for.

- **Buddy System**

In addition to your healer, it's important to have a "buddy system" with at least one person who knows what you're going through and will be a resource of unconditional

support. Choose someone close to you (spouse, friend, relative) to be your personal advocate and confidant who you can confide in that won't judge you but will listen and be supportive of your process. Have regular "shares" with this person throughout your healing process.

- **Community**

If possible, seek out others who have also gone through sexual healing (local Meetup group, 12 step group, or the like) who can also be supportive and provide a safety net in the event that you need additional support or your personal advocate confidant is not available.

- **Get additional professional support.**

- **Therapist – Counselor – Coach**

In many cases, especially where there has been severe abuse, it is a good idea to work in-tandem with a licensed therapist, counselor, or coach who can give you additional support and feedback as well as another perspective on what is going on for you. If you can afford it and can arrange for one to be on "your team" make sure he/she will be supportive of your decision to work with a sexual healer. Otherwise, you may find that you are pulled in two directions with your healing process and create confusion instead of clarity and healing.

- **Doctor – Alt. Healer – Shaman**

Additional healing resources are sometimes warranted—especially when physical health issues are present. Consult with your doctor or other qualified healer to make sure you are not neglecting or omitting important medical treatments where these apply. Let your sexual healer know of any medications with side-effects that may influence your state of mind or emotions during sessions.

In addition, alternative healers or shamans may provide healing resources on other levels that allopathic physicians do not provide. It may be worth consulting with an alternative healer or shaman to receive non-traditional therapies that could be effective in helping your healing process (i.e. acupuncture, Reiki, myofascial release therapies).

- **Spiritual Advisor – Minister – Priest**

Clients do well to also consider the spiritual element of their healing process. Consult with your spiritual advisor, minister, or priest to get support with your spiritual needs and relationship to the higher power you ascribe to while you go through your sexual healing program.

- **Check in with your personal advocate.**

Important pre-and-after session care is to check in with your personal advocate confidant and let them know when and where you are having sessions. This is a safety step, not out of distrust of your healer (you should only work with someone you trust completely); it is in consideration of possible sudden emotional shifts that can result from sexual healing sessions. It's possible to become disoriented or suddenly fall into bouts of despair or depression due to mood swings caused by uncovering disturbing memories or from processing strong emotions. Checking-in especially after sessions will help you feel safe and supported regardless of whether or not you have a sudden shift in your state of being.

You should never leave a healing session in a psychologically fragmented state of shock. Your sexual healer should be able to accommodate that circumstance should it happen and remain with you until you feel grounded, competent and able to leave or until your buddy support arrives.

□ **Keep a journal.**

One of the most effective ways to facilitate your integration and healing is to keep a journal of your process; writing out your feelings, memories, and breakthroughs will help these process through your consciousness and either be released or learned from more completely.

□ **Take care of yourself.**

○ **Time for integration**

As mentioned above, it is important to give yourself time for integration and processing of what is coming up and revealed in your sessions. It's also important to have some "down time" when you are not processing, but are just able to "recharge your batteries" and rest.

○ **Sleep**

Related to the above is to have enough sleep. This is important for your mind, energy, and body to recuperate, balance, and recharge.

○ **Exercise**

Moving your body, stretching, and exercising your muscles will help move the impacted energy and clear embedded patterns stored somatically in the body. This will help speed and facilitate your healing.

○ **Bodywork**

As mentioned previously, bodywork is beneficial for helping to move impacted energy and clear your body of old patterns stored from embedded "knots" that from emotional wounds. Arrange for regular treatments to keep your physical clearing up to speed with the psychological, emotional, and energetic clearing that sexual healing sessions will stimulate.

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