

TEN FOUNDATIONS FOR SAFE TRAUMA THERAPY

From Rothschild, B (2000) *The Body Remembers: the psychophysiology of trauma and trauma treatment*. New York : Wiley.

1. First and foremost: establish safety for the client within and outside therapy.
2. Develop good contact between the therapist and client as a prerequisite to addressing traumatic memories or applying any techniques – even if that takes months or year.
3. Client and therapist must be confident in applying the “brake” before they use the “accelerator”.
4. Identify and build on the client’s internal and external resources.
5. Regard defenses as resources. Never “get rid” of coping strategies/defenses; instead create more choices.
6. View the trauma system as a “pressure cooker”. Always work to reduce – never to increase – the pressure.
7. Adapt the therapy to the client, rather than expecting the client to adapt to the therapy. This requires that the therapist be familiar with several theory and treatment models.
8. Have a broad knowledge of theory – both psychology and physiology of trauma and PTSD. This reduces errors and allows the therapist to create techniques tailored to a particular client’s needs.
9. Regard the client with his/her individual differences, and do not judge her for non-compliance or failure of an intervention. Never expect one intervention to have the same result with two clients.
10. The therapist must be prepared at times – or even for a whole course of therapy – to put aside any and all techniques and just talk with the client.

(Underlining mine)