



Your First Counselling Session

If this is your first time at counselling, or at a session with me, you might want to know what happens before you come. In fact, before you come, you need to think about why you are coming, and what you want to achieve. Let's look at that first.

Before you come to Counselling

People come to counselling for many reasons. You will see some of the main ones on the 'What is Counselling' webpage and the links from that page. Usually, clients want to talk something over, and improve something in their life. They are looking for change.

In fact, if you weren't looking for some kind of change, you probably wouldn't be considering counselling. You would be getting on with your life, happy and contented. But when something is not quite right, and you want help to either fix it or find ways to cope with it, counselling is then considered.

So before you come, please consider: 1) What is the problem that you want to discuss? and 2) What is the change that you are looking for? If you can have this clearly in mind before you come, you will save yourself a lot of time and money.

Sometimes clients come to counselling with no idea of why they are coming. This usually means that they need to spend several sessions sorting out what they want before work can start. Certainly, we can help you do that if that is what you want. But the more that you have considered this before you come, the sooner we can begin to work on things - and the easier it is on your budget.

We are well aware that the cost of counselling can be difficult for many people, and may even prohibit them from seeking help. So, we want to make it as easy as we can for you to experience the change you want as soon as possible. Some problems can be solved in a few sessions. Others take much longer. Once you have decided as much as you can why you are coming, the next step is to book your first session.

To do this, as you will see on the Counselling Booking Page, you complete an intake form and book your session online from the booking calendar. Having all this out of the way means that we can concentrate on your issues during the first session.

At Your First Counselling Session

You will have supplied some details on your booking form, as well as consenting to the conditions and confidentiality of counselling. We will ask you a few background questions at the start of your sessions, so that we have the information we need to begin work with you.

The next step is for you to tell me why you have come. This means explaining a problem and why it has brought you to counselling at this particular time. You can do this in your own way, in your own time.

First, you may just want to unload and share your feelings. And then, you may want some help to work through some difficulties in a practical way. Common feelings that bring clients to counselling include anxiety, depression or grief.

You may want strategies, ideas, help making decisions or any one of a number of things. For most clients, it is a combination of several things. I may ask questions when more information is needed. We look at your strengths and supports, your vulnerabilities and any other information relevant to your situation.

Setting Counselling Goals

As soon as we have sufficient information, we set your goals for counselling, What is it that you want to achieve? What do you want to be different from what it is now? It is important that the goals are achievable – something that is possible. This means they have to be about you, not someone else.

We can only ever change ourselves, not another person, no matter how much we may want to. But we can change how we react and respond. Often, we rate the goals out of 100 as they are now, so that we can measure progress periodically. Sometimes goals may change as more information is uncovered and more skills are developed.

Subsequent Counselling Sessions

Between sessions, you may be set tasks to carry out. At each session, progress will be evaluated and measured. You may learn new skills and new approaches. Psycho-education is an important aspect of good therapy. Understanding how what you are asked to do connects with your goals helps to keep you motivated and on track.

Also important is knowing how to maintain your gains and progress once your sessions have finished. In the end, we want you to be able to manage things for yourself so that you can deal with whatever comes up. You can, of course, always come back for help whenever you need it.

Counselling can be a rewarding experience and give you a new lease on life. If you would like to give it a try, why not book your first session now? Clients usually need several or more sessions to achieve their desired outcome, so why not take advantage of the discounts and book three or six sessions, each a week apart to start with? It could be a step forward into a happier, and more rewarding life. I look forward to hearing from you and working with you soon!

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