

Information Sheet: What is Counselling?

Counselling is an opportunity to talk about difficult issues - and your feelings about them - in a safe and confidential environment with a trainee practitioner who will listen in an accepting and non-judgmental way. Counselling helps you to examine areas in your life that are causing you distress, to identify what inner resources and what external support you already have, or can acquire for yourself, in order to reduce that distress. Sometimes, counselling simply means that you are able to see the same situation in a new light, which in itself helps. For more information about counselling visit the website of our professional body, the BACP - <https://www.bacp.co.uk/about-therapy/what-is-counselling/>

The types of presenting issues that people typically bring to counselling include:

- **Anger**
- **Anxiety and panic attacks**
- **Bereavement/loss**
- **Depression**
- **Disability/chronic ill-health**
- **Domestic and/or Sexual Abuse**
- **Relationship issues**
- **Self-esteem**
- **Significant life changes**
- **Stress**
- **Trauma**
- **Work-related issues**

What you can expect from us:

We aim to offer a 30-minute “triage” appointment within 28 days of receiving a referral. We offer a choice of face-to-face [F2F], telephone or online triage appointments with an experienced and qualified counsellor. The purpose of the triage is to ensure our services are right for you, and which is the most appropriate service (such as brief, or longer-term counselling or EMDR, which is a trauma treatment).

Following the triage appointment, we aim to offer you a first counselling appointment with one of our trainee practitioners as soon as possible (again normally within 28 days). Counselling sessions usually last 50 to 60 minutes and are normally held on a weekly basis. We offer face-to-face or remote (telephone or online) appointments.

All counsellors adhere to the Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) or the Code of Ethics and Professional Practice of the UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP). For details of our Confidentiality Policy please see our Confidentiality Statement Information Sheet, which can be downloaded from our website or to can request a copy to be sent to you.

What we expect from clients:

Clients are expected to attend sessions on a weekly basis for the duration of the counselling. If you are unable to attend a session, please let us know in advance so we can offer the appointment to someone else and help keep our costs to a minimum.

A few words about our trainee counsellors and therapists

All of our trainee counsellors and trainee therapists [*“practitioners”*] are studying at professionally-accredited counselling and psychotherapy training institutions. They have undergone a rigorous recruitment process in order to be accepted by their respective training providers before undergoing a further competency-based recruitment process before being offered a trainee placement at Community Counselling.

In order to apply to Community Counselling, trainees need to have a *“fitness to practice”* certificate from their training provider to confirm that they have a thorough understanding of counselling theory - as well as possessing the personal qualities demanded by their respective professional bodies, including a high level of personal insight and a strong commitment to continuing professional development [CPD] which is required by the counselling and psychotherapy professions.

Our trainee practitioners receive excellent support from their training providers, their external clinical supervisors, and from Community Counselling, made up of mentoring, line management and admin support, plus robust policies and procedures, which have been recognised by our professional body, the BACP.

Trainee Practitioners adhere to their relevant professional code of practice [such as the Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions (BACP) and the Code of Ethics and Professional Practice (UKCP) and are subject to Enhanced DBS checks.

Our monitoring and evaluation systems show that trainee practitioners achieve excellent clinical outcomes [such as reducing overall levels of emotional and psychological distress] and receive excellent feedback from clients:

I really enjoyed the sessions I had with [the trainee counsellor], I'm somebody that can sometimes find it difficult to open up but within the first session I brought something up that had been on my mind for many years and [the trainee counsellor] helped in more ways than she could possibly imagine.