

## What is counselling?



Counselling is a professional service that supports people to develop better understanding of themselves and others, address life difficulties and make the changes they want in their lives. Counselling is a confidential process primarily focused on empowering and enhancing psychological well-being to enable people to reach their full potential.

## How does counselling work?

Professional counsellors work within clearly contracted, ethical relationships to support people to explore and resolve life difficulties. Counsellors draw on a wide range of therapy Interventions and are highly skilled in working across the spectrum of life difficulties. Counsellors support, assist and guide clients to work through their issues addressing their needs at their own pace. This work can be short or long term to bring about effective change that enhances clients' wellbeing.



## What are the goals of counselling?

- To help you lead a happier life
- To help you clarify your challenging issues
- To work out what you hope to achieve
- To identify ways you might achieve this
- To provide support and advice as you work towards your goal

## How will counsellors support you?

Counsellors work with respect for their clients, their values, their beliefs, their uniqueness and their right to self-determination. Over time, the non-judgemental and accepting nature of counselling makes it possible to face painful experiences and unknown parts of self. Counselling takes people beyond where they can go by themselves.

## Why see a counsellor?



There are times when life can be difficult to cope with and we think about seeing a counsellor to help us find our way. Ironically, it is often at times like this that we doubt ourselves and wonder if counselling is what we really need.

Counsellors and psychotherapists work with current problems, crises, and longer term difficulties. They provide both short and long-term services according to people's needs. Counsellors and psychotherapists work with individuals, couples, families and groups, according to their training.

Some of the more common reasons why you might want to see a counsellor include:

- Chronic low-grade depression ('feeling blue').
- When a specific situation is affecting your ability to effectively carry out your daily life.
- When you are unable to make important decisions.

Some of the more serious reasons why people see counsellors include:

- Family or relationship difficulties.
- Coping with death, separation or divorce. Severe depression.
- Anxiety, either severe or chronic.
- Anger management.

### How do I get the most out of counselling?

Counselling is most effective when it is a collaborative process between counsellor and client. The following points may be helpful:

- Be prepared to share your thoughts and feelings openly with the counsellor
- Feel free to ask for clarification at any stage during the counselling process
- Complete any work between sessions suggested by your counsellor to the best of your ability



### Are there any risks in attending counselling?

During counselling a wide range of thoughts, feelings and reactions may be triggered. These can be positive or negative, and will vary in type and intensity according to individual differences and circumstances. You may notice some changes in your thinking, your emotions or in your physical wellbeing. This is usually a normal stage of the therapeutic process, and should be discussed with your counsellor.

### Confidentiality



Your counsellor has an ethical responsibility to maintain confidentiality. Therefore, everything you discuss with your counsellor is confidential and will not be disclosed without your consent. Occasionally, there are legal requirements where a counsellor is required to disclose information. For example if a court of law subpoenas information about you. In the unusual event of these and any other circumstances, your counsellor will make every effort to discuss any disclosure of information with you prior to doing so. In the event that your appointment needs to be rescheduled, care is taken to maintain confidentiality. Your counsellor will discuss with you the best way to contact you.

## **Counsellors' Qualifications, Training, Qualifications and Expertise**

Counsellors have in depth training over several years. Training is provided by universities and private training institutes. PACFA sets a high level of training standards and accredits counselling training programs. In addition to theories of change and human development, training programs also focus on personal development of counsellors and psychotherapists.

Counsellors have various ranges of qualifications and experience. Visit [Julia's page](#) for her qualifications and summary of experiences. Feel free to ask Julia more about her experience if you would like to.

## **Referrals**

Julia will not attempt to assist you in areas beyond her expertise. In such cases she will refer you to another professional with your consent.

## **Missed appointments**

There may be times that for some reason you are unable to attend. If so please notify me as early as you can.

Appointments cancelled or missed without 24 hours notice incur a fee equal to 100 % of the appointment fee.

The purpose of the fee is not punitive, but to make the work viable. To make sure Julia can offer a quality and trust worthy service, to allow the possibility of offering an appointment to someone else and to ensure that she does not have to resort to over scheduling.

When you meet with Julia you will be asked to read and sign the following consent form to work with Julia.

[Information and consent form](#) [PDF 110kb]