

Counselling, Wellbeing Department

How we can help



HOW COUNSELLING CAN HELP

Counselling is all about helping you find your own resources to cope. Seeking counselling isn't a weakness – it shows that you want to do something constructive about what is troubling you. Sometimes just putting your problems into words helps, and other times counselling can help you find a new perspective.

- Counselling gives you a space to get something off your chest and so lets you move on more freely.
- At times we all need someone to confide in. Sometimes this is too difficult to do with family, friends or academic staff, so speaking to a counsellor is a good alternative.
- Most problems assume a less frightening dimension once they are aired and then you can gain a new perspective and focus on the real issues.
- A clearer view of things may give you increased self-confidence and enable you to free yourself of unwanted thoughts and feelings like worry, anxiety and depression.
- If you get on well with the counsellor, this generates support for you to start looking at old problems in a new way and so gain insight.
- The counsellor may be able to make some specific suggestions for ways of helping yourself which you had not considered and then help you put them into practice.

WHAT A COUNSELLOR DOES

Careful listening is the biggest part of what all counsellors do. They make sure you've defined the problem areas in your own terms, and then help you work out what you want to do next. Some counsellors can be more active and suggest ways to investigate or resolve problems, while others focus more on moving at your own pace.

ADVICE COUNSELLORS WILL GIVE YOU

A counsellor will never tell you what you should do, nor will a counsellor ever make a moral decision about what you should do about any situation. A counsellor can, however, sum up their understanding or what you've told them in order to help you move on and form a plan. They can offer pointers about how others have dealt with problems and ask you whether you've thought of certain ideas. All these suggestions will be drawn from the counsellors training and their experience of what has helped others, but they're never a prescription for you: if you don't feel they're helpful, you don't have to take that action.

CONFIDENTIALITY

We handle the information that you discuss in counselling sessions very carefully, and when we do share information it's normally because our clients ask us to. It's very unusual for us to share information against a client's wishes. If you have worries about disclosing information, please mention it to us. We can talk about problems in general terms or advise on how our Code of Ethics might apply to your particular situation before you disclose anything. If you absolutely don't want to disclose information, you could also consider getting anonymous help over the phone. The Samaritans (116 123) can be a very good starting point for the number of other helplines. You can find further details of [emergency and crisis support here](#).

WHERE DO I START?

If you'd like to come in and speak to one of our counsellors, the first thing to do is [make an appointment](#). Following your initial counselling session (which we will usually arrange in no more than 2-3 days) there may be a short wait until you can be booked in to return to see your counsellor for a further session(s). Due to high demand for counselling we periodically operate a minimal waiting list.