

What to Expect from Counseling

Catalyst Counseling

**** So, what is counseling?***

Counseling is focused conversation about things you want to change in your life. Counseling is most effective when it occurs in a relationship in which trust and care are established. Friends and relatives provide a type of counseling, as do clergy, teachers, and many others. Psychotherapists are different from others who may offer counseling because of our capacity to maintain objectivity and privacy and our extensive training in psychology and human behavior.

**** If I go to counseling, does it mean that there is something wrong with me?***

You have sought out counseling because you feel uncomfortable with some aspect of your life. You are demonstrating courage and wisdom by seeking help to gain new skills or perspectives. Some people struggle because of events in their lives. Others may struggle because of biological and situational reasons. We will work together to identify the sources of your distress and address them with the appropriate resources, including referrals to other professionals or agencies.

**** What can I expect from my counselor?***

You can expect someone who:

- will maintain the highest ethical and legal standards of confidentiality,
- is interested in listening to your concerns,
- is interested in helping you develop a better understanding of these concerns so that you may deal more easily and effectively with them,
- will take you seriously,
- will be open to discuss concerns,
- will be willing to answer questions about the therapeutic relationship and her approach to counseling,
- will help you explore options and discover strategies toward change,
- will help, but will not do for you what you are capable of doing for yourself.

**** What sort of time commitments do I need to make for counseling?***

I strive to offer therapeutic treatment as efficiently as possible and am accustomed to helping people within 12-16 sessions and less. However, some issues require longer term therapy. How many sessions I will offer you will depend on the severity and nature of your presenting concerns and on your financial resources, including health insurance coverage. I will give you an estimate of how many sessions it may take to address your goals after the third session.

**** What can I do to benefit most from counseling?***

- Be ready to focus on a specific problem or issue.
- Set clear and specific goals.
- Attend your sessions regularly and take an active part in them.
- Let your counselor know if you will be late or are unable to attend a session.
- Talk about what is bothering you as openly and honestly as you can.

- Complete any tasks or homework assignments which you may be asked to do.
- Be open to trying new or different approaches to dealing with your concerns.
- Talk openly with your counselor about your progress in counseling. Your counselor is most interested in *you* benefiting from counseling. There are lots of different ways to provide counseling and your counselor can modify her methods to be most effective for you.
- Apply your new insights and growth in your daily activities.