

Counselling



How does counselling work?

Your counsellor will draw on a range of techniques and ideas to find a way of working that suits you. Some approaches will take a longer-term view, gradually unravelling current problems and tracing them back to past experiences; others are aimed at working in the present and developing tools to help you manage your situation better. Talking through what is troubling you with a trained counsellor can lead to a better understanding of yourself and your problems, and help you to find new and more effective ways of dealing with them.

What training and experience does a counsellor have?

At The Sara Lee Trust, all counsellors hold, as a minimum, a Counselling Diploma, and they regularly undertake additional psychotherapeutic training. Trust counsellors belong to the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and/or the UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP), they receive monthly clinical supervision, and are fully insured.

Getting started

The first appointment is an opportunity for you to have a taste of what counselling might be like and to start to explore your problems. Your counsellor will probably ask you some questions to try to understand what you are experiencing and what you hope to achieve through the counselling process. At the end of the session, you might want to book another appointment, or your counsellor might suggest other appropriate therapies or services for you.

How long does a session last, how many will I have, and how often?

Counselling sessions last up to 50 minutes. For some people one or two sessions are all they need, for others ongoing weekly sessions might be recommended. The number and frequency of sessions is something that you will decide with your counsellor and review together every few weeks.

Confidentiality

What you discuss with your counsellor is confidential. There are just two exceptions to this rule:

- At least once a month counsellors have 'clinical supervision' during which they discuss their caseload with an experienced professional in confidence, to help them manage their caseload and improve their practice.

Therapies should not be regarded as an alternative to medical treatment prescribed by your doctor.

- If your counsellor is concerned about risk of harm to yourself or another they may consider it is necessary to involve other professionals. Where this is the case, they would endeavour to discuss this with you first.

Couples and family counselling

If you would like to have counselling with a loved one, instead of on your own, couples and family counselling is available.

Bereavement counselling

For those needing support following the death of a loved one, please contact St Michael's Hospice Bereavement Service on 01424 456361 or by emailing bereavement@stmichaelshospice.com

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