

ACIS

WHAT IS COUNSELLING?

acis

ABERDEEN
COUNSELLING
& INFORMATION
SERVICE

January 2023

Counselling gives you the opportunity to talk with a trained person who will work with you as you make changes in your life. The counsellor offers a therapeutic space to help you deal with the difficulties you are experiencing and find a way to move forward.

“The one to one counselling gave me the opportunity to say what I was feeling out loud, and being listened to allowed me to see other solutions and identify inner strengths and the ability to cope.” (Client quote)



What can ACIS counselling offer?

- an Initial Meeting, to go through the service offered and discuss any questions you have about counselling and how it may be helpful so a way forward can be agreed;
- a safe space where you can be yourself and be heard;
- a place to look at new ways of coping with difficult experiences, distress or conflict;
- somewhere to explore the emotions that you attach to your experiences;
- support as you come to terms with loss or change in your life;
- confidentiality, which is taken very seriously by the agency.



How does counselling work?

- sharing your thoughts and feelings about issues that are bothering you without fear of being judged can be a real relief especially with someone outside of the situation;
- ACIS counselling is based on the relationship that you form with your Counsellor; the warmth, acceptance and honesty within the relationship helps to build a foundation of trust;
- the counsellor will work with you as you reach your own conclusions, move forward and take action for yourself.



How many sessions will I be offered?

- The number of sessions offered will be discussed at the Initial Meeting (usually up to 10 weeks). You will have the same Counsellor at the same time each week for the contracted number of sessions; and
- the counselling session lasts up to 50 minutes.



Your first counselling session

- if your session is on the phone, your counsellor will call at the arranged time on the day (withheld number); in person, you are expected to attend the Centre in time for the session.
- the counsellor will take some time in the first session to talk about how you are going to work together and to discuss issues like timing and confidentiality;
- this is a good time to bring any questions or worries you may have about ACIS and how the counsellor will work with you;
- you may be confused and unclear about how to start your session and it may help to think about questions like –
 - “Am I really ready to talk?”
 - “How long have I felt like this?”
 - “How much is this interfering with my life?”
 - “Why am I seeking help now?”
 - “What do I want to change by coming to counselling?”
- you may choose to bring up feelings and issues

Cancellations

- clients are expected to give the agency at least **24 hours notice** when you are unavailable for a session as your counsellor has given up their time specifically to speak with you;
- Your session will be counted as a missed session if you give late notice or not attend an appointment. Your sessions will be given to someone else if consecutive/frequent appointments are missed or cancelled.



Grievance and complaints

If you have any concerns about your counselling please contact ACIS Management by phoning 01224 573892; or e-mailing: acis.cm@mhaberdeen.org.uk

Cost

- ACIS is a charity so we rely heavily on donations to be able continue to offer our service now and in the future;
- donations are gratefully accepted by Bank transfer or by cheque, made payable to Mental Health Aberdeen (our preferred options), PayPal or Just Giving.

Confidentiality

- the content of your sessions are kept as confidential as possible;
- limits to confidentiality will be explained at the Initial Meeting;
- all ACIS counsellors are required to keep brief notes of sessions;
- ACIS is an organisational member of BACP and COSCA (Recognised Organisation) and adheres to their ethical frameworks.

Safety

ACIS reserves the right to take action in the event of any unacceptable or threatening behaviour over the telephone or towards anyone in the Centre.

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MENTAL HEALTH ABERDEEN
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