

# Counselling

## What is counselling?

Counselling provides a regular time and space for people to talk about the issues they are facing and explore difficult feelings in an environment that is dependable, free from intrusion and confidential.

Counselling is not about offering advice, but rather it can help a person to gain insight into their thinking, feelings and their ways of coping, and to consider if these are helping or hindering their ability to cope.

The counsellor is a highly-trained professional who will do their best to help a person to look at their issues, and to identify the right course of action for them, either to help them resolve their difficulties, if that is possible, or help them find ways of coping. Sessions usually take place either once a week or once a fortnight.

Another form of therapy that is available is Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (sometimes shortened to CBT), a talking treatment designed to help people manage distressing feelings such as sadness, worry, anxiety and panic. These feelings can be quite natural when people are ill. If they persist or begin to interfere with a person's everyday life, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy may help.

The therapy is based on a simple principle – the idea that how we think about a situation affects how we react to it. Our actions, in turn, affect how we think and feel. The therapy involves discussing thoughts, feelings, behaviours and physical symptoms which occur at times of distress or upset. The therapist encourages the person to look for more helpful ways of thinking or behaving, as this can make a big difference to the way they feel and how they cope with different situations.