

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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Counselling Methods

I have been trained to use a variety of counselling methods, with a focus mainly on Cognitive Behavioural and Family Systems approaches. In simple terms, this means that I take into account the issues and patterns of behaviour within your relationships, as well as what is going on inside you. The counselling you will be receiving may be short-term or long-term. I will try to help you to move from focusing on problems to focusing on solutions to those problems. The work of putting this new focus into practice in your situation will be up to you.

Philosophy

I believe that it is fair for clients to be informed of what viewpoint on life their counsellor holds to, as the counsellor's personal value system will influence how he or she counsels others. Therefore, in fairness to you, I am letting you know that the counselling I do will be influenced by my belief and value system as a Christian. It does not mean that I will be constantly quoting from the Bible. Also, you do not need to be or become a Christian in order for me to counsel you. I respect and accept others, even when their beliefs are not my own, and will work with you in accordance with that respect. However, if at any point in the counselling process you become uncomfortable with receiving counselling from someone who works from the perspective of the Christian worldview, I will be happy to refer you to someone else.

Confidentiality

Everything that is discussed in counselling is confidential. This means that information shared in the session is not shared with others outside of the professional relationship. It is important for you to know that I sometimes work with a team, for your benefit as well as my own support and accountability. Therefore, some information from the sessions may be shared in full confidentiality between myself and my supervisor and/or professional peer support group. All issues shared in these situations are completely confidential between the professionals involved, and will not be shared with others, or made public.

The only time when I will not be able to keep confidentiality is when an issue comes up that I am required by law to report, such as any suspicion of abuse to a minor child or vulnerable person, danger of suicide, actual current suicide attempts, threats to the life of another person, misconduct by a regulated health professional, or release of information ordered by a court of law. Relational conflict, strong personal distress and/or risky behaviour are issues that are addressed in confidence within counselling sessions and are NOT reported, unless the situation escalates to the point that there is serious risk of harm that would require other intervention.

Confidentiality also means that, if I do not know you from another setting, I will not take the initiative in greeting you if we ever meet in public. You are free to greet me or not in public, as you wish. However, it is your own responsibility whether or not you wish people to know that you are seeing or have seen me for counselling. I need your consent before I will share any information about your issues with anyone else.

Appointments

Appointments are usually scheduled and charged for 1 hour sessions. Longer sessions can be arranged, if needed, and will be charged accordingly. If you wish to cancel an appointment, you must do so at least 24 hours before your scheduled appointment time, or you will be charged for the session, except in the case of unavoidable circumstances, such as an emergency or bad weather. If you cannot keep your appointment, please contact me as soon as possible to inform me of what has happened. All appointments made to deal with a crisis situation must be kept, even if you think the crisis is past -- NO EXCEPTIONS.

Fees

Fees are set at \$100 plus HST (\$113 total) per hour for online, telephone and in person counselling sessions. Other rates as listed apply to online journal consultations, as well as to intensive retreats and self-help courses.

Those who are covered by EAP or other funding do not pay for sessions, as I bill these sources directly for payment, unless you have arranged to be reimbursed personally by your funding source. If you have insurance coverage for a Registered Psychotherapist, you will need to pay me directly, then seek reimbursement from your insurance company in accordance with your benefit plan, as I am unable at this time to bill insurance companies directly. If there are circumstances that make the set rate a hardship for you, we can discuss this and hopefully come to a satisfactory solution.

Payment for sessions is usually made at the time of the session, unless otherwise arranged with the counsellor. If you are late for a scheduled session, you will be charged for the whole session, even if you are not present for the entire scheduled time, as you have reserved that time. If you choose to proceed with an extended session beyond your scheduled appointment time, it is expected that you will also pay for the extended session time, not just the original amount of time scheduled.

Phone Calls and Internet Contact

Sometimes I do counselling on the phone or via the internet. You may find out more about this option on my website <http://www.gracecounselling.com>, or email me at info@gracecounselling.com. Lengthy phone sessions (longer than 5-10 minutes per day) are charged as counselling sessions and you will be billed for them accordingly, as are lengthy emails in which you address issues that take significant time to answer. If it is impossible for you to meet with me in person, phone counselling or online counselling sessions may be arranged, if necessary.

My counselling numbers are picked up only by myself. One number rings into my home in the Kincardine area (519-368-4277). I also have a private Owen Sound number (226-909-0749). The best number to reach me at is my cell phone (519-386-4208). If I do not answer, please leave your phone number on the answering service, and I will return your call as soon as possible. At times, my confidential administrator may pass on messages for me. Any information shared in this context will remain confidential in accordance with the Confidentiality and Permission Form.

Online and Telephone Counselling

When online or telephone interactions are the mode through which counselling sessions are conducted, I make sure that your privacy is protected, in accordance with privacy laws and confidentiality, and that you have my focused attention for that time. It is your responsibility to make sure that you are in a safe and private location for these sessions, with minimal interruptions or distractions, so that we can focus on the counselling process together, as well as that you protect your own personal information.

Home Visits

In most cases, counselling sessions are not done in your home. However, there may be some circumstances where home visits may be beneficial. Should this be the case for you, please give the home session your attention and limit your response to interruptions such as the phone or door bell. Couple, family and women's individual sessions can be done in the home, if necessary. I do not do individual sessions for men in their homes.

Professional Contacts

Please inform me if you are seeing or begin to see other professionals. This is important so that we as professionals do not interfere with each other's therapy or treatment of you. We need to be able to co-operate for your benefit.

Regulation and Accountability

Please be aware that, as I am a Registered Psychotherapist with the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario, my practice is conducted in accordance with the Code of Ethics and standards of this regulatory body. As my practice is located within Ontario, Canada, it is governed by the laws of this jurisdiction. If you are not located within Ontario, Canada, I also seek to be informed and abide by any conditions of law in your jurisdiction that may apply to our interactions in counselling.