

SEEKING A PRIVATE THERAPIST

Seeking support from a private counsellor can be a difficult task, especially if you have never had counselling before. Our counselling co-ordinator has put together a handy guide to give you a step by step guide to finding a private counsellor as well as a guide to common terminology used to describe the different counselling methods used.

How to find a private counsellor:

- 1) All Counsellors working ethically must belong to a governing body.
 - a. There are many governing bodies that counsellors belong to but the 2 main ones to focus on within the counselling profession are either UKCP (United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy) or BACP (British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy)
- 2) You can use their websites to search for a therapist through one of the following links:
 - a. **UKCP:** <https://www.psychotherapy.org.uk/find-a-therapist/>
 - b. **BACP:** <https://www.bacp.co.uk/>
- 3) Once you have set your search parameters on the website and have a list of counsellors.
 - a. read their profiles
 - b. visit their website
 - c. get a feel for what the offer
 - d. most importantly trust your gut instinct on how you feel about what they have said
 - e. Add them to your 'like' list
- 4) Check their qualifications and modality of counselling- see below for an overview of each. Most counsellors will offer a range, and this means the counselling can be client lead and they can work with you in a way that suits you.
- 5) Discard any that are out of your price range or don't offer sessions at the times you need.
- 6) Once you have a list to contact:
 - a. send them an email
 - b. ask whatever questions you feel you need/want to too
 - c. get a sense of if they are the counsellor for you.

- d. You may want to tell them a little about what you want to support with. See what responses you get; how do they feel? Have they responded quickly and fully to your enquiry? Again, discard any that don't feel right.

Remember you will be paying for this service so do as much communication beforehand as you want, with as many as you want. If you feel confident on the phone you might want to give them a call and see how they sound, you may book an initial assessment with them (some counsellors offer a free appointment).

Most importantly, you are in control, it's fine to have meetings with a few counsellors before you decide.

Modalities of counselling:

Many counsellors will offer various modalities of counselling on their profiles and their websites, there are many different styles and modalities of counselling but below is an overview of the most common styles and are a reliable place to start....

INTEGRATIVE

An integrative approach to counselling and psychotherapy involves **drawing upon more than one modality**. The blending of relevant theory and interventions as an approach is formed to suit the needs of the client. Integrative counselling can offer a tailored approach for working with clients. The different approaches will be mainly drawn from the following

PSYCHODYNAMIC

The psychodynamic approach is derived from psychoanalysis but focuses on immediate problems to try to provide a quicker solution. It stresses the importance of the unconscious and past experience in shaping current behaviour. A therapist will aim to build an accepting and trusting relationship, encouraging you to talk about your childhood relationships with your parents and other significant people. It also uses similar techniques to psychotherapy, including free association, interpretation and especially transference, where feelings you experienced in previous significant relationships are projected onto the therapist.

PERSON CENTRED

Person or client-centred therapy is based on the view that everyone has the capacity and desire for personal growth and change, given the right conditions. Rather than being seen as the expert and directing the therapy, the counsellor offers unconditional positive regard, empathy and congruence to help you come to terms with any negative feelings and to change and develop in your own way.

COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY (CBT)

CBT aims to help you change the way you think (cognitive) and what you do (behaviour). Rather than looking at past causes, it focuses on current problems and practical solutions to help you feel better now.

CBT works on the principle that the way we think about situations affects the way we feel and behave.

If we view a situation negatively, we may experience negative emotions and feelings which lead us to behave in an unhelpful way. Your therapist will help you identify and challenge any negative thinking so you can deal with situations better and behave in a more positive way

CBT can be helpful for depression, anxiety, stress, phobias, obsessions, eating disorders and managing long term conditions.

SOLUTION -FOCUSED BRIEF THERAPY

This therapy promotes positive change rather than dwelling on past problems. Practitioners will encourage you to focus positively on what you do well, set goals and work out how to achieve them. Just three or four sessions may be beneficial.

COGNITIVE ANALYTIC THERAPY (CAT)

CAT looks at your past experiences and relationships to understand why you think, feel and act as you do. It relies on forming a trusting relationship with your therapist, who will help you make sense of your situation and find new, healthier ways to cope with your problems. CAT is a time-limited therapy, typically lasting around 16 weeks.

GESTALT THERAPY

The name Gestalt is derived from the German for 'whole' or 'pattern'. It looks at the individual as a whole, and within their surroundings, rather than breaking things into parts. Practitioners help you to focus on the here and now and your immediate thoughts, feelings and behaviour to better understand how you relate to others and to situations. This can help you find a new, positive perspective on problems and bring about changes in your life. Gestalt therapy often includes acting out scenarios and dream recall, and is effective in treating issues such as anxiety, stress, addiction, tension and depression.

HUMANISTIC THERAPY

This approach focuses on the individual as a whole. It encourages people to think about their feelings and take responsibility for their thoughts and actions. The emphasis is on self-development and achieving your highest potential rather than on

problematic behaviour. Gestalt therapy, person-centred therapy, transactional analysis and transpersonal therapy are all humanistic approaches.

EYE MOVEMENT DESENSITISATION and REPROCESSING (EMDR)

EMDR was developed to resolve symptoms resulting from disturbing and traumatic life experiences. It is particularly used in the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder.

EMDR is thought to imitate the psychological state that we enter when in rapid eye movement (REM) sleep. Studies show that when in REM sleep we are able to make new associations between things very rapidly. EMDR is designed to tap into this high-speed processing mode that we all have, helping the brain to process the unresolved memories and make them less distressing.

For a full list see the link below:

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/about-therapy/types-of-therapy/>