



FAQS - Questions about Counseling?

Fielding your Questions

Will counseling do me any good?

Most people find counseling to be helpful. Having someone outside of your circle of friends and family to offer a more objective point of view can be quite beneficial. At a minimum, counseling should provide at least two things. First, counseling provides a safe place to talk over difficulties with someone who has experience helping people with their difficulties. Second, counseling generally adds some clarity about decision-making options and provides a healthy place to brainstorm ideas about their next steps.

How long does counseling take?

Since counseling is used for so many different situations it is difficult to predict exactly how long it will take. Nevertheless we can predict some things. For example, right away your therapist will be making an assessment of your issues and needs. Once that assessment is complete, he or she should be able to give you an estimate about the time frame and frequency of meetings. This should be a topic you freely discuss with your therapist as you go along.

How confidential is counseling?

Any therapist licensed in the State of Illinois is bound by a Code of ethics that limits the disclosure of information to any outside person or entity without your express written consent. There are a few legal limits to confidentiality, and you should make sure that your counselor discusses them with you during the first session.

Will my insurance cover the costs of counseling?

Many health insurance policies have some coverage for outpatient mental health but most expect that you will pay some portion of the cost -- either as a co-pay, or as a percentage of the fee. To find out the details of your coverage, you should call your insurance carrier. If you do not have insurance, you may be able to find an agency or a counselor who will adjust their fees based on your income. You should feel free to ask about fees when you call to make your first appointment.

What about medication?

Medications can be a useful tool in the treatment of certain disorders. When you utilize medication, you should be fully informed about the benefits of the medication, as well as its know side effects. You should expect that your counselor would work closely with your physician to find the most effective medication available for your symptoms.

How do I find the right counselor?

The best way to find a counselor is through a personal referral. Physicians and pastors, and school personnel are often in a position to make referrals to mental health professionals. You will find that most of them have a list of therapists (with various specialties) who they have come to know and trust. You can also check with family and friends. To find a therapist who participates in your insurance plan, call your insurance company or check their online resources.

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