



Counselling Contract

It is really important when working with your Counsellor to be aware of the boundaries that contain this relationship; this is in order to keep you safe and to ensure that your Counsellor is working in a transparent way. We recognise that the term contract can feel very legal however this is just a term we use to try to express a working agreement. During counselling, it is important for you to expect the following:

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is held within the agency unless your counsellor believes that you or someone else is at serious risk of harm. If this was the case your counsellor would let you know that they would need to pass this information to be shared with appropriate authorities.

Supervision

Your counsellor will attend supervision, this is to ensure that they are working in your best interest. During supervision your anonymity will be protected.

Time

Sessions will last for 50 minutes, you may notice during your session the counsellor glancing at the clock this is to ensure that the session keeps within the appropriate time boundary. Sessions will usually take place at the same time on the same day each week.

Missed sessions

We understand that there may be times you are unable to attend your planned session. If you need to cancel a session it is important to ring your counsellor to let them know that you are not able to attend. Due to our extensive waiting list if you miss two sessions without informing your counsellor unfortunately your place will need to be withdrawn. For short term work of up to 9 weeks, we require these to be completed within a maximum of a 12 week period. For long term work, we require this work to be for approximately 12 months and may be shorter depending on conversations between you and your counsellor. In extenuating circumstances, your counsellor can request extensions with Number 22's Director.

As a charity it is important for us to let you know that whilst our service is free of charge to our clients, we do a huge amount of fundraising in order to deliver counselling sessions. Please help us to continue to offer our services by attending as many of your sessions as you can so that as many clients as possible can benefit. If you are able to make a donation to Number 22, we would be very grateful.

Holidays

Counsellors will inform you two weeks in advance of any holidays they are due to take we would ask you to please respect them with the same information.

Counselling orientation

Most of the counsellors in this agency work as person centred counsellors the remainder work from a humanistic perspective. This is explained in more detail in our Practice Policy.

BACP code of conduct

The agency is an accredited member of the BACP; as such, all of our counsellors adhere to their Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions

Notes

All counsellors will write minimal notes about your sessions. These will be stored safely and anonymously. You have the right under the Data Protection Act to see your notes, if you wish to do this please speak to your counsellor and the notes will be made available to you within two weeks.

Know your rights

You have many rights regarding your personal data, including knowing what information we hold on you. You also have the right to make changes to the data we hold on you and you have the right to be forgotten, this means that if you wanted to see your notes you have the right to do so and to change what we have written about you. Under the right to be forgotten you have the right to ask us and we will comply, to destroy your notes as soon as you finish counselling.

Complaints Procedure

We aim to offer a service which is safe for each client. The agency follows the ethical framework for Counselling Professions as a member of the British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists. If a client is unhappy with any aspect of the service they may contact the agency Director to discuss particular concerns. If following this discussion they want the complaint to go further they can contact the agency's Executive Committee. Alternatively if the client chooses they can contact the BACP directly and inform them of their complaint.

Practice Policy

Number 22, provides free person centred/humanistic or integrative counselling. We predominantly provide free one to one sessions, but in schools we also provide support groups and deliver groups on a range of topics associated with emotional wellbeing. We also provide an Advocacy service which is delivered for the support of young people and children who are either looked after by the Local Authority or where there is a concern about their safety.

The agency counsels and functions from a person centred perspective. That means when a counsellor is working with a client it is the client who decides what they want to work on. Within the agency as a whole it is people who matter.

The core conditions of respect, empathy and unconditional positive regard, we hope underpin not only all our counselling and advocacy sessions but also everyone's interactions with each other.

Counselling is a journey and the client and the counsellor discuss how long or how short that journey needs to be. The session itself lasts for usually 50 minutes but the number of sessions will depend on whether the client has requested long or short term counselling. Short term counselling lasts up to 9 sessions long term counselling is restricted to one year and will end when the client and counsellor feel it is appropriate but regular reviews will take place at a maximum of 20 session blocks.

Within counselling, clients find their own solutions. Counsellors cannot give you your answers, however counsellors can and do enable you to discover for yourself what you feel you need to do. This is a respectful stance which acknowledges your ability rather than seeing the counsellor as the expert. Sometimes this stance can feel frustrating, but when we find out our own answers for ourselves they have more meaning.

The service is confidential, however there may be times when that confidentiality needs to be broken, this will be discussed with you by your counsellor when you first come for counselling.

We are an organisational accredited member of the BACP and as such adhere to its Ethical Framework. All the counsellors in the service are bound by the principles, values and personal moral qualities as laid down in the Ethical Framework for The Counselling Profession.