



Why Seek Counselling?

What is Counselling?

Professional counselling services are often viewed with mystery. Some think that counselling is being told how to solve life's problems or images of reclining on a couch and talking may come to mind. The truth is a little different. Counselling is meant to be a safe place where people can speak about their issues and explore possible solutions. It is a cooperative endeavour with both parties working together to move towards identified goals. People can learn skills to cope with life's stresses or address past experiences, gaining perspective and making positive life changes.

Myths and Truths about Counselling¹

Myth	Truth
I can handle this myself.	While you have a large role to play, counsellors provide tools, insights, or support as you work towards healthier outcomes.
Counselling is only for those who have extreme needs.	Most extreme needs take time to develop. Getting help earlier prevents your concerns from taking their toll in increasing areas of your life.
Time will heal all wounds.	While time can decrease the strength of wounds, this is not always the case. Time can allow wounds to fester and spread its impact in your life.
There's no difference between talking to my friend and seeing a counsellor.	Counsellors are trained professionals who have developed skills to assist people. Similar to seeing a doctor for physical ailments, counsellors can help with emotional and psychological struggles we all face.

When should I seek Help?ⁱ

There is no hard and fast rule about when someone should seek professional counselling. Here are some indicators that counselling may be beneficial for you or for a family member:

- Loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities.
- Changes in eating or sleeping patterns.
- Use of alcohol and/or drugs to cope.
- Desire or thoughts of ending your life.
- Lack of desire or energy to engage in daily activities (e.g. work, school, etc.).
- Unwanted and seemingly uncontrollable thoughts or voices.
- Difficulty coping with emotions.

Roadblocks to Seeking Counselling²

Roadblock	Passkey
Trust: it can be difficult to trust someone that you don't know with the struggles that you face.	Trust in counselling takes time to build. You are in control of how much you share and when you share it.
Stigma: If other people find out I go to counselling, they will think I'm "crazy," "weak," or that something is wrong with me.	No one has to know that you are seeking counselling services. You are in charge of this information. Contrary to popular opinion, seeking help for your struggles is a sign of strength.
Money: I don't have enough money to do this.	Look into whether your insurance can cover the costs. If not, subsidized fees can be discussed with counsellors at Christian Counselling Services.
Time and Energy: I have a lot to do and I'm too tired anyway.	Finding time and adjusting your schedule to work on your personal growth and healing can increase your energy in the future.
Loved ones don't always understand that there is a serious concern.	Not everyone will understand your desire to seek help. Some may discourage you from asking for help and tell you that it will all be okay. Entrust specific, trusted individual(s) with your desire to seek professional help and draw on him or her for support.

What to look for when seeking a Counsellor³

The first counsellor you meet may not be the best fit for you and your needs. It is important to know that **you have a choice about who your counsellor is**. Keep in mind that because one person didn't meet your needs doesn't mean that another person won't be able to help you. Counsellors have different perspectives and ways in which they approach helping their clients. It may take some time to find someone with whom you feel safe and whose approach to counselling is helpful for you. **Here are some helpful points to consider:**

- Do you feel like you can trust this person? Do you feel comfortable and safe?
- Does their treatment orientation fit for you?
- Do you feel like he or she truly cares about you and your concerns?
- Do you feel accepted and understood?
- Do you feel listened to? Do you feel heard? Can she or he pick up on your feelings?

What to Expect when Seeing a Counsellorⁱⁱⁱ

Developing a therapeutic connection is key to the first few sessions with a new counsellor. You can come prepared to share about your concerns, and possibly your family, and mental and physical health history. Being open and honest is helpful for you to build a good connection.

It is helpful for you to **have an idea of what you would like to accomplish**. Your counsellor can help clarify the direction you want to go. This allows you to set benchmarks and determine whether you are making progress.

Therapy length is something you and your counsellor should discuss early on. It is often determined by your goals but can be revisited at any time. If you feel you have reached your goals, there is no obligation to continue working with your counsellor. This can also be influenced by practical limitations such as insurance or funds.

The work you do in between your sessions is key to achieving success. Your life is lived outside the walls of the office and will include some hard work as you begin to implement the tools that you learn in session.

What does the Bible say about Seeking a Counsellor?

While the role of counsellor or psychologist is a relatively modern development, seeking wise counsel has long been a staple in the lives of many men and women. In the Bible, we see examples of both men and women seeking and giving guidance. Moses found himself in a situation where his work was too much for him. Seeing his exhaustion, Moses' father-in-law counselled him to share his workload with trustworthy individuals (Exodus 18:13-23). Deborah, a judge of Israel, settled disputes at the Palm of Deborah (Judges 4:5). King David was surrounded by counsellors (e.g. Nathan, II Samuel 7). While the idea of seeking help for mental health and wellness is not clearly seen from these examples, the idea of seeking direction when in need is clear. The Book of Proverbs calls people to seek wisdom and to look to the teaching of the wise (Proverbs 13:14).

The services provided at Christian Counselling Services combines godly counsel with relevant psychotherapeutic knowledge and techniques to minister to the whole person: heart, mind, and soul. Our desire is to facilitate hope and healing in the lives of those who choose to entrust us with their concerns.

For more information or counselling support, please contact:

Christian Counselling Services

<http://www.saskatoonccs.com/>

(306) 244-9890

chcounselling@sasktel.net

¹ Tips for getting help for mental illnesses (2013). Canadian Mental Health Association. Retrieved from <http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/factsheet/getting-help-for-mental-illnesses>

² Tartakovsky, M. (2013). What prevents people from seeking mental health treatment. Retrieved from <https://psychcentral.com/blog/archives/2013/01/14/what-prevents-people-from-seeking-mental-health-treatment/>

³Smith, M., & Segal, J. (2017). Finding a therapist who can help you heal. Retrieved from <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/emotional-health/finding-a-therapist-who-can-help-you-heal.htm>