



CORK COUNSELLING CLINIC
PSYCHOTHERAPY · MEDIATION · COACHING



INDIVIDUAL COUNSELLING OVERVIEW



Introduction to Individual Counselling

Embarking on the journey of counselling and psychotherapy can often be accompanied by a mix of anxiety and apprehension, especially if it is your first time seeking professional help. It is entirely natural to feel a sense of nervousness; after all, you are about to share intimate, personal aspects of your life with someone you have not met before. Recognizing these feelings as a normal part of the process, we have created this brochure to provide you with a clearer understanding of what to expect during your initial session and to help alleviate some of the anxiety you might be experiencing beforehand.

Our clients come from diverse backgrounds, each presenting with unique issues and concerns. Despite these differences, many clients share similar questions and feelings when they first step into the therapy room. Through our experience, we have gathered insights into these common concerns and wish to address them openly with you.

Common Concerns Before Starting Therapy

“Will the counsellor think I’m exaggerating or that my issues aren’t serious enough for therapy?”

Absolutely not. We see every client as a complete individual with a natural drive towards personal growth. No issue is too minor or too significant to bring up in therapy. Our approach is compassionate, understanding, and empathetic, always focusing on nurturing your growth.

“Will therapy always focus on my past?”

Therapy is predominantly forward-looking, aiming to empower you in the present and prepare you for the future. While past experiences can impact current circumstances and may be discussed, the purpose is always to inform and improve the present and future.

“What if my difficulties are past trauma?”

If specific past traumas are the reason you are attending counselling then this will be where therapy will focus, it will be approached carefully and only at your pace. You as the client will be the person who will be in control at all times of the pace you feel best to go at and your therapist will be fully supportive of that.

“Will I be diagnosed with a condition?”

The goal of therapy is not diagnosis but support. We are here to help you navigate through and overcome the obstacles that cause you distress. While some clients may come with medical diagnoses, our role is to support all clients, regardless of



their diagnostic status. Therapy puts its focus on the client as a whole person while being fully supportive of any medical diagnosis you may have received. We are also experienced in approaching therapy as part of a multidisciplinary team. We regularly work with clients doctors and medical teams.

“Will I be judged?”

It takes significant courage to seek therapy, and we view every client as brave for making this choice. You will be met with respect and admiration for taking this step towards self-care.

“What if I become too emotional or break down during the session?”

It’s completely okay to express your emotions during therapy, no matter how intense they may seem. Many people fear losing control, but remember, this is a safe space designed for you to explore your feelings without judgment. Emotional expressions, whether tears or anger, are all valid and can be crucial parts of the healing process. Your therapist is trained to handle these situations with care and will help guide you through your emotions at your own pace.

“How long will I need to be in therapy?”

The duration of therapy varies widely among individuals. It depends on the complexity of the issues you’re facing, your personal goals, and how the process unfolds for you. Some people find relief in short-term therapy, while others may engage in longer-term therapy to achieve deeper understanding and change. Your therapist will work with you to tailor the therapy duration that best suits your needs and will regularly discuss your progress and preferences.

“What if I don’t feel a connection with my therapist?”

Building a therapeutic relationship can take time, and it’s important for you to feel comfortable and connected with your therapist. If you find that the fit isn’t right after a few sessions, it’s perfectly acceptable to discuss this with your therapist. Sometimes, adjustments can be made in the approach, or alternatively, the therapist can help refer you to another professional who might be a better fit. It’s essential for your therapy’s success that you feel a strong, trusting relationship with your therapist and know that you have found a therapist you can work with. This is part of your own self care.

“Am I supposed to do something in preparation for therapy?”

There’s no specific preparation required for therapy, but it can be helpful to reflect on what you hope to achieve through the sessions. Some clients find it useful to keep a journal in the days leading up to their therapy, noting thoughts, feelings, or incidents that seem significant. This can help you remember and articulate your experiences during your sessions. However don’t worry that you feel you must be ‘fully’ prepared, as its not a requirement. We encourage you to begin by trusting yourself and let the process unfold naturally.



Your First Counselling Session

The first session serves as an introduction and a foundation for future work together. You can arrive a few minutes early for your session and take a seat in the waiting room. This gives you 'time to arrive' as we call it. It lets you take a breath and relax. At your appointment time you will be welcomed by your counsellor who will bring you to a comfortable therapy room where confidentiality and safety are paramount.

Every counsellor and psychotherapist has chosen this profession out of a deep passion for helping others, ensuring that you are in qualified, caring and capable hands.

Initially, your counsellor will discuss the boundaries of privacy and confidentiality with you. It's normal to feel a bit awkward at this stage, but remember that this space is designed to be a safe space where you can express yourself freely.

You are invited to share what brought you to therapy. How much or how little you choose to disclose is completely up to you. Your therapist will listen attentively, providing a supportive environment to help you start articulating your thoughts and feelings.

Feel free to ask questions. If there are specific things you want to know about the therapy process or about the therapist's approach, it may help you to think about these questions beforehand. Writing them down can ensure that you don't forget them during the session.

Together, you and your counsellor will begin to formulate a plan for your therapy journey. Collaboration is key, and the counsellor will work with you to set goals and discuss the best approaches to address your concerns.

Moving Forward

As the first session progresses, many clients find that time passes quickly, reflecting the engaging and immersive nature of the therapeutic process. By the end of this initial meeting, you should have a clearer idea of whether you feel comfortable with the therapist and whether their approach feels right for you. It's okay and recommended to take some time, even a few days, after the session to decide how you want to proceed.

If you choose to continue, the second session will typically begin with forming a therapeutic contract, outlining the agreement and expectations for your ongoing sessions.



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Ongoing Counselling and Support

Counselling and Psychotherapy is a powerful tool for those in emotional distress, seeking self-understanding or exploring ways to enhance their lives. It requires time, patience, and commitment. We encourage you to allow yourself the compassion to explore your issues deeply and gain insights that can lead to positive change.

Your counsellor will respect your pace and support you throughout this process, ensuring that your therapy experience is both transformative and reaffirming.

Questions and Further Information

Each person's reasons for seeking counseling are unique, and thus, it is beyond the scope of this brochure to cover every aspect of what counselling might entail for every individual. However, we welcome your questions and concerns. If you have specific queries before your first appointment, please do not hesitate to contact our clinic. We are here to help and look forward to assisting you on your journey towards healing and personal growth.

**You can contact us by phone 089 600 9460 / 021 439 7552 or
through our website www.corkcounsellingclinic.ie**

We will be happy to take your call and look forward to working
with you in creating a harmonious and strong relationship.

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