

THE SALISBURY COUNSELLING SERVICE

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

About Counselling:

- Counselling is basically a one-to-one talking therapy, conducted with a trained, understanding professional.
- It is particularly useful, and is recommended, for people with anxiety and/or depression, for people with loss or bereavements, for relationship difficulties, and situations of life or work stress.
- Counselling offers a private, confidential, reliable, sympathetic, and judgement-free situation to talk about worries and concerns.
- Counselling can help clarify important decisions that may need to be made.
- Counselling can be most helpful when the time is right, when the client feels ready, and is able to think and talk about what is happening with and around them. A long waiting-time can aggravate symptoms.
- When emotional difficulties have their roots in the past, talking them over with a counsellor can help to understand them better, and this can help to see past situations in a new light.
- Counselling can also help the client to rediscover or develop new resources within themselves, enabling them to approach life in a more effective and personally satisfying way.

The Model of Counselling:

- The counselling service offers a relatively 'brief' course of about 6 - 8 sessions, at 2-3 week intervals, spread over a few months.
- The intent of these sessions is, as far as is possible, to meet the declared needs of the clients within the agreed framework of the Counselling Service and the number of sessions.
- The Counselling Service offers an integrative approach, with person-centred and humanistic principles that support and value the person receiving the service, not as a 'patient' but as an active 'partner', helping themselves to get their life back into balance and themselves functioning better.
- The Counselling Service will basically encourage the principles of self-help, self-awareness, and self-empowerment - rather than using any particular theory or method of 'treatment'.
- This model has been found to be reasonably effective, satisfying most needs, and maximising long-term benefits.

Location:

- The service is situated in an already well-established therapy and workshop centre: the Salisbury Centre¹, with a very pleasant, informal atmosphere [i.e. it is not a 'clinic', and does not have a 'medical' atmosphere].
- The Salisbury Centre telephone number is 0131-667-5438: e-mail is: office@salisburycentre.org
- There is an office receptionist (weekdays from 10.00 am – 7.00 pm), with tea & coffee facilities in an attractive waiting area, and there is a lovely garden at the back available to clients.
- It is conveniently situated near to the Commonwealth Pool in Edinburgh, with frequent bus services and available (metered) parking in the area.

¹ The Salisbury Centre: www.salisburycentre.org

- Buses from the city centre that pass Salisbury Road at either end: 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 14, 29, 30, 31, 33, 37, 47, 48, 49, X47, X95, 62, 86,
- The Salisbury Centre is properly insured, and appropriate health & safety risk assessments and security checks on the premises are conducted regularly and appropriately.
- Rooms are available that are accessible to wheelchair users, but there is not (yet) a proper disabled toilet.

Sessions:

- After the initial referral or self-referral, there is an in-depth initial assessment with an experienced counsellor/psychotherapist, which usually takes about 1.25 hours (we allow for an hour & a half); and then a referral on to an appropriate counsellor.
- The initial GP referral would usually be in writing, and some basic information about would be given. A referral form is available, on request, or from the Salisbury Counselling Service website. In the case of self-referrals, an initial form would be sent out or filled in prior to the initial session.
- The referral on for counselling sessions is usually to a Counselling Diploma student / trainee on a placement to gain extra experience and session hours, to fulfil their course requirement and/or prior to accreditation. More experienced counsellors are available.
- The service usually offers about 6-8 sessions, with 2-3 week intervals, although clients may be given additional or more frequent sessions, according to need and availability.
- Sessions usually take place on weekday mornings, when there is generally more room space available. Some afternoon or evening sessions can be arranged with the counsellor once the client has started seeing them.
- There is on-going monitoring, and an appropriate onward referral, if appropriate.

Fees:

The initial assessment session (c. 75 minutes) costs £40. Thereafter, we offer counselling at £25 per individual (50-minute) session, or at £20 per session if there is an agreement for a course of 5 sessions or more. (See Table 1. below)

Table 1:

Client Fees:	
Assessment:	£40.00
Session 1:	£25.00
Session 2:	£25.00
Session 3:	£25.00
Session 4:	£25.00
Session 5:	£ 0.00
Session 6:	£20.00
Session 7:	£20.00
Session 8:	£20.00
Thereafter:	£20.00

The clients are responsible for paying fees for the session to the counsellor, at the time of the sessions. Cash or cheques only are accepted: receipts are given.

Fees are kept to a minimum by using a number of Diploma counselling and psychotherapy trainees, who have finished their counselling training, and are now on a placement to complete their required hours of supervised practice, and also by using relatively underused room-space at the Salisbury Centre.

Timings & Availability:

- The initial assessment session will usually be scheduled to take place within 2 weeks of receipt of the referral, and the client should meet their assigned counsellor well within another 2 weeks.
- Subsequent sessions are usually at 2-3 week intervals, and thus a 'course' of 6-8 sessions may stretch over 3-4 months.
- This allows the client plenty of time to absorb the content of the sessions and implement any changes as a result of the counselling, which adds to the efficacy of the counselling.

Counsellors:

- The trainees on placement have all completed (or are in the process of completing) their full Counselling Diploma training; they will probably have already worked in other placements, and are fulfilling the number of supervised practice hours before accreditation.
- They are externally supervised, as well as being line-managed within the Salisbury Counselling Service.
- They will have appropriate professional insurance and will have had a Disclosure Scotland check.
- Additional support is offered to the counsellor, when appropriate, or if any special issues get 'flagged' up as a result of their client work.
- More experienced counsellors are also available, if required.

Assessment:

- Clients are given a couple of standard easy-to-complete written assessment forms (HADS² & CORE³), as part of their initial assessment session. They are given these again at completion, so as to be able to monitor their progress effectively. Sometimes, clients may be asked to fill in a similar post-therapy follow-up assessment, sent to them by post, with a stamped return envelope.
- Clients are also assessed with reference to the GAF⁴ Scale.
- At the end of the counselling, clients will also be asked to fill-in a Client Satisfaction Questionnaire.
- A short written report on the overall client's progress is sent to the referrer (where appropriate).

GP Referrals:

- We welcome referrals from General Practitioners, Medical Practices and GP Surgeries, especially in South Edinburgh and the Dalkeith & Penicuik areas, particularly if people from these surgeries these do not have easy or quick access to a (free) NHS counselling service.
- We also welcome referrals from voluntary organisations, employers, and – of course – any private or self-referrals.

Medication:

- Counselling can sometimes be the only help readily available for people who are not on (anti-depressant or anti-anxiety) medication, and counselling is often seen – by clients – as a preferable alternative (or possibly as an interim step, if medication is eventually needed).
- Counselling is a preferred 'step' in the NICE (& SIGN) Guidelines for anxiety &/or Depression; either before medication is prescribed; or with medication.

² HADS: Hospital Anxiety & Depression Scale: www.hqlo.com/content

³ CORE: Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation: www.coreims.co.uk

⁴ GAF: Global Assessment of Functioning: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global_Assessment_of_Functioning

- Counselling has been shown to be particularly effective for people who are on medication, and better than medication alone; sometimes also helping people get to a position where they are ready to come off such medication.
- Clients are always encouraged to consult their GP about any medication and especially about any changes in medication or usage: the service does not make any recommendations.
- Counsellors always advise clients, when asked, not to mix medications (prescribed and over-the-counter or herbal, etc.)

Topics:

- The range of ‘topics’ suitable for counselling include:
 - An accumulation of life stress;
 - Relationship difficulties, divorce & separation, or difficulties with other people (relations, colleagues, etc.);
 - Mild to moderate anxiety and depression;
 - Issues of low self esteem;
 - Bereavement and other losses (e.g. miscarriages, abortions, missing persons, losing job, relationship ending, etc.);
 - Coming to terms with traumatic events (e.g. accidents, crimes, life-threatening illnesses, etc.);
 - Sexual difficulties;
 - Addictive behavioural patterns;
 - Coping with violence & abuse;
 - Work difficulties (bullying, redundancy, problems with colleagues);
 - Self-harm;
 - Life changes (menopause, retirement, unemployment);
 - Social difficulties;
 - General fears, panic attacks and mild phobias.

Contra-indications:

- Counselling is not suitable for:
 - People with identified mental health issues (severe depression, psychotic illness, personality disorders);
 - People with chronic phobias and obsessions;
 - People with severe post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD);
 - People who are currently engaged in extreme forms of self-destructive behaviour, prolonged substance abuse, alcohol abuse, or eating disorders;
 - People with a history of violent behaviour.

Finances:

- The Salisbury Counselling Service is specifically designed as ‘low-cost’ and ‘not-for-profit’. Fees and costs have been adjusted to reflect this, as much as possible: see Table 2: Schedule of Fees & Costs, etc. (below).
- The Service pays room fees at the full rate to the Salisbury Centre; and also offers an honorarium of £5.00 per session to the trainee placement counsellors, to cover fares and/or parking.
- The Assessor gets paid at a professional rate (for a 1.5 hour session) and there is a £10.00 administration fee, per client, to cover costs of advertising, printing & stationary, website, accounting & auditing, etc.
- Proper accounts will be kept and will be open, transparent and available for inspection, on request.
- The Counselling Service will have its own dedicated bank account, so as to be able to deposit cash & cheques and be able to make cheque or card payments. Initially, this will be administered by the founder of the Salisbury Counselling Service: Courtenay Young.

- A portion (c. 20%) of any excess funds (profits) at the end of the financial year will be retained as a Contingency Fund; and a portion (c. 30%) will be retained by the Counselling Service for a Bursary Fund, for people with severe financial needs.
- Any other residue (c. 50%) will be distributed at the end of the financial year, split between the Salisbury Centre Trust and/or other relevant charities (c. 25%), and on a pro rata basis to the Trainees (c. 25%).
- Once up and running, and after a year of operation, we will also be looking for external grant funding, so as to be able to offer further subsidies to special client groups.
- **Table 2: Schedule of Fees and Costs per client**

Client Fees:		Outgoings:	Costs:	Surplus:	Total:
Assessment:	£40.00	Assessor:	£60.00	- £20.00	-£20.00
Session 1:	£25.00	Administration:	£10.00	£15.00	-£5.00
Session 2:	£25.00	Room Fees: to date:	£28.00	£ 1.00	-£8.00
Session 3:	£25.00	Honorariums to Trainee:	£15.00	£10.00	£2.00
Session 4:	£25.00	Room Fees: to date:	£16.00	£9.00	£11.00
Session 5:	£ 0.00	Room Fees:	£ 8.00	-£8.00	£3.00
Session 6:	£ 20.00	Honorariums to Trainee:	£15.00	£5.00	£8.00
Session 7:	£20.00	Room Fees to date:	£16.00	£4.00	£12.00
Session 8:	£20.00	Room Fees + Honorariums to Trainee to date	£ 8.00 £10.00	£2.00	£16.00
Total to date:	£200.00	Total Outgoings to date:	£184.00	£16.00	£16.00
Thereafter, if requested.	£20.00	Room Fee (£8) + Trainee Honorarium (£5)	£13.00	£7.00

- These fees and costs are accurate to date (February 2012). They may change in the future.

Confidentiality:

- All client information and counselling notes are kept strictly confidential and are physically kept within the Salisbury Counselling Service.
- Clients are given written information about confidentiality (and conditions under which disclosure can/might be made) at the (1st) assessment session.
- In the event of any emergency, or a declared risk of such, the client's doctor or the emergency services would be informed.

Literature:

There are various printed self-help booklets and handouts available, that can also be sent by e-mail to clients. These can help to give basic self-help information and also support the client's process; give information and further reading for family members; reinforce or add to the discussion in the sessions; and help the client to achieve their self-defined goals from the counselling.

Safety:

- The Salisbury Centre reception office is open between 10:00 am and 7:00 pm weekdays, and there are nearly always several other people present in the building during weekday times. Some Salisbury Centre staff live on the premises.

- The Salisbury Centre is properly insured; has a fire alarm system; and conducts regular health & safety checks.
- All counsellors work within a clear ethical framework and code of practice and are accountable to this. Currently, we adopt the British Association of Counselling & Psychotherapy (BACP) Ethical Framework: www.bacp.co.uk/ethical_framework and the BACP (NHCP) Code of Practice. Trainee counsellors are required to have read these documents.
- All counsellors receive regular 'line management' within the Salisbury Counselling Service and also have phone access to the Administrator / Assessor / Manager.

Status:

- It is hoped to start the Salisbury Counselling Service in April 2012.
- These policies and procedures are still being refined and modified as the service is being developed and as a result of feedback.
- The service will be 'managed' by team meetings (frequent in the first few months), with additional meetings between the administrator, Salisbury Centre trustees, staff, and other 'stakeholders' (including possible representatives from the NHS) as and when necessary or asked for.

This is just one of the low cost counselling services that is available in Edinburgh. Other low cost Counselling Services are available from Wellspring, 13 Smith's Place, Leith Walk, Edinburgh, EH6 8NT: 0131-553-6660 (between £18 - £25) which is more convenient for people living in North Edinburgh; or there is a range of other (some more specialist) counselling services (some low cost) that may be available: details from the Edinburgh Counselling Agencies list (run by The WholeWorks): www.edinburghcounsellingagencies.co.uk

For further information: please ring 07570-776410
info@salisburycounselling.co.uk