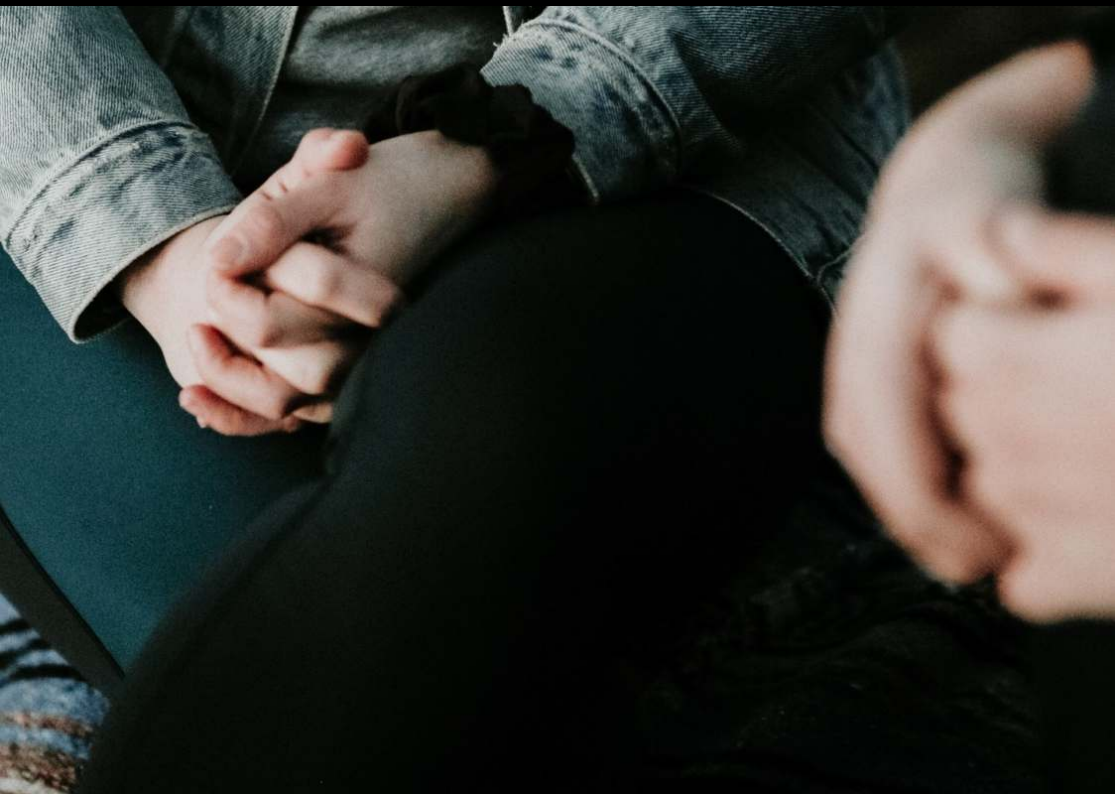




FIRST

SESSIONS



What to expect from your first counselling or life coaching session/s.

It does take courage to reach out and step into the unknown world of counselling, coaching or psychotherapy. Whichever area you choose, the process is the same and give yourself credit for taking that first step.

You may be feeling anxiety and apprehension at the thought of attending therapy for the first time. Please see this as expected and completely natural. You are meeting someone for the first time to discuss aspects of your life that are personal to you which can feel daunting. This brochure is produced to address some of those issues and to give you an overview of what to expect from the beginning session you attend.

Clients come from many backgrounds with as many different presenting issues. A number a questions or thoughts are common to most clients on first attending. We know this because when clients make progress in their journey they tell us those very feelings they had when first attending. Though everyone is different there is a commonality in the feeling's and inner questions clients tell us they experience in beginning therapy.

Will they think I'm mad?

Absolutely not, we believe every client is a complete person who has a natural desire and drive to personally grow. We support and nurture such growth in a compassionate, understanding and emphatic approach.

Will it always be about digging up the past?

For the most part therapy is forward facing. The focusing is on a client empowering themselves better in the now and going forward in the future. Of course, the client's past may be impacting on today, so in going to the past it will always be to inform the present so as to enable the clients better understanding of themselves. Of course, if there is a specific past event such as a severe trauma then we would look at that but the approach is never to bring a client to a place not of their own choosing.

Will I be diagnosed with a condition?

Diagnosis is not the purpose of therapy. We are not looking to find something wrong with, or to diagnose the client with any condition. Our role is to support the client in moving forward in their lives from any distress they may be experiencing. A client may have been medically diagnosed with a condition and we support clients in all such circumstances once they can partake in the sessions.

Will I be judged?

Attending therapy takes courage so please know before you even attend your first session you will be viewed as taking a courageous step in your own welfare. We admire you in taking such a step.

What happens at my first session?

The therapist will meet you and make you feel welcome in a comfortable room. All therapists choose this profession out of their own passion so you can be assured that you will be met by a person who is passionate about assisting you. The therapist will then explain to you the importance and limits of everything you say being held in complete privacy, in a safe and confidential environment. Keep in mind that feeling awkward is fine.

You are then invited to discuss the reason you have come for therapy and you will have the full attention of your therapist in listening to you discuss as much or as little as you are comfortable to say.

Don't be afraid to ask questions. It is a good idea to give some thought to any questions or information you may want from the therapist before you arrive at the session. If it helps write them down so that they don't get forgotten.

The therapist will endeavour to formulate a plan for a way forward for the both of you to work together in a collaborative way. Before you know it, you will be well into the session and most clients say that the hours session goes by so quickly.

The first session gives you the time to see if you as the client feel the therapist is a good fit for you and you can wait until the end of the first session to decide if you want to come weekly until you resolve your difficulty.

The therapist will at all times be mindful of keeping you at ease throughout the whole session.

Talk Therapy is a very effective tool in helping people in emotional distress, who are seeking answers for themselves and in finding a way forward. Therapy does take time so be patient. Give yourself the compassion to explore your issues and gain a better understanding of them so as to take positive action. Your therapist will give you the time and respect throughout this process to do so.

If you decide to engage in therapy the therapist will form a contract with you at the beginning of the second session which will be the agreement for going forward.

Main things to remember:

- **Everything is said in confidence.**
- **It's absolutely ok to ask questions.**
- **Give yourself some time prior to your session to get a feel for what your needs are.**
- **Remember that the therapist is there for you in a completely non-judgemental way.**
- **Be patient and compassionate with yourself.**

Finally it may be helpful for you to know that every therapist has been on their own journey of self-discovery before and as part of becoming a therapist. They know what it is like to be a client in therapy as they have been there too. Therapists also have to undertake their own supervision throughout their career on a frequent basis. They have all been where you have been in entering into therapy for the first session.

If you have any questions about the therapeutic process you can email or ring us and we will endeavour to put your mind at ease as quickly as possible. We wish you every success in your journey of empowerment.

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