

Person-centred counselling

Person-centred counselling is an approach that deals with the ways a person thinks about themselves rather than how a counsellor can interpret their unconscious thoughts or ideas. It focuses on the person rather than the problem.

This help them to come to terms with the negative feelings that may have caused emotional problems and to develop personal skills. The objective is for the person to become able to see themselves as an individual with power and freedom to change.

How does it work? The counsellor or psychotherapist in this approach works to understand an individual's experience from their point of view. The counsellor must value the client as a person while being open and genuine. This is key to helping an individual feel accepted and better understand their own feelings - helping them to reconnect with a sense of self-worth. This reconnection helps them to find their own way to move forward.

Lots of things can affect someone's ability to be at their best, including low self-esteem, a lack of self-reliance and very little openness to new experiences. The person-centred approach recognises that a person's social environment and personal relationships can make a difference, so therapy is offered in a neutral and comfortable setting where you can feel at ease and open to learning about yourself.

Other related changes that can come from this therapy include:

- Closer agreement between an individual's idealised and actual selves.
- Better self-understanding and awareness.
- Decreased defensiveness, insecurity and guilt.
- Greater ability to trust oneself.
- Healthier relationships.
- Improvement in self-expression.
- A healthy sense of change overall.

Who can benefit? Generally, person-centred counselling can help people of all ages with a range of personal issues.

Many people find it appealing because it allows them to keep control over the content and pace of sessions, and they do not need to worry that their therapist will be evaluating them in any way. The style of person-centred counselling is thought to be of more help to people who have a strong urge to explore themselves and their feelings, and for those who want to address specific psychological habits or patterns of thinking.

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The approach has been found particularly useful in helping people to overcome specific problems such as depression, anxiety, personality disorders, eating disorders and alcohol addictions. These issues can have significant impact on self-esteem, self-reliance and self-awareness, but person-centred therapy can help individuals to reconnect with their inner self in order to get past any limitations.

Are there any forms to complete? A contract and confidentiality agreement is signed in the first session.

How long and how often would you see a therapist? A session lasts for 50 minutes and you and your counsellor would meet at the same time and place each week. The number of sessions you have is ultimately down to you. Your counsellor would review your needs with you.

For more information about person-centred therapy or for an informal chat about whether this type of therapy might be useful for you, please contact the counselling team, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, on enquiries@mnessexmind.org or 01206 764600.

We're Mid and North Essex Mind, the mental health charity. We're here to make sure anyone with a mental health problem has somewhere to turn to for advice and support. We are a local, independent charity connected to the national charity Mind. We have to raise our own money to run our services.

If you want to raise some money or donate to support the work we do in the local area, make sure you are clear on any fundraising or cheques that the money is for Mid and North Essex Mind. This means we can use this money locally. We cannot take donations to 'Mind'.

Thank you