

What is Counselling?

Each of us at some stage in our life will meet difficult or distressing events or experience painful emotions which can interfere with our daily living.

Counselling provides an opportunity to share and clarify your “problem situation” in privacy and confidence with a person who is trained and skilled in the art of listening and enabling personal growth.

Talking to a counsellor in a confidential, safe, non judgemental and reliable place can help you to reach your own decisions and find effective ways of managing your life and relationships. This process can also lead you to a deeper understanding of yourself.

What you are offered?

We offer a free confidential, woman to woman, safe counselling Service to help you find ways of addressing the difficulties in your life. We provide counselling on week days and can arrange to see you in the evenings on request.

Where are we?

Our Service is at Swinburne House, Swinburne Street, in Gateshead Town Centre, close to Gateshead Metro Station and the Tyne Bridge. Please call for directions if needed.

Who is the service for?

The service is for women in Tyneside aged 18 years old or over who feel they would benefit from counselling and who may be on low incomes or unemployed.

Do I have to pay?

No. Tyneside Women’s Health Counselling Service is free of charge.

How to refer?

There are two ways you can be referred to the counselling service. You can attend our **Welcome Session on Thursday mornings** and ask to be referred to the counselling service. You can then complete the Counselling Referral Form with the support of a Tyneside Women’s Health Worker.

Alternatively you can call us on **0191 4777898** to request a Counselling Referral Form which we ask you to complete as fully as you can. You may want to ask for help from somebody you trust to do this.

When you have completed your referral form, please send it back to us indicating when you are available for appointments. Please note that as a general rule the more flexible you can be with attending appointment times, the quicker we can arrange your appointment.

What next?

After sending us the completed referral form we will invite you for an initial assessment appointment. The purpose of this appointment is to get to know you and your needs better.

If the assessor feels we can appropriately meet your needs you will then be matched to a counsellor. Where possible this will be the same counsellor that carried out your assessment, but there may be times when another counsellor from Tyneside Women’s Health is recommended for you.

If the assessor feels that your needs would be best met by another service, she will be honest with you about this and help you to access that support.

After I start what next?

Counselling sessions take place weekly, at a time that is convenient for you and the counsellor. Sessions last for 1 hour. We usually offer counselling on a six week block until you and your counsellor decide that the time is right to end the sessions. What we will ask from you is that you attend your appointment or cancel in advance if you can’t make it.

Generally a counsellor will not give you advice or tell you what to do, but she will enable you to find your own solutions.

What if it is not for me?

There may be situations when Tyneside Women's Health Counselling Service is not the most appropriate form of support for you. For example:

- ♦ You feel that your mental health issues are serious enough to require specialist mental health medical treatment.
- ♦ You feel that you are in immediate crisis and require an emergency response – if this is the case you should speak to your GP, your local Mental Health Crisis Team or present at your local hospital's A & E Department. **We do not offer immediate crisis counselling.**
- ♦ You may feel you require specialist treatment or counselling, for example in relation to addiction.

How will I know if counselling is helping me?

For some people counselling leads to immediate improvement whilst for others, change happens more gradually. Many people find that counselling brings feelings of upset to the surface. Your counsellor will help you monitor your progress.

Is it confidential?

Yes, what is said between you and the counsellor is confidential. We will only breach confidentiality if we believe somebody is at immediate risk of harm and would try to discuss this with you first.

Will my cultural background be taken into account?

Yes. Although our counsellors mainly come from white British cultures we are striving to be more culturally aware and inclusive. We can arrange translation for counselling sessions in languages other than English. Please discuss your needs further with us.

A note to counsellors

If you would like to **apply to be a Tyneside Women's Health volunteer counsellor**, please call our Office Manager for an application pack.

Please note you have to:

- ♦ be in at least year two of counselling study
- ♦ be prepared to attend regular clinical supervision sessions
- ♦ agree to an advanced Criminal Records Bureau Check.
- ♦ Be a member of BACP and have professional indemnity insurance

We particularly welcome applications from women counsellors from black and minority ethnic cultures.



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Company Number 06702528
Registered Charity Number 1126648



Women's Counselling Service

Are you a woman experiencing mental health issues?

and...

Unhappy?

Anxious?

Lonely?

Angry?

Stressed?

Lack of fulfillment?

Relationship problems?

**Would it help to talk to a counsellor
FREE of charge?**

**To enquire call 0191 4777898 or
come along to Tyneside Women's
Health Welcome Session, every
Thursday morning from 10.00am to
11.30pm**