

What To Expect

BEFORE THE SESSION

Before the session, you will want to read and complete all necessary forms and bring them with you to the first counseling session.

FIRST SESSION AND BEYOND

During your first session or two with a counselor, we'll gather information about your story so we have a holistic view of what's going on. A lot of people want to jump right into talking about their problems, yet without the proper context we won't be able to fully help.

Here's how your first session will be outlined:

- Briefly discuss the forms you filled out and answer any questions you may have
 - Discuss confidentiality within counseling, which is very important to discuss
 - Briefly review what counseling is and is not
 - Engage in clinical interview, which gets at what brings you into counseling
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WHAT IS COUNSELING? VS. WHAT IS NOT COUNSELING?

What Counseling Is:

- a place to receive support from a trained professional
- goal-focused, meaning change is the ultimate aim
- a safe environment to talk about difficult things in your life
- focused on *you*, not other people (meaning we focus on changes you have control over)
- connected to your life outside of counseling, and requiring work in between sessions
- a resource for anyone who wants help improving a certain area of their life (e.g., spiritually, relationally, emotional health, etc)

What Counseling Is Not:

- a place to lie on a couch and get psychoanalyzed
- an opportunity to vent for one hour a week
- oriented to advice-giving
- something that only crazy people engage in
- what you see on TV or in movies
- your savior for whatever challenges bring you to counseling
- meant to be long term (i.e., something you engage in for many years)*

** There are some cases in which an individual may need to stay in counseling for a while. This is ultimately a decision you make for yourself. Your therapist won't keep you in counseling longer than necessary.*