



Counseling 101

At any moment, nearly 50 percent of individuals are experiencing issues that affect their productivity and overall well-being, such as stress, anxiety, depression, relationship problems, or addictions.

Unfortunately, some people do not seek out counseling during challenging times. The reasons vary but often the myths and stigmas that continue to surround counseling are part of the barrier to seeking help. One such myth is that counseling is only for people who are mentally ill or who have severe emotional problems. The reality is that counseling can benefit just about everyone—from helping couples build a stronger relationship to individuals coping with grief, or adjusting to a life changes – big or small.

If you or someone you know is thinking about counseling for any issue, consider the following tips.

What You Can Do

Choosing a counselor.

Each counselor has a different counseling style and varies in the type of training they have received and techniques they use. Ask a counselor about their training and about how they would work with an individual in your situation. Even though you may not know the various clinical approaches, how the counselor describes how they would work with you will provide valuable information to help your decision. Getting the referrals from your EAP or physician is a good place to start. If, after a few sessions, you don't feel comfortable with the counselor, it is important to discuss your concerns with him or her. If you are still not comfortable, you may need to look for someone else. You should expect the following from your counselor.

- Listens to you, answers your questions, and takes your concerns seriously.
- Provides you with a statement that outlines their approach and your rights as a client.
- Helps you identify and work towards your personal goals.
- Maintains the highest ethical and legal standards of counseling practice.

Participate.

In order to get the most out of your counseling sessions, you need to be an active participant. This means being prepared for each session, and being as honest as possible. In addition.

- Attend your scheduled sessions and complete any 'homework' provided by your counselor.
- Discuss your progress with your counselor as you go along.
- Tell your counselor if you do not think the sessions are helping.

Making the first step.

If you aren't sure if counseling is an appropriate step for you, it can be helpful to have an initial session with a counselor to discuss the potential benefits of counseling. Counselors can provide the kind of objective perspective and professional guidance to help you figure out what might be going on and what you could do about it. They also can make referrals to other helpful services.

To locate an EAP counselor, visit the website or call the phone number listed below.



www.apsheplink.com



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