

Telephone and **ONLINE** COUNSELLING

Short Course



STUDY GUIDE

HOW TO WORK THROUGH THIS COURSE

Over the following pages, you will move through a logical, self-paced learning experience that can enlighten and educate you on Telephone and Online Counselling.

It is important from the outset to understand that learning about something is not the same as just reading about it. Learning implies a permanent change in what you know and can do.

Anyone can read a book and understand it; but for most people the detail of what you read is largely forgotten.

Reading something once only puts information into short-term memory. It is soon lost if you don't 'work' on it. Studying the same information takes longer, but by thinking about it and processing it you can transfer that information to long-term memory. This way, you will enhance your ability to recall and apply that information for years to come. If you take your time to work through the 8 lessons that follow, you will learn.

Read, Reflect, Research, Revise

Throughout the following pages, you will find not only things to read about, but also things to do:

1. Throughout each lesson, there are suggestions of things to do under the headings "Learn More". These are all sorts of ideas about things you can do in order to explore the subject further.
2. At the end of each lesson, there are Lesson Review Questions for you to undertake. When you click on this, your computer needs to be online. You will be taken to our cloud-based online school. The answers you choose will be evaluated immediately, and your results can be seen on completion of each test. You can return and repeat tests if you wish.

Undertaking these tasks will involve reflection, research and revision of the topics you read about. By repeatedly encountering each topic in different ways, your perspective on each subject will broaden, and the commitment of information to longer term memory will strengthen.

You don't need to undertake all of the suggested tasks if you don't want to; but we strongly recommend that you do some in each lesson, and that you answer all of the Lesson Review Questions.

The more time you spend doing these things, the stronger your learning will be.

Completing the Course

After completing all 8 lessons you will be presented with a final set of Lesson Review Questions which can also be undertaken online.

Do not attempt to do this until you have worked through all 8 lessons, and feel like you have learnt the subject well.

Upon finishing this final assessment you will immediately see your final results, and you can save a pdf copy of those results as a "Certificate of Completion".

Welcome Audio

Click the button below to listen to the welcome audio for this course. This feature is supported by most computers and some mobile devices.



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INTRODUCTION

Telephone and online counselling are still relatively new forms of counselling, but are increasingly popular. Many organisations, including the Samaritans, offer counselling via phone, video conferencing and chat platforms.

Counselling from a distance is not a new concept; Sigmund Freud is known to have written letters to counsel some patients.

Telephone counselling tends to occur when a person telephones a counsellor to discuss their problems. Telephone counsellors may specialise in certain topics or be a general counsellor. They may be available at certain times by appointment or 24 hours a day through a helpline.

Online counselling is growing rapidly through websites, forums, apps and more. Online counsellors may offer face to face video conferencing facilities. Some counsellors and patients prefer to work together via email or forums. Online counselling is also known as e-therapy, cybercounselling, teletherapy and e-counselling.

Online or telephone counselling is unlikely to replace face-to-face counselling. It is a useful vehicle for people who are experiencing difficulties in their lives and find it hard to access traditional face-to-face counselling.

In this short course, we will look at telephone and online counselling and how they are used. Throughout the course, we will also look at some of the difficulties your clients may face, including bereavement and loss, depression, anxiety, cyberbullying and more.

LESSON 1 WHAT IS COUNSELLING?

Many people experience difficulties in their lives, when their problems seem overwhelming and distressing. They may not be able to talk to the people close to them about their problems, so will seek help from a counsellor. They may have issues such as relationship breakdowns, divorce, bereavement, illness, family crisis and so on. They may find it hard to cope or not have the personal resources to deal with a problem. The counsellor will help the person to retain their independence, develop coping strategies, and encourage them to act on their own choices to resolve their problems.

Counselling is not a quick fix. We do not go to a counsellor to get “the answer” or for the counsellor to tell us what to do to feel better. Counselling is not a get well soon option, but rather a way to encourage the person to consider their issues and explore them and hopefully resolve them.

Counselling is a working relationship. The counsellor’s role is to help the client manage what is happening in their life and explore it further. It is a form of talk therapy or psychological therapy that offers people the chance to change how they live and feel. The aim of counselling is to provide the person with a more satisfying experience of their life. Everyone is different and unique, so counselling should be concerned with offering support to the person as an individual.

The counsellor helps facilitate the client’s resolution of their difficulties and issues. As such, they must also respect the person’s culture, choice, values and personal resources. Counselling can provide a person with a space to talk about their problems and personal feelings in a confidential and dependable environment.

The counsellor may offer the person the only situation where they can truly reveal how they feel about their difficulties and their life, so the counselling relationship is a very important one.

Counsellors do not give advice, but offer insight into the client’s feelings and behaviour. When necessary, they may also help the client to change their behaviour. They will do this by listening to what the client has to say and then commenting on this from a professional perspective. Counselling covers people who may use counselling skills as part of their job role (nurses and teachers for example) or other, specifically trained counsellors.

Many people use counselling skills in their daily lives. However, sometimes it may be inappropriate for people to use their usual methods of support. They may not want to discuss their problems with a friend or family member. They may feel that the person is too close, that they don’t want them to know their confidential problems or the person they would usually confide in might be part of the problem. Counsellors are trained to be effective helpers in difficult

Suggested Tasks: ▼

Throughout this course you will be provided with suggested tasks and reading to aid with your understanding. These will appear in the right hand column. Remember: these tasks are optional. The more you complete, the more you will learn, but in order to complete the course in 20 hours you will need to manage your time well. We suggest you spend about 10 minutes on each task you attempt, and no more than 20 minutes.

LEARN MORE >>>

Suggested Tasks

People may require counselling for many different reasons. Make a list of reasons why a person may seek help from a counsellor. If you are unsure, look online for counsellors and research the services they offer.

COUNSELLING TECHNIQUES – A SUMMARY

There are several basic counselling skills that are important in telephone, online and face-to-face situations. Later in the course, we will consider in more detail how these skills are specifically used in telephone and online counselling situations.

Attending

In tradition counselling, attending behaviour shows the client that you are present both physically and psychologically and that you are listening. It also shows empathy. Empathy is the ability to put yourself into someone else's shoes. It comes from the Greek words for "in feeling" – empathising with someone is feeling with someone. This is distinct from sympathy. Sympathy is feeling for someone, perhaps feeling sorry for someone. When we display empathy, we actually try to visualise how that person might feel about what is going on in their life.

Attending behaviour is demonstrated by the SOLER method. This is a method of actively listening to the people. It can be a very effective way of listening to people in a counselling situation, but also in conversation generally. It shows that we are paying attention to the speaker, that we are attending to them.

Developed by Gerald Egan, in his book, *The Skilled Helper*, this acronym details the essential parts of communication:

or sensitive situations. They should be independent, neutral and professional, and always respect the client's privacy. Counselling can help people clarify problems, identify changes they would like to make, get a fresh perspective, consider alternative options, and reflect on the impact that life events have made on their emotional wellbeing.

Counselling can help people to come to terms with their issues and difficulties. It works best if the person comes to counselling through their own choice and is committed to the counselling process and want to change. Counselling is not about making judgements.

There are five key elements that must exist for counselling to work:

- A contract between the counsellor and client.
- A warm and trusting, professional relationship.
- Client-focussed work.
- A space where the client feels safe.
- A place where the client is able to share difficult feelings in an accepting atmosphere.

When we talk about a safe space, we're not talking about a physical space, but rather a place where the person feels safe. This may sound odd when we are looking at telephone and online counselling, but a safe space can also be a virtual/online space, a time and situation where the person is offered support and acceptance to talk about their problems.