

First meeting

At our first meeting, my main priority is to begin to think with you about what has brought you to therapy. I will need to gather information to gain 'the big picture' of your life: work; relationships; ethnicity; family of origin; health and any previous experiences of therapy.

I will also be assessing whether what I offer is suitable for you. If I feel that some other form of help would be more suited to you and your needs, I will do my best to recommend either another professional or agency.

This meeting will also give you a chance to see what you think and feel about me. Is your gut instinct that you feel safe and comfortable with me even though what you are talking about may be difficult or distressing? Do you feel you could work with me?

Therapy sessions

As I continue to work with you I seek to build up our working relationship. I listen attentively, empathise, hold you in mind, remember what you say and attend to the themes that emerge in our work. I use my theoretical knowledge and skills to bring insight, understanding, challenge and opportunities for therapeutic change. I will not tell you what to do or give advice; this is a process where I help you find your own solutions to the issues, known and unknown, which brought you to therapy.

Counselling sessions are weekly on the same day and same time for 50 minutes.

I usually offer open-ended counselling. This is where we allow the therapy the time it takes to meet your unique needs.

I also offer time-limited counselling, usually 12 sessions, for the resolution of specific problems.

Psychotherapy sessions are twice weekly.

What will happen when you contact me?

I appreciate that making contact with a therapist can be difficult and may take you some time. It is a very significant step. It is important that you make contact and not someone else because we need to know that you are choosing therapy for yourself.

You can contact me by email or phone.

My email address is
susan.blundell@tonbridgecounselling.com
My phone number is: 07758 559464

We will talk briefly on the phone about why you are seeking help. We will then arrange a mutually convenient time to meet. I have varied availability and can usually arrange a first meeting within a week. I offer weekday daytime and evening sessions.

Fees

My fee is £45 per session. In certain circumstances, I may be able to offer concessions to £30. Please feel free to talk to me about what fee seems reasonable and manageable for you.



TONBRIDGE PSYCHOTHERAPY & COUNSELLING

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Why see a therapist?

People seek therapy when they are in pain – you know something isn't working for you but you may not be able to pinpoint what. You may be facing acute known difficulties such as bereavement, the loss of a job or relationship problems. You may be experiencing familiar distressing situations and begin to wonder why you encounter the same problem over and over again. Or you may find yourself personally limited by anxiety or depression or the ways you find yourself reacting. Life transitions can also be confusing times as you ask yourself big questions such as: Who am I? What do I want?

How does it help?

As your therapist I seek to build a safe relationship with you in which you can talk freely, express your emotions, feel heard, understood and valued. I use my personal qualities, therapy models and skills to help you. Together we work through emerging themes hopefully bringing insight, resolution, healing and opportunities for conscious change and personal growth. It is a process where I help you find your own solutions to the issues, known and unknown, which brought you to therapy.

Who can I help and with what?

I have experience in offering therapy to men and women of all ages and many ethnicities with a wide range of mental health, life transition and personal development issues.

To give you some indication of my work, I have helped clients in the following areas of their lives:

- Depression
- Anxiety & panic attacks
- Stress
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Challenging negative thinking
- Relationship difficulties; separation and divorce
- Relationships with family
- Effect of childhood on the present
- Work problems
- Bereavement
- Loss – health; job; role
- Repeating patterns
- Feeling 'stuck'
- Life crises
- Life changes and transitions: 'empty nest'; 'mid-life crisis'
- Identity issues
- Coming to peace with oneself
- Spiritual issues



My Counselling Models

I have a diploma in Psychodynamic Counselling. This is a model of counselling which aims to make us more aware of what goes on for us unconsciously and so awakens the possibility of conscious change. The model uses a triangle of insight: our relationships with significant people in the past; our relationship with ourselves and others in the present and the relationship in the room between counsellor and client.

Psychodynamic counselling is suitable for open-ended work where ideally the work continues until we both feel it is complete. I find the psychodynamic model effective in bringing about deep and lasting change.

I also have a Post-Qualifying Certificate in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. CBT is a therapy recommended by NICE (the National Institute for Clinical Excellence). CBT explores the relationships between our thoughts, feelings and behaviour and facilitates change through enabling realistic thinking. I find CBT particularly effective in helping with anxiety, panic and challenging negative thinking. I offer 12 sessions of CBT for the resolution of specific problems.

Psychotherapy

I also offer psychoanalytic psychotherapy. This therapy has many similarities with the psychodynamic counselling model but is a deeper, usually longer term process. It aims for significant and lasting change in personality and gain in our emotional development. I offer twice weekly sessions for psychotherapy.

Professional Membership

I understand the trust that is placed in me whenever someone contacts and then contracts with me for therapy. It is very important that you know that your therapist is a qualified professional and has been accredited by a leading professional body as competent for independent practice.

I am a qualified counsellor and an accredited member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy and work within its framework for good practice. The BACP defines an **accredited** counsellor/psychotherapist as someone who has "achieved a substantial level of training and experience that has been approved by BACP". In order to achieve BACP accreditation the counsellor/psychotherapist needs "to demonstrate the capacity for independent competent, ethical practice."

Confidentiality

Knowing that what you say to me is confidential is fundamental to your feeling safe and able to talk freely. I treat all information disclosed to me as confidential. However, please note that confidentiality is limited by legal obligations and issues relating to the serious and immediate risk of harm to yourself or others. I explain this in the first session.