

COUNSELLING AND YOU

This pamphlet provides an overview of the counselling process, what to expect from your counsellor, what your responsibilities are in counselling and concerns that may lead you to seek counselling.

What is Counselling?

Counselling may be defined as a growth process through which individuals are helped to define goals, make decisions, and solve problems related to personal-social; educational and career concerns. Counselling can present you with personal challenges and you are likely to discover new and exciting aspects of yourself.

Important considerations

One of the most difficult steps in counselling occurs before you even see a counsellor for the first time. Deciding to seek counselling is the first step in change. Once this decision has been made, the mechanics for change have been set in motion. In the process of changing the way you think, feel, or behave, you may have to try out new ways of doing things. This can make you anxious or frustrated. Also, in the course of counselling you may come to realize that things you once thought of only in a positive or negative way, you see a bit differently.

What you can expect from your counsellor?

You can expect someone will:

- ◆ Not to interrupt you.
- ◆ To help you sort out and disentangle your feelings and worries.
- ◆ To provide you with insight into how you really think and feel.
- ◆ To help you express your emotions in your own way.
- ◆ To help you work out your own solutions to problems.
- ◆ To help you accept what cannot be changed.
- ◆ To help and support you while you do all of this.

Confidentiality is an important and vital part of counselling. Your lecturers and parents **WILL NOT** be informed about what you discuss during the sessions. Nothing discussed during counselling may be told to anyone without your permission.

Change the World

NELSON MANDELA
UNIVERSITY

Enquiries

**Student Counselling Career and
Development Centre
Nelson Mandela University**

<http://counselling.mandela.ac.za>

counselling@mandela.ac.za



mandela.ac.za

Counselling and You

Myths about Counselling:

1. Counselling is only for people who have very serious emotional problems.

- ◆ **Fact** — Counselling does attend to challenges regarded as “serious emotional problems”, but it also attends to the issues that students bring in whenever they feel that their stress is getting in the way of living life with satisfaction.

2. People in counselling are inherently weak.

- ◆ **Fact** — There is nothing weak about a person who enters counselling. Rather, counselling is a vehicle for strong people who decide to face their challenges directly. This could be viewed as wise and courageous.

3. Change is simple.

- ◆ **Fact** — Change is not always simple and may take time and energy. Counselling is not a "quick fix" cure to your problems.

4. The counsellor is your "psychic" who tells you what to do with your life and how to "fix" your problems.

- ◆ **Fact** — The counsellor is there to help you achieve the goals you set and help you resolve your problems. Counsellors will NOT tell you what to do, but will rather help you to explore the potential up and down- sides of your choices.

5. Counselling is an activity for self-absorbed people.

- ◆ **Fact** — Most students who seek counselling are struggling because they are very sensitive to the feelings and experiences of others and want to preserve their relationships by working on the difficulties that threaten them.

Your responsibilities in counselling

Your main responsibilities in counselling are to:

- ◆ Attend our regularly scheduled sessions,
- ◆ Talk about what is bothering you as openly and honestly as you can.
- ◆ Complete any tasks or "homework" assignments you may be asked to do.
- ◆ Let your counsellor know if you are unable to make it to a session (preferably at least four hours before the time).

- ◆ Take risks because most counselling will require you to try something new or a "different approach".
- ◆ Give feedback to your counsellor about how you are progressing. Are you making progress or not?

How Do I Know If I Need Counselling?

Counselling may be of help to you if you feel concerned about:

- Where you are going with your life.
- Relationships.
- Not being able to make friends.
- Something you have never told anybody, but feel like you should.
- Academic concerns, such as loss of motivation or concentration
- Not knowing how to study.
- Your marks not being in line with the amount of effort you put into your studies.
- Failing tests during the term.
- Not getting along with a lecturer.
- Having chosen the wrong course of study and considering a change in direction
- Sexual harassment, date rape, rape, sexual abuse etc.
- Feeling stressed out or anxious.
- Feeling sad or depressed most of the time.
- Drinking or using drugs.
- Your physical or learning disability.
- Lacking in self confidence.
- Either eating too much or too little.
- Feeling afraid to speak in front of the class

Is there an emergency service?

When there is an emergency, we will arrange for you to see a counsellor quickly. Emergencies will be given priority and will be seen on the day.

Alternatively, for emergencies out of working hours, crisis line services are available on: **082 428 5009**.

How do I go about making an appointment?

You can make an appointment at the Reception area or you can call in.

The following venues and numbers can be used for your specific campus if you would like to contact the Student Counselling, Career and Development Centre:

- **South Campus:** Embizweni Building: 041 504 2511
- **North Campus:** (Opposite the Goldfields Auditorium): 041 504 3222
- **Second Avenue Campus:** (Opposite Cafeteria): 041 504 3854
- **Missionvale Campus:** Administration building
Office number D126: 041 504 1106

Do you know?

The counselling services are available free of charge to enrolled students.

Other emergency contact numbers

In the case of an emergency you can also contact the following numbers:

- Police: 10111
- Ambulance: 10177

Unless otherwise indicated, copyright in the content of this work is the property of the Student Counselling, Career and Development Centre, Nelson Mandela University. All content is protected by South African copyright law and, by virtue of international treaties, equivalent copyright laws in other countries.

No material contained within this work may be reproduced or copied in any way without prior written permission of Nelson Mandela University.

© Copyright 2018, Nelson Mandela University. All rights reserved.