5 TIPS TO PREPARE FOR THERAPY

Tip 1: Try To Be Clear About What Issues You Want To Work On.

Have a think about this in relation to what's important to you. It may be that it is just one issue, or it maybe there are several, in which case it could be helpful for you to write down what the issues are and keep this to refer to in your first contact.

Tip 2: What Do You Want To Get Out Of Your Therapy?

Having a goal for Counselling is always a good start, as it helps both yourself and your Counsellor to have structure and focus and measure progress. Goals can always be changed or adapted along the way, as awareness grows and priorities for the therapeutic work become even clearer, but starting with a clear intention is always beneficial. If you come along to therapy and you know what your issues are but aren't sure about your goals for therapy, that too is absolutely fine. Part of a Counsellors role can be to help you agree goals that are realistic and achievable.

Tip 3: Be Open and Honest

Try to be as transparent and open as possible. A Counsellor will need to know quite a lot about you and if you choose to hold back, this can limit the work. Understandably this openness requires trust and may take 2-3 sessions as you build rapport with the therapist but, please resist the temptation of trying to present as the best version of you, because if you do that, the Counsellor will not be able to understand the fullest measure and this can hamper you from achieving your goals or elongate the process, which in the long run, costs you.

Tip 4: Be Prepared to Do Some Work Between Sessions

As you will have heard, practice makes perfect, and in various situations in life, this does ring true. As we practice new skill sets or ways of behaving, they soon become second nature and we reap the benefits. An example of such within therapy is someone who wants to overcome anxiety, whose Counsellor may provide a guided imagery audio to listen to between sessions; or it may be that you are directed to a choice of helpful free apps, to engage with as part of extending the work. This work undertaken in the interims can enhance the chances of feeling better sooner and mastering any necessary behaviour changes to improve wellbeing. Whatever additional work is advised, this will be decided collaboratively between both the therapist and the Counselee, it is never dictatorial.

Tip 5: Clear Some Time Around Your Sessions

Getting to appointment early is always beneficial as it gives time to consider where you are and process how you are feeling and what you would like to discuss within the session. Also, having time after your session can prove very helpful. Having a quiet time with a hot drink after your session, will give you time to think about the things you discussed and get you ready for whatever you need to do next. It also provides an opportunity to cut off from those emotions that may have arisen and get your headspace for what awaits you when you return home or back to work. It is also a great time to Journal, and Therapy Journalling has been proven to enhance work undertaken in therapy and all manner of these can be purchased. Alternatively, you could just get a notebook which you dedicate to Counselling, where you log your thoughts, feelings, and maybe what you found helpful or even what you didn't. You may even wish to write down things to bring to your next session, which you want to explore further. After therapy can also provide a time for new insights and understanding as you process what happened in the session and some people find that this can sometimes provide an 'aha!' moment. Rushing back into your normal life can mean that feelings are raw, and this can impact others as well as yourself, so arranging a time where you have space before and after is really the ideal if that possibility is available to you.