Counselling – What can I expect?

*Counselling is a way of relating to and responding to another person, so that the person is helped to explore his or her thoughts, feelings and behaviour, to reach a clear understanding. He or she is then helped to find and use their own strengths so that they cope more effectively with life by making appropriate decisions or by taking relevant action.*

**Q. What is counselling?**

A. Counselling offers you a chance to explore difficulties you are having in your life. You can explore these with a counsellor who will neither advise nor judge you. The counsellor’s role is to help you explore and unlock your feelings.

**Q. Some of my feelings are very painful. Will talking about them make it more so?**

A. It may well be painful and upsetting. This cannot be avoided but will help you to understand more about yourself. From this you may well begin to feel less confused and able to make necessary changes in your life or come to terms with things that cannot be changed.

**Q. Who is counselling for?**

A. Counselling is for anyone that wants to explore issues concerning the past, present or indeed future. It could be that you feel you lack direction and that life makes no sense. It may be that you can no longer be sure just what it is you are feeling.

**Q. What will happen in our first meeting?**

A. The first session is a chance to talk over your expectations and hopes. The counsellor will explain the way in which she works and what will happen. The first session is also a chance to see if you both feel you are able to work together.

**Q. What is a contract?**

A. The contract is between you and the counsellor and generally specifies the cost, commitment and limits to confidentiality.

**Q. What is expected of me?**

A. It is your responsibility to attend at the agreed time but if you are unable to attend an appointment you must let the counsellor know. If less than 24 hours notice is given before the agreed appointment the full fee will be charged.

**Q. How do I end the counselling contract?**

A. Normally you will know when you are ready to end and you and your counsellor will work out a way to suit you.