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counselling & wellbeing



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Things I wish I knew before starting counselling

Starting counselling can feel like a big, strange, sometimes scary step. Whether you're feeling hopeful, nervous, unsure or just tired of carrying things alone, you're not the only one. Here are a few things I wish someone had told me before I started counselling (and that many of my clients say they wish they'd known too):

1. You don't have to know what to say

Seriously. You don't need to prepare a speech or have it all figured out. Some people start therapy and talk non-stop. Others sit quietly, unsure where to begin. Both are completely okay.

It's your counsellor's job to hold the space, not for you to perform in it.

2. It's okay to cry (really)

This one feels important. So many of us were raised to believe that crying makes us weak or that it's something to apologise for. In therapy, it's the opposite, tears are welcome here.

Crying is your body expressing what words might not have found yet. It's not a breakdown; it's a release. And no, it's not "too much."

3. It might feel awkward at first

You're talking to a stranger about personal stuff, of course it might feel weird. It takes time to build trust and safety in the space. That's completely normal.

You don't need to feel instantly better after one session. Sometimes counselling feels like a slow unfolding and that's okay too.

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4. Your counsellor isn't judging you

No matter what you say, how you feel, or what you've been through, a person-centred counsellor is here to understand, not judge. You're not "too dramatic," "too quiet," or "too messy." You're human, and therapy is a space to show up exactly as you are.

5. You're allowed to say what you need

Want to go slower? Need more silence? Unsure if this is working? You're allowed to bring all of that into the room. Therapy isn't about doing it "right", it's about being real.

You don't need to protect your counsellor's feelings. This is *your* time.

6. It doesn't mean you've failed

Needing support doesn't mean you're weak, broken, or behind. In fact, it means you're paying attention to yourself in a world that often encourages us to ignore our needs.

It's one of the bravest things you can do, to stop pretending you're fine, and choose to be seen instead.

One last thing...

If you're thinking about starting counselling, or you've already begun, and you're not sure what you're doing that's okay. Most people don't. Counselling isn't about being "ready." It's about being *willing*. Willing to explore. Willing to feel. Willing to begin.

And if you cry? That's more than okay. That's healing.

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If you're curious about what counselling might look like for you, I'm here when you're ready. You don't have to have it all figured out. Just bring yourself. That's enough.

Rachel .