

## Individual Counseling/Therapy

Individuals interested in individual counseling have an opportunity to collaborate with their therapist in the identification of a specific plan of action that will help them accomplish their counseling goal. This, however, is a process over a period of time early in the development of the therapeutic relationship.

The following points identify the various aspects involved in the development of a working relationship:

- Initially, client and therapist roles are identified, and all questions are addressed to create and support the development of a trusting, therapeutic relationship. Confidentiality is assured at this point, and the limits of confidentiality are also disclosed.
- After this is accomplished, the individual client identifies or clarifies a goal to address with their therapist. There may be a short-term goal established within the context of a longer term goal. This varies from one person and situation to another. Through a collaborative effort, new steps, decisions, actions, communications, or behaviors are identified that will support the achievement of the goal and an individually tailored plan of action emerges.
- Another part of goal accomplishment is the identification and removal of specific obstacles to the identified goal. This may involve learning new skills or improving current skills with regard to personal boundary setting, effective communication, conflict resolution, anger management, or anxiety reduction techniques to name a few.
- There are times that other family members, spouses, or significant others may be invited to a particular session(s), but only if the individual client agrees and sees the benefit of doing this.
- All topics and feelings are acceptable within the counseling/therapy session. Generally, initial appointments are weekly, eventually move to bi-monthly, monthly, then as needed or desired as one moves closer to their goal. A regularly scheduled appointment time will be reserved for each client.
- As goals are accomplished and a client is feeling much better, the topic of termination of sessions will be addressed and decided upon between the individual client and his/her therapist. Clients are encouraged to discuss progress during the course of counseling/therapy and to identify when they desire to terminate their counseling/therapy sessions. A discussion and agreement secured *prior* to the termination of the therapy work is an accomplishment and course of action that is often generalized and beneficial in the successful termination of personal and other working relationships as well.
- Once termination has taken place, clients have the choice to return to counseling/therapy at any time in the future.