

The Foster Practice

Counselling & Coaching

Online & Telephone Counselling

Whilst many people consider that counselling is done face to face; online or telephone counselling work creates additional choices for clients. You can choose what works for you. It may be that you need flexibility in your day, that accessing a location is difficult, or you feel unable to see a counsellor face to face.

An important part of any therapy session is ensuring that confidentiality is protected and this is no different for telephone or online counselling. Using encrypted software platforms and secure settings are an important part of making sure that sessions are managed professionally. All of this can be explored and agreed during the initial consultation, but you can ask questions any time if you have any concerns.

You decide which method of counselling works for you and we book an appointment, just like you would do for a face-to-face session. You choose the location and the pace of your counselling to suit your needs.

How it works

Video, audio and chat-room counselling

Online counselling is available via Doxy.Me, an end-to-end encrypted service allowing you to access either video, audio, or chat. Doxy.Me provides a non-account login platform. This way you don't have to download any apps. It also means there is no trackable information and no software to download.

Should you choose remote counselling, you will be guided through accessing Doxy.Me and we will meet on Doxy.Me at a time that we have previously arranged. Sessions are 50 minutes in length.

Being able to use this service provides the benefits of face-to-face therapy whilst experiencing the flexibility and convenience of online therapy. You only need a camera or a webcam if you are accessing the video portion of this service.

Email counselling

This form of counselling gives you time to think through what you would like to say to your counsellor. It also gives you time to reflect in between bookings. We book an appointment as we would normally and this reflects the time you would like to send me your email. I will then respond within 2 working days of receiving the email.

Importantly, we use a specific platform called 'Prevail' to send and receive emails. This is a secure platform created specifically for managing confidential email content. If you decide to use this method, I can take you through setting this account up and how we can manage the exchanges. Whilst it is possible to work purely through email counselling, it is also often punctuated with more structured online or face to face counselling. It is worth considering the delay of communications through this method, especially if you have issues to discuss of a timely nature.

Benefits of Online Therapy

- Providing therapy in a flexible fashion from your own home or other setting.
- Encrypted software that offers confidentiality and peace of mind.
- Email counselling provides the time to write and consider what you wish to say.
- Booking time with your counsellor that works for you and working at your pace.
- Some find it easier to express their feelings by writing it down.
- Access to counselling may be timelier for you.
- Flexibility to choose the technology you feel is best for you.

Things to consider

- Are you comfortable using internet technology?
- Would you prefer to see your counsellor face to face?
- Do you feel you can express your feelings well using words?
- Do you feel your situation is too complex or easier to discuss via the internet?
- Is there a computer that you can use privately without interruption?
- Text communication can sometimes be open to misunderstanding, your counsellor will spend time to help clarify anything and this may take a little longer.
- There may be more clarification from the counsellor so they can be sure they understand what it is you are communicating.

Confidentiality and Ethical Considerations

Confidentiality and Security

You can read my privacy policy regarding how information you supply is handled by visiting this link: <https://www.thefosterpractice.co.uk/privacypolicy>

Any information shared with me is held in strict confidence and all electronically stored information is stored on a system called 'bacpac' according to ICO and GDPR guidelines. Please see more details of the use of 'bacpac' in my client contract:

https://www.thefosterpractice.co.uk/files/ugd/b2fe6e_be87c00a2ec84ce9b5374814212bed56.pdf

Ethical Considerations

I adhere to the ethical framework for good practice for both the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy and the National Counselling and Psychotherapy Society. I adhere to their ethical guidelines for Online Counselling and Psychotherapy. More information on these documents can be found at:

BACP

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/events-and-resources/ethics-and-standards/ethical-framework-for-the-counselling-professions/>

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/events-and-resources/ethics-and-standards/competences-and-curricula/online-and-phone-therapy/>

NCPS

<https://ncps.com/about-us/code-of-ethics>

Please answer the questions listed below and then return this agreement document.

Please provide brief details below regarding the issues you would like to explore in counselling:

Full Name

DOB:

Address:

What are you looking to address in counselling
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.....

Are you, or have you in the past, had counselling?
.....
.....

Contact details phone:

Emergency contact number in case of technology breakdown
.....

E-mail:

Best time to contact:

What method of communication would you prefer?.....

History of Previous or Existing Medical/Psychiatric Conditions or Admissions:
.....
.....
.....

Any medical appointments due and what for:
.....

Where/when/why:

History of violence/overdose or self-harm:
.....

GP details:
.....

Consent for us to contact your GP: YES / NO

Please 'sign electronically' here with your name if you agree to working to the points within this agreement

Please return this document by email to info@thefosterpractice.co.uk

I aim to contact you via your preferred contact method within 48 hours of receipt of this form with further information regarding your counselling.