

## **Counselling and Therapy in a Psychoanalytic Mode: In Brief**

The ways counselling and therapy differ from each other is a subject about which there is much argument. However, to be brief, I do not distinguish the two in this short paper.

### **Example**

There are many possible scenarios. These can relate to one person, a couple or a group seeking to gain from counselling and therapy in a psychoanalytic mode. I will focus on individuals; but the same approach works more widely.

In one such scenario, somebody may have worried about what others thought, or would think; and may have felt downcast a lot of the time. It may be that family and friends thought the last thing on earth for that person to do was to go and talk to a therapist each week. It could be that family and friends thought this individual was "self-centred enough already". However, after sessions, most tend to agree something enlarging has happened. Someone formerly known to have been very unhappy now gets on in a more authentic way with other people, feeling both more present in relationships and more at ease in moments of solitude. That person can approach things to a greater extent without, as before, feeling hopeless or wretched.

### **Introduction**

Counselling and therapy in a psychoanalytic mode aim to add greatly to your sense of wholeness, your ability to lead your life effectively, and your engagement with your emotional, bodily and relational health. It is a process that helps you explore and approach your problems by increasing awareness of the way in which your inner world comes into and is a part of your day-to-day behaviour. It differs from many other therapies and forms of counselling, because it can take longer, aiming for underlying and enduring change in your being and capacity to grow.

### **Reasons For Seeking Help**

Sometimes people seek help for particular issues such as

- eating disorders
- psychosomatic illnesses
- obsessional and other troubling or harmful behaviours and
- phobic anxieties.

At other times they seek help because of more widespread and deep-seated feelings, for example

- depression
- anxiety
- difficulties in concentrating
- dissatisfaction at work and
- an inability to form and sustain satisfying relationships.

### **The Theory**

The psychoanalytic mode comes out of the observation that we sometimes try to deal with problems by trying to keep them out of our minds. This has seemed to provide a way of getting rid of them. Yet there is no getting rid of or moderating them this way. These problems continue to have an important effect on our feelings and behaviour.

Early experiences are important in shaping the way our minds work. A large part of our

minds operates outside of consciousness. From an early age, we find ways of managing our experiences; and this influences how we cope in later life. With the help of a counsellor or therapist working in a psychoanalytic mode, you can gradually come to understand these experiences and make sense of how you have dealt and are currently dealing with them. This leads to a process of change, which takes place through and between sessions.

The relationship with the therapist is an important part of the therapy. I offer a confidential, safe and private place where the unconscious patterns of your inner world can come to light.

The quiet setting of counselling and therapy sessions means that emotional conflicts can be re-lived and new responses to old problems can be found. This process helps you identify those patterns of behaviour which you keep repeating. As you become aware of these patterns, the work enables a loosening of their hold; and movement can occur.

### **The Therapist**

As a counsellor and therapist in a psychoanalytic mode, I will reveal little about myself. I will, in principle, keep contact between us to the time and place sessions occur. These sessions form the slot you will have booked with me. Moreover, I will work within a strict rule of neutrality toward what you bring. Such features may mean I appear to you to be unconcerned.

Nevertheless, this quiet, non-intrusive method adds to a laboratory setting intended to help you express unconscious wishes and disagreement. The difficulties that you may have in your life, especially past discord, are reflected in the relationship between you and me. Though this experience may be uncomfortable at times, it is the basis for providing the experiences of holding and understanding that help you stay in touch with distressing states, rather than seeking means of short-term escape. This is although some of those around you, in your past and your present relations, may have approved of such means.

### **Time In Therapy**

It is difficult to say how long therapy will take. It can vary from months to years. It therefore involves some financial undertaking, although (as you can see at the *Confidentiality & Fees* page at my website) I do offer a sliding scale. Each session lasts fifty minutes, somewhat longer in the case of couples, and takes place, generally, between one and three times a week. This will be discussed with you at the initial assessment.

### **The Cost**

As mentioned, fees vary. They are discussed before therapy begins and can be reviewed in the light of developments.