



### **Who is counselling for?**

Counselling is for everyone.

All of us need to feel heard, validated and connected. More than ever we need this when we are struggling, but you don't have to be struggling to benefit from counselling.

Sometimes there is a niggling feeling that something isn't quite right, but you can't place it, a counsellor can help. Maybe you find yourself feeling anxious or overwhelmed, counselling can help by providing a safe space for you to reflect on your experiences, thoughts and feelings.

If you're feeling like something isn't right, that matters and you have the right to ask for support. Keeping going when it's causing you damage is not always a sign of strength, asking for help takes bravery. If it didn't it wouldn't be such a challenge for so many of us.

Counsellors won't offer you advice, if you're looking for practical support please email [info@expresscic.org.uk](mailto:info@expresscic.org.uk) and they can arrange a time to speak to you about other services.

### **What happens in a counselling session?**

Counselling is a confidential space to talk through what has been troubling you, when it started and how it's affecting you. This is an opportunity for you to say the things you can't usually say in a safe space with someone who is trained to listen.

During a counselling session you'll be encouraged to notice your emotions and supported to identify what they might be trying to tell you. A bit like when your tummy grumbles you know you need to eat something, emotions like anger, sadness and feeling overwhelmed etc are your body's way of communicating something to you.

Your counsellor will ask you questions like "Have you felt like this before?" or "how have you kept going until now?" Questions like this will help you to think about things from a different perspective, you might identify strengths and choices you didn't know you have. You might learn new ways to talk to your partner about how you need to be supported, or come to terms with a new diagnosis. These are just a few ways counselling can help.

### **What are some of the benefits of counselling?**

Often parents feel like if they can solve the issues surrounding their child, that this will stop them from feeling burnt out, resentful, overwhelmed, isolated and unsupported. Have you heard the phrase 'you can't pour from an empty cup'? Counselling can help you figure out how to build your resilience during times of difficulty. Many times parents of children with additional needs say they are constantly battling, for funding, for support, for space, for others to help. Counselling can help



you to begin to identify options or choices that you may not be able to see, with all the challenges that are surrounding you taking up so much space.

Sometimes talking to friends and family doesn't feel like an option. Maybe you worry you'll burden them or perhaps you don't think they will understand. A Counsellor won't judge you, they will ask you questions and support you to reflect on your experiences, to understand what life is like for you and how you would like things to be different.

In counselling your needs, thoughts and feelings are the priority. You will be given space to share whatever battles and challenges you may be facing, you'll be supported to identify ways to begin feeling back in control.

### **How can I access counselling at Express?**

We offer one to one counselling to parents and carers of children and young people with additional needs. Our counsellors work both in person at the Express CIC office in Tolworth and virtually via Zoom. Our team is made up of a mixture students and qualified counsellors all who have experience either personally or professionally of additional needs and the impacts of these on families.

For more information or to apply for counselling at Express CIC please email us at [counselling@expresscic.org.uk](mailto:counselling@expresscic.org.uk)

Once your email has been received we will send you information about session times and the session fee. You'll also receive a referral form to complete and return, please note there can be a wait for sessions to start.