



WHAT TO EXPECT IN COUNSELLING - A GUIDE FOR NEURODIVERGENT TEENS



Going to counselling can feel weird at first – especially if you're not sure what it's going to be like. This guide is here to help you know what to expect so you can feel more prepared and less anxious.

Whether you've chosen to come to counselling or someone else suggested it (like a parent, carer or school), this space is just for you.

What Is Counselling?

Counselling is a place where you can talk (or not talk!) about what's going on in your life. It's a space where you won't be judged, and you don't have to pretend everything's okay.

You might come to counselling if you're feeling:

- Overwhelmed or anxious
- Low or unmotivated
- Confused about your identity or emotions
- Stressed by school, friendships, family, or expectations
- Burnt out or masking all the time
- Like you just want someone to understand

What If I'm Neurodivergent?

Counselling with me is neuroaffirming. That means I understand that being autistic, ADHD, or otherwise neurodivergent isn't a problem to fix. It's a part of who you are, and I respect that. That might mean:

- You can stim, fidget, or bring a comfort item
- You can take breaks or have quiet time
- We can use special interests to express how you feel
- You can show up exactly as you are — and you will be supported

What Happens in the First Session?

The first session is just about getting to know each other. You don't have to tell your whole life story. We might talk about:

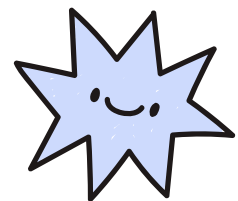
- What helps you feel safe
- What kind of support you'd like
- Any worries you have about counselling
- How you like to communicate
- You can ask me questions too. I want you to feel comfortable.

What Do Sessions Look Like After That?

Each session is usually around 45 minutes long. You can talk about whatever you need. Some weeks might be quiet, and that's okay too. You can bring topics, or I can gently help you explore what's going on.

Some things we might do:

- Talk through something that's bothering you
- Learn ways to handle stress or anxiety
- Make sense of emotions
- Explore who you are and what matters to you
- Practice setting boundaries or handling difficult situations
- You're in charge of what we talk about.



What If I Don't Know What to Say?

That's totally fine. You won't be pressured to talk, but I will help you.

What If I Don't Like It?

That's okay. You can tell me if something doesn't feel right or if you want to do things differently. This space is yours. We can go at your pace. If you're unsure about continuing, we can talk about that too — no pressure.

You Deserve Support

You don't have to figure everything out alone.

If you ever feel like counselling isn't helping or you're struggling with something new, we can review how things are going and make a plan together.

Want to Know More?

Follow us on Instagram for gentle reminders, helpful tips, and info about our monthly Stim Space meet-up for neurodivergent teens (2nd Thursday of each month) @ Birkenhead Park Counselling Centre