

COUNSELLING - DOES IT WORK?

The following is an extract from a press release from the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy in relation to the King report. This study verifies that counselling is effective and works:

- It overturns the popular misconception among a MINORITY of doctors that counselling is ineffective and blows out of the water populist critics who suggest that counselling may be "counter-productive"
- A new study summarised in the British Medical Journal on 2nd December 2000 found that the most effective treatment for depression and anxiety, is counselling.

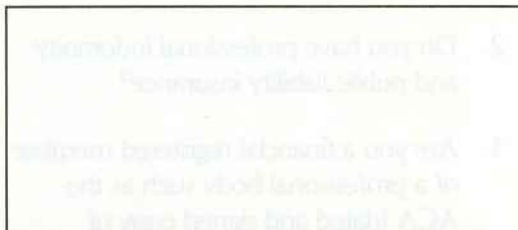
This was one of the most rigorous studies of counselling yet completed. It conformed to the National Health Scheme 'gold-standard' in evaluation research.

In plain English, this means it was more or less the highest quality research you can get. It confirms that.....

**THE EVIDENCE FOR COUNSELLING
IS BECOMING EVER MORE
STRONGLY SUPPORTIVE.**

(For further information on this press release contact:
Stephen Goss on goss@bacresearch.freemove.co.uk)

Australian Counselling Association Pty Ltd ACN 085 535 628



Australian Counselling Association Pty Ltd ACN 085 535 628

Phone 1300 784 333

Fax (07) 3857 1777

Email aca@theaca.net.au

Web www.theaca.net.au

PO Box 33
KEDRON Q 4031

Office hours 8am - 4pm Qld time.

....*the* association for counsellors in
Australia

An ACA public education initiative.

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*Before you see
a Counsellor,
please read
this brochure.*

This brochure is made available for the benefit of the public. It is a public educational initiative of the Australian Counselling Association.

Counselling in Australia

Counselling in Australia is a self-regulating industry. Counsellors are not by law required to meet any specific standard. It is the job of professional associations such as the ACA to set industry standards. If you are going to use a counsellor, it is in your own best interest to make sure they meet industry standards.

The reason it is in your own best interest is that as a consumer you have rights. These rights cannot be enforced if you use the services of a counsellor who does not meet industry standards.

A counsellor who is a member of a professional body such as the Australian Counselling Association has committed to abide by an agreed code of conduct and meet training standards.

Any member of the public who uses a counsellor who is a member of ACA can take disciplinary action against that counsellor if they are unhappy with the service.

Counsellors who are not members of a professional body such as the ACA may not have any recognised training. They may have inadequate training that was undertaken for personal development rather than for formal vocational training. They may also be individuals who have experienced a trauma and use this as their qualification.

Counsellors are expected to have formal qualifications like any other professional.

Questions to ask a counsellor

1. Do you abide by a Code of Conduct that outlines my rights? Can I have a copy?
2. Do you have professional indemnity and public liability insurance?
3. Are you a financial registered member of a professional body such as the ACA (dated and signed copy of registration should be on display)?
4. Do you receive regular professional supervision?
5. Are your counselling qualifications recognised by a professional body such as the ACA?
6. Have you completed your training as a counsellor?
7. What are your hours and do I need an appointment?
8. What are your hourly rates and are there any other costs involved?
9. How long is a normal counselling session? (Sessions should average between 40 & 60 minutes and no longer than 2 hours).
10. What happens if the session goes over time?
11. What are my rights of recourse?

12. Do you take notes? If so, what happens to them? Can I read them and if not, why not?

A counsellor who answers **yes** to questions 1-6 and has the relevant documentation probably meets the minimum industry training standards.

If a counsellor answers **no** to any of the questions from 1 to 6 regardless of their reasoning they may not meet all of the appropriate industry standards.

People claiming to be counsellors and who do not meet industry standards may try to convince you that there are no standards. Would you accept this argument from an accountant who was not registered or certified?

Although ACA is Australia's only national professionally managed counselling body some counsellors may belong to other associations that do meet industry standards.

Before entrusting your emotional well being to a counsellor, please take the time to ensure the counsellor you are intending to see is a qualified counsellor who meets the industry standards. If in doubt phone us.

If a counsellor is not a member of a professional body such as the ACA, it is important to note; they may have either failed to meet industry membership standards or have been deregistered for disciplinary reasons. Non registered counsellors may also be professionals who have been deregistered from other disciplines such as psychiatry.