

Let's establish your goals for this counseling process. Please review the points below and do as much as you can. You can send your goals back to me in an email.

There are:

- Emotional Goals = how I want to feel
- Behavioral Goals = what I want to do

Emotional Goals:

Please choose one of the common goals below or write your own that most closely applies to you.

Common emotional goals include:

- "Recover from depression (or anxiety)"
- "Stop feeling so anxious"
- "Increase self-worth"
- "Build self-esteem"
- "Get over what happened"
- "Get my old self back"
- "Feel happy"
- "Feel good"
- "Stop feeling so bad"
- "Have more confidence"
- "Stop doubting myself"
- "Feel calmer"
- "Reduce anxiety"
- "Stop getting so angry"

Behavioral Goals:

If the work we do in counseling is successful, then..

- "What will I do differently?"
- "What will I start doing/stop doing?"
- "What will I do more of or less of?"
- "How will I treat myself, others, the world differently?"
- "What people, places, events, activities, challenges, will I approach, start, resume, or contact (rather than avoid, withdraw, quit, or stay away from)?"
- "Is there anyone or anything I'll be able to appreciate more, focus on better, engage in more, pay more attention to?"

Once again, it is worth mentioning that we use ACT (Acceptance and Commitment Therapy) in our sessions. It's a very active form of therapy/coaching, not just talking about your problems and feelings. Our aim here is to work together as a team, to help you be the sort of person you want to be and build the sort of life you want to live. Part of this approach involves learning skills to handle difficult thoughts and feelings more effectively, so they have less impact and influence over you. When we introduce these skills, I'll ask you to practice them between sessions. You don't have to do that, of course; but it's like learning to play a guitar or drive a car: the more practice you do, the better you get.

ACT also involves clarifying your values: finding out what matters to you, what you want to stand for in life, what strengths and qualities you want to develop, how you want to treat yourself and others. And taking action to solve your problems, face your challenges, and do things that make life better. I want you to leave here after each session with an action plan: something practical to take away and use to actively improve your life. At times, therapy may seem like a roller-coaster ride; but I'll be there in the roller coaster car with you. I will ask you at times to try new things that may pull you out of your comfort zone – like learning new skills to handle difficult thoughts and feelings - but you never have to do them.

You are always free to say no to anything I suggest.