

Why Counseling?

If you are going through a difficult time in your life, you have some major life altering decisions to make, or it seems that things are just “not working” the way you anticipated, then it may be time to make some personal changes in your life through counseling. The key is to find a therapist with whom you are comfortable and whose experience aligns with yours. Change can inspire dread or fear or it can open you to new possibilities depending on your past experiences. Counseling takes an educational approach; learning from our past and then examining what we are currently doing that holds us back from creating the life we want to have.

Often we start by exploring your history and the patterns that you inherited from your family which is a “multigenerational family program” that is passed down from one generation to the next. Frequently people vow not to do things the way their parents or grandparents did and often find they have swung to the opposite extreme as a reaction to the parenting they experienced. Couples often have different family backgrounds and this process allows us to take the best core values and traditions from both worlds. Once we identify the things that you want to change, be it your relationships, your attitude, your identity we set counseling goals and then work to resolve the conflicts that have prevented you from living your life to the fullest. I encourage clients to take an active role in the counseling process by reading books; watching videos; participating in support groups (when appropriate); expanding their social support network; and tapping into the vast resources of information available on the internet. My counseling approach is education based and I teach clients new perspectives; reframing past experiences; challenging their belief system to see if it still applies today. I work closely with medical professionals in cases where medication may be required. Issues of depression; anxiety; phobias; eating disorders; may require the client to have a physical examination and if necessary medication prescribed by a psychiatrist. I work with doctors and other professionals to help clients find what they need.

Often couples come to see me when they are on the brink of divorce. Before they proceed to separate we try to find some common ground to work towards creating a new and better relationship. All couples have conflicts but learning how to resolve these without threatening the stability of the relationship is crucial to creating a better and more loving partnership. In couples’ counseling, we also have to look at individual growth and the ability of each person to recognize the need for change. It only takes one person to affect the family system and initiate the change process.

How long will counseling take?

This question depends on the individual or couple involved. Sometimes a single session is enough to realign priorities or to come to a decision that has been difficult. Other times it is a process that may last for a few sessions or several months depending on the individuals involved. How entrenched are we in our story? And how open are we to new

interactions? It may take some time to learn new interactions. The key is to be willing to commit to the process and attend regularly scheduled appointments.

What can I expect through the process?

One definition of insanity is to do the same thing over and over again and expect a different result. Counseling is an educational process to learn something new. Sometimes it is necessary to experience transitory fear or pain as we enter the change process. The alternative is to remain in an anxious state until the pain is sufficient to challenge us to grow. It is the times when we feel “we can’t keep doing what we are doing” that we are most open to change and allow our fear to challenge us to grow. It takes courage to change and building a support network is also part of the process of counseling.

When will I know that I am done with counseling?

Since counseling is an individual process by setting goals of what you would like to accomplish in counseling, we will have a clear determination of when you have attained those goals. This is usually done in the first or second session. Occasionally additional goals arise and the process may continue but as a counselor, my ambition is to get people back into enjoying their own life surrounded by family and friends. The door remains open and if at anytime you wish to have a “tune up” and make sure you are on track, additional appointments can be scheduled.

What do you do that is different from other counselors in Bangkok?

For one thing, I prefer longer sessions that range between 80 to 120 minutes. With all the effort it takes to get around in Bangkok traffic I have found the longer sessions are far more productive. A fifty minute session is often too short to accomplish the work at hand. I would rather see clients for longer sessions over a shorter period of time so that they can reengage in their life more quickly. My clients have expressed that they get more “value” from the extended sessions.

I bring my life experience to the counseling arena. I have lived internationally for over 30 years as an expatriate corporate wife; raised two children; engaged with various school systems (Montessori, British, American, International- including boarding schools); have actively cared for our elderly parents from a distance; and was present to experience their peaceful deaths with the loving support of hospice and family members.