



## Counseling Myths and Reality

Life is full of challenges, including pressures at work, financial worries, family problems and personal issues. Even with support from family and friends, it can sometimes be helpful to talk with an independent counselor who can help you work out what's right for you, in an empathic and confidential setting. Here are some of the common myths surrounding counseling.

**Myth: Counseling is only for people with serious mental health issues.**

**Reality:** Not true! Many people attend counseling when they come to a point in their lives when nothing seems to be seriously wrong, but they don't know which way to turn next. Some people access counseling when simply struggling with a specific situation or problem in their life. Others use it as a means of personal or professional development.

**Myth: Only weak people who can't cope with life seek counseling.**

**Reality:** The opposite is actually true! Sometimes life throws you a curveball that you can find difficult to manage on your own. It takes inner strength to acknowledge that there is something that you could benefit from addressing in counseling. It takes self-awareness to recognize this, and courage to be willing to proactively deal with the challenges you are facing.

**Myth: Counseling is only for serious problems.**

**Reality:** While counseling can help people facing serious issues, most people who access counseling through their Employee Assistance Program (EAP) do so for assistance with everyday issues such as stress, anxiety or work-life balance. You don't have to wait until things spiral out of control before seeking support; counseling can help nip things in the bud before things become too serious.

**Myth: Everyone at work will know I'm seeing a counselor.**

**Reality:** The only person who will know you are seeing a counselor is you. No one at your workplace will even know that you have accessed your EAP unless you tell them. Your counselors are bound by a code of ethics and work within their confidentiality guidelines, which your EAP strictly adheres to. This would be explained to you fully when you contact the service and prior to your starting any counseling.

**Myth: A counselor will fix my problems for me.**

**Reality:** A counselor will work with you to help you work through the challenges you face, but his or her role isn't to fix things or do it for you. The counselor will listen, guide, support and ensure you stay focused. He or she can help you identify and draw on your own resources, as well as learn others. Ultimately this can enable you to make the right choices and decisions in a safe and supportive environment. The counseling process can help you feel more empowered and in control of your life by talking through situations, feelings or concerns that might otherwise be keeping you feeling stuck, helpless, angry or frustrated.

**Myth: I've tried counseling before, and it doesn't work.**

**Reality:** There are a number of reasons that may have led you to believe this, but as long as you are open to the counseling process, you can have a different and more positive experience this time around. On rare occasions, the fit between a person and a counselor might not be right, and that is one of the reasons why when you contact your EAP, a full assessment of your needs will be completed from the very start.

**If you are interested in locating a counselor near you, call BHS at 800-245-1150. Your Care Coordinator is able to confidently assist with finding a provider that meets your needs.**



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