



COUNSELLING & COACHING

KIRSTY MCGOVERN

*Your
Essential
Guide To
Changing
Anything In
Counselling*

**YOU
DON'T HAVE
TO BE CRAZY...**

CHAPTER 6 MEETING YOUR COUNSELLOR HOPES & FEARS



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'YOUR TURN' WORKSHEET: CHAPTER 6

From "You Don't Have To Be Crazy..." by Kirsty McGovern

Meeting Your Counsellor: Hopes And Fears

What are you bringing to your first counselling session?

This exercise will help you get clear on the 'stuff' you bring to the relationship with your counsellor. The point here isn't to erase your memories (that's impossible) but to be aware of how they form your hopes and fears. If you go into a situation knowing this, you can separate it more easily from the situation in front of you, allowing this time to be different if it needs to be or building on what worked in the past.

Thinking over your relationships (past and present) from close family and friends all the way out to neighbours, acquaintances and colleagues. Answer the following questions.



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1) List one or more positive experiences you've had when you felt heard, respected, understood or appreciated.

Note - If you've had a particularly hard time with relationships and are finding this difficult, see if you can think of one person who's been caring or kind. If you're still struggling, don't worry. Move on to question 2.

Example – Positive feedback in work recently for my contribution to the team project or my friendship with Chris, I can always talk to her when things are tough and she gets it.



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a) What did the other person do or say that made you feel like that?

Example – My manager sent an email round thanking us all and mentioned my work, my colleagues noticed how I'd helped them and also thanked me. Chris always notices when it's hard going and asks how I am. She shows me she cares without sounding patronising.

b) Think about how you could share that with your counsellor to let them know how you'd like them to respond to you (no pressure – just think about it!)

Example – I notice I respond well to positive feedback when I've earned it or it's important to me to have it noticed when I'm working hard.



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2) Now think about situations that haven't gone as you wanted – when you didn't feel heard, able to speak or felt disrespected in some way.

Example – In the relationship with my ex-partner, she was always interrupting me and never listened or back in school I didn't feel so confident, often I wanted to ask a question but didn't because I was worried I'd look 'stupid'.

a) Think about how those experiences are shaping your expectations of your counsellor and how you might challenge them in your counselling.

Example – I'm worried she / he won't listen to me, especially if I'm confused or unsure how I feel, this might make me feel I have to 'prepare my answers' and stop me being open to genuine help and support or honest about how I feel. Or, I might not understand something but pretend that I do so I don't look stupid. Asking if I don't get something would be difficult but more productive.



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Now you've done this exercise you'll be clearer on what you're bringing to you first session and if you're able to share your thoughts with your counsellor it could really help the work. But remember - it's your choice!