

Information about counselling and our counselling contract

What is counselling? – Counselling is a process, which provides the space for you to explore the things you are finding hard and to work towards feeling more comfortable.

I offer **individual** using a **Person-centred approach** and I will sometimes use other approaches and techniques (Integrative approach) if these are helpful to you. In sessions we will work at your pace and look at the things that are troubling you.

I also offer counselling to **couples** and work in a way to provide space for each individual to explore what has been happening for them, how this impacts their relationship and how things might be changed.

My qualifications: **BSc Econ (Hons) in Psychology (1990), Dip Couns (2008) & Dip HR Mgt (2016)**. As well as being a counsellor I am an experienced group facilitator and trainer.

I have worked with clients focusing on a number of different areas however I have a special interest in work focusing on relationships (monogamous, poly, ethical non-monogamy) , sexual orientation, sexual health, gender identity (trans+, non-binary, queer), identity, recovering from domestic abuse, bereavement, change, neurodiversity, work issues, unemployment and living with health conditions including HIV.

- Accredited Gender, Sex and Relationship Diversities Therapist (Pink Therapy)
- Licensed instructor to deliver an educational programme to individuals and groups based on Susan Jeffers' PhD book "Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway".

The **first session** will be for us to look briefly at the areas you want to focus on and to identify if counselling is right for you at this time. If so, we will go on to talk about the counselling contract below. If I feel I am not the right counsellor for you I will give you the number of an organisation or a counsellor that is more appropriate. I encourage potential clients to be honest and feel no pressure if it seems that I am not the right counsellor for them.

Beginnings and endings – I work on the basis that it is your choice to come to counselling and also to decide when the time is right for you to stop or to take a break. It is helpful if you can let me know in advance when you want to end the sessions so that we can plan an ending together.

Where, when and how often – We will agree on a time and a place to meet - this may be using on-line video, phone or face to face in a room I work from in central Exeter.

A session is usually an hour long and is once a week, depending on your needs.

- **Reviews** – If we meet for a series of sessions, we'll review how it's going after 6 sessions.

- **Payment** - I charge a fee of between £50 and £65 per hour session for individuals and £75 - £95 per hour session for a couple, depending on your financial circumstances.
- We have agreed a fee of payable 48 hours before the session by PayPal, Stripe, bank transfer or by cash on the day if a face-to-face session.
- **Cancellations & missed appointments** - I charge the full fee for missed appointments and cancellations within 24 hrs of the session.
- **Contact details** – I can be contacted on 07500 015574 and will return your call as soon as I can if you leave a clear message. I can also be emailed and will respond during my working hours: maxcohenwellbeing@gmail.com
- **Making contact on someone else's behalf** – I understand that family, partners, and carers have a substantial role in the wellbeing of their loved ones, so it is fine for them to contact me on behalf of the person who is seeking counselling. However, after the first initial contacts, I then only communicate with the client rather than the person who has originally made contact on their behalf. This means that each client chooses when to start or finish the counselling process and I do not enter into any communication with the person who initially made contact on behalf of the client.
- **Couples counselling** – I work on the basis that everyone wants to come to the sessions but sometimes it may work out that individual counselling is more appropriate in which case I will discuss with you.
Any contact by email, text or phone made by one individual will be discussed in the couples' session.

Safety during the sessions –

- **The safety of both the clients and counsellor are most important.**
- Although I understand that some clients use non-prescribed drugs and alcohol, I do not enter into sessions where clients are under the influence of these. I also kindly ask that clients do not smoke cigarettes or vapes during the sessions, including on-line or phone sessions.
- I reserve the right to end a counselling session and take appropriate action should anything be a threat to either party's safety. This includes acts of self-harm or violence.

On-line video and phone sessions – All of the points that are covered in this contract apply to on-line video and phone counselling as well as face to face counselling.

Setting up an on-line or face to face meeting

- I will send out some paperwork to you. This will need to be completed and emailed back to me using either a password protection on the document or via the secure email system called Egress. This includes a risk assessment, personal details, and an outline of your reasons for wanting counselling. If it is not possible to email, we may do this on the phone instead.

- Payment must be made 48 hours before our first meeting using PayPal, Stripe, bank transfer, cash on the day if a face-to-face session or via the on-line therapy platform you are using (Plumm or Harley Therapy).
- I use Zoom (or another on-line video may be able to be set up) – this means you will need to set this up beforehand and I will then invite you to a meeting.
- If on the day of the meeting you do not turn up, I will end the session after 10 minutes of trying and no refund will be made.
- If there are any problems with internet connections at the time of the meeting, we will use a backup plan of using the phone.

Confidentiality - I will not disclose any information to another party, including the person who has made the first contact with me. The only time this may be different is if I have serious concerns about your or another person's safety or the wellbeing of a child. In these circumstances, I will aim to talk to you first about the need to pass on information to the relevant agencies such as your GP, police and / or Social Services. In the case of couples, all information remains confidential to the couple unless there are serious concerns, as above.

I am a **member of the BACP** (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy), which means I work to the BACP Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling & Psychotherapy (More details about this can be found on the BACP website www.bacp.co.uk). I am on the registered list of BACP counsellors, and my registration number is 58366.

Part of this ethical framework is to have on-going **supervision** with a counselling supervisor to enable me to work with the best interest of you, the client. I keep very brief **notes** to help my counselling practice. These notes are locked away by me and seen by no one else.

Privacy policy – I comply with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018 and am registered with the ICO (Information Commissioner's Office). See my Data Protection and Privacy Policy on my website.

Social settings - To help with keeping your confidentiality and the boundaries of client and counsellor if I do bump into you outside of the counselling session, I won't acknowledge you if you are with someone else or if you are alone, I will wait for you to acknowledge me first. Regarding social media, I keep professional boundaries and do not respond to any requests to be friends or contacts from clients outside the counselling session.

Registering

Please either go to this link and fill in my [on-line registration form](#) or we can complete the details in our introductory session.

If you have any questions or need help to complete the form, please do contact me.

1. Client Name..... Signature..... Date.....

2. Client Name..... Signature..... Date.....

Counsellor's Name: **Max Cohen** Signature..... Date.....

Your details
CONFIDENTIAL TO MAX COHEN

1. Client Name:
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Pronouns: (e.g. He/she/they).....Date of birth.....

Phone number.....

Address.....

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E-mail address.....

Emergency contact person (if meeting face to face)

Emergency phone number.....

Any other relevant details of things that may affect you, for example, accessibility needs, mental health, physical health, disability, autism spectrum, court hearings or legal proceedings and any risk factors such as domestic abuse, self-harm or thoughts of suicide?

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2. Client Name:
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Pronouns: (e.g. He/she/they)..... Date of birth.....

Phone number.....

Address.....
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E-mail address.....

Emergency contact person (if meeting face to face)

Emergency phone number.....

Any other relevant details of things that may affect you, for example, accessibility needs, mental health, physical health, disability, autism spectrum, court hearings or legal proceedings and any risk factors such as domestic abuse, self-harm or thoughts of suicide?
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Anything else?
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