

## Seek Counseling? Who, me?

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Perhaps you have been debating for some time about whether or not to seek the services of a counseling professional. Or, perhaps a loved one has been urging you to seek assistance. When is it time to seek the help of a professional?

Everyone experiences situational and transitional emotional discomfort. It's part of life - part of being human. There are options other than professional counseling -- talking with relatives, friends, the tribal chief, church elders -- or reading self-help books. All of these are valuable at times. Some choose to just keep quiet, suffer stoically, and keep all "family secrets" just that.

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***Professional counseling operates on carefully defined boundaries, ethics, and scientifically based principles.***

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### When is it Time to Seek Counseling?

- When a problem, issue, or personal struggle persists or worsens.
- When an outside, objective perspective or opinion would help.
- When what you are doing is not getting you what you want.
- When an argument repeats and repeats without resolution.
- When significant others express concern for your welfare.
- When arguing becomes abusive, whether verbal or physical.
- When feelings of emptiness, anger, guilt, etc. become chronic.
- When existing parenting strategies are ineffective and conflict escalates over time.
- When work productivity and personal relationships start being effected by issues you are struggling with.
- When impulsive or compulsive behaviors (including use of alcohol, mind or mood altering substances, gambling, eating, sex) are damaging to your self-worth, physical health, or relationships.
- When sleep, appetite, or mood patterns are persistently disrupted.
- When you are having difficulty managing multiple stressors, losses, or pressures.

People who seek counseling are not "crazy," but in fact people of *courage*. It takes courage to confront issues or behaviors that are not working and to seek change. Change is not always easy.

If you have questions about whether or not you might benefit from professional counseling, feel free to contact us with any questions.

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