

Counselling and Psychotherapy - Some Similarities and Differences

PSYCHOTHERAPY	COUNSELLING
The focus is generally on long-term recurring patterns or ongoing “lived experience” issues or challenges.	The focus is usually more short-term, working with present or current “life” challenges and/or newly emergent issues.
The applied treatment is guided by specialist psychotherapeutic modalities and protocols.	Treatment is more likely to be tailored to suit the individual with a focus on developing new strategies, skills and practical tools.
Treatment is more likely to be theoretically informed by such as CBT, EMDR or IFS therapy.	Treatment is less likely to be theory-driven and informed more by the quality of the therapeutic relationship.
Psychotherapy can involve talking, cognitive, emotional, behavioural, artistic, dramatic, creative, musical, symbolic & movement techniques.	Counselling involves talk therapy as a foundational technique and often includes “homework” activities to consolidate learnings and insights.
Therapy tends to focus on chronic, entrenched and long-held thinking, feeling and behavioural patterns.	Counselling is usually focused around specific problematic behaviours or situations and the practice of applied solutions.
Therapy may be long term and can take place over many years.	Counselling is more likely to have a short (brief) to medium-term focus.
Therapy is delivered by a qualified professional who has undertaken specialist training.	A qualified trained professional usually delivers counselling, however people such as pastoral counsellors or volunteers may offer layman counselling.
Focusing on a psychological or “inner world” disorder or a chronic problem with mental/emotional functioning is customary.	Counselling deals with functioning individuals who are experiencing unusual difficulties within their current situation/circumstances.
Therapy involves acknowledging lived experience and felt sensibility as the basis for restoring health.	Counselling will generally focus on behaviours or actions that can be adapted/adopted to improve a persons overall wellbeing.
Therapy holds a personal growth focus through maintaining an in-depth perspective on core issues.	Counselling offers guidance and practical rational strategies to support individuals to resolve current issues.