



Policies

Article 1 - Payment Policy

The fee for philosophical counselling sessions is to be paid upon booking. Prospective clients (persons who have not yet had a free preliminary consultation) should not pay for a 1:1 philosophical counselling session before booking a free preliminary consultation session as it is important to have the preliminary consultation before moving onto 1:1 philosophical counselling sessions in case the problem(s) or concern(s) being brought are not suitable for philosophical counselling.

Get Philosophical SP only accepts card payments through Stripe and cannot accept cash payments for any services.

Article 2 - Cancellation Policy

Cancellations can be made 14 days after booking a philosophical counselling session. Cancellations made within 14 days of the initial booking are entitled to a refund in line with the 14-day cool off period laid out by the *consumer protection act 2022*. Cancellations made after this 14-day period will not be eligible for a refund.

For more information on how refunds are made, see “*Article 3 - Refund Policy*”.

When a cancellation is made, the client, prospective or otherwise, is welcome to rebook at their leisure. However, repeat cancellations may lead to Get Philosophical SP refusing services to clients, prospective or otherwise, who repeatedly cancel booked philosophical counselling sessions.

Clients, prospective or otherwise, are welcome to request a change of appointment date and/or time, but this cannot be guaranteed. If a client, prospective or otherwise, is unable to make an appointment and a new date and/or time cannot be agreed upon, then this will be treated as a cancellation. If in this instance, the previously booked session falls out of the 14-day cool off period, then Get Philosophical SP is not obligated to offer a refund. However, Get Philosophical SP maintains the right to offer one. Whether or not a refund is offered to appointments cancelled outside of the 14-day cool off period is up to the discretion of Get Philosophical SP.

Article 3 - Refund Policy

In the event of a refund due to cancellation or on compassionate grounds, Get Philosophical SP will refund the paid amount of money to the same card that paid for the booked philosophical counselling session and will not refund money to any other card. This is non-negotiable.

Get Philosophical SP cannot refund in cash. This is non-negotiable.

Refunds will be made to the client, prospective or otherwise, from Get Philosophical SP within 48 hours of Get Philosophical SP being made aware that a refund is to be made either due to cancellation (in line with “*Article 2 - Cancellation Policy*”).

Please note that it may take longer for a refund to reach a payees account due to processing time between banks. In such an event, please make Get Philosophical SP aware of the situation.

Upon making a refund, Get Philosophical SP will make the client, prospective or otherwise, aware that the refund has been sent.

Please note, Get Philosophical SP do not offer refunds if a client, prospective or otherwise, is dissatisfied with the service. Get Philosophical SP may choose to offer a refund, but are by no means obligated to do so.

Article 4 - Confidentiality Policy

Philosophical counselling sessions (including the preliminary consultation) between the philosophical counselling and the client, prospective or otherwise, including any and all information disclosed therein, are strictly confidential. This includes information disclosed by the client, prospective or otherwise, in the preliminary consultation as such

information is private and subject to general data protection regulations (GDPR) which philosophical counsellor's working for/with Get Philosophical SP are obliged to follow, as Get Philosophical SP is a member of the information commissioner's office (I.C.O), (see section "Data Protection" for more information). However, confidentiality can and may be broken if it is deemed necessary by the philosophical counsellor based on the guidelines for breaking confidentiality laid out in the following subsection "*Breaking Confidentiality Policy*".

Any notes taken by the philosophical counsellor including but not limited to, audio recordings, video recordings or written/typed notes during or about philosophical counselling sessions shall be kept confidential and secure by the philosophical counsellor at all times and the philosophical counsellor shall not disclose any such information/media to anyone without prior written (through email or letter) consent by the client, prospective or otherwise, to the philosophical counsellor, with exception to certain limitations by law/Get Philosophical SP's breaking confidentiality policy.

Section 1 - Breaking Confidentiality Policy:

The philosophical counsellor can and may break the confidentiality agreement made between the philosophical counsellor and the client, prospective or otherwise, if any of the below circumstances occur or are strongly suspected by the philosophical counsellor based on information disclosed by the client, prospective or otherwise, to the philosophical counsellor (regardless of whether this information is disclosed or the philosophical counsellor's suspicions are aroused inside or outside of philosophical counselling sessions, including the preliminary consultation):

1. Abuse to a child/children, disabled person(s), elderly person(s) and/or other person(s).
2. Criminal Acts.
3. Sexual Abuse.
4. Acts which may involve the transmission of HIV/AIDS.
5. Acts of terrorism.
6. Plans to commit crimes/terrorism (conspiracy).
7. Drug trafficking.
8. Money laundering.
9. Human trafficking.
10. The client, prospective or otherwise, is or is believed to be at imminent risk of causing harm to themselves or others, including through negligence of self or others (for instance inability, reluctance or failure to feed oneself or dependant(s)).

11. Any other instance where the philosophical counsellor has a duty or the philosophical counsellor has a firm belief that there is a necessity to disclose.

Anytime that confidentiality is broken, although instances of such are rare, the philosophical counsellor will, to the greatest degree possible and with safety for all parties considered, including the philosophical counsellors own safety, endeavour to inform the client, prospective or otherwise, of the philosophical counsellor's decision to break confidentiality, prior to breaking it if possible. However, the philosophical counsellor is not required to inform the client, prospective or otherwise, of the decision to break confidentiality, as this is not always possible and/or safe and the decision by the philosophical counsellor to inform the client, prospective or otherwise, will be based on the particular circumstances surrounding the decision.

In the rare instances of the philosophical counsellor deciding to break the confidentiality agreement made with the client, prospective or otherwise, the philosophical counsellor will only do so with the appropriate actor(s)/agence(s).

Appropriate actor(s)/agence(s) the philosophical counsellor may contact and disclose any personal information to even if the philosophical counsellor has decided it is necessary to break the confidentiality agreement may be but are not limited to:

The police, counter-terrorism agencies (such as MI5), emergency services (such as ambulance services), hospital staff (when appropriate) and any parties contactable by the philosophical counsellor who may be at risk of HIV/AIDS based on information given by the client, prospective or otherwise, friends of the client, prospective or otherwise, family of the client, prospective or otherwise.

*note that, the philosophical counsellor may contact friends and/or family of the client, prospective or otherwise, if the client, prospective or otherwise, is unreachable or suspected to be in danger of some kind (e.g. history or self harm or suicidal ideation/plans to commit suicide/attempted suicide). The philosophical counsellor may also contact the friends and/or family of the client, prospective or otherwise, if the philosophical counsellor believes them to be in imminent danger and that the philosophical counsellor believes it urgent and necessary enough to contact the friends and/or family of the client, prospective or otherwise, before contacting authorities (e.g. the police).

Inappropriate actor(s)/agence(s) the philosophical counsellor will not disclose any personal information to even if the philosophical counsellor has decided it is necessary to the break confidentiality agreement would be:

The client's, prospective or otherwise, place of employment, the client's, prospective or otherwise, co-workers, academic institutions attended by the client, prospective or otherwise, place or places of worship attended by the client, prospective or otherwise, establishments/businesses used by or associated with the client, prospective or otherwise, places of entertainment or recreation attended by the client, prospective or otherwise.

Section 2 - Emergency Contact Policy:

Get Philosophical SP and its philosophical counsellor's reserve the right to contact the client's, prospective or otherwise, emergency contact in the event of an emergency or urgent, non-emergency situation(s). Get Philosophical SP and its philosophical counsellor's also reserved the right to share emergency contact details with relevant agencies in the event of an emergency, such as but not limited to; fire and rescue services, paramedics or the police.

Examples of emergency situations may be, but are not limited to:

-The client, prospective or otherwise, is experiencing a medical emergency and the philosophical counsellor deems it appropriate to inform the nominated emergency contact or to pass on the emergency contact details to the emergency services. For example, if the client, prospective or otherwise, is not conscious and their residence may be left unlocked or unattended or for example, if the client, prospective or otherwise, has dependents that must be cared for such as children and will otherwise be left alone or in the temporary care of emergency services if the emergency contact details are not passed onto emergency services. Although wherever possible the philosophical counsellor will endeavour to get the client's, prospective or otherwise, permission before contacting the emergency contact or passing on emergency contact details, though this may not always be possible.

-The client, prospective or otherwise, is experiencing a mental health crisis such that they have become unstable, inconsolable or are deemed by the philosophical counsellor unsafe to be left alone, particularly in the time immediately following the preliminary consultation or philosophical counselling session.

Examples of urgent but non-emergency situations may be, but are not limited to:

-The client, prospective or otherwise, is in a state of rage or distress such that they are damaging their own or others property.

-The client, prospective or otherwise, has expressed or there is clear evidence presented to the philosophical counsellor that the client, prospective or otherwise, is neglecting themselves such that it is seriously impacting their physical health (for example not eating despite being hungry, resulting in noticeable emaciation).

In the rare event that the philosophical counsellor deems it necessary to contact the nominated emergency contact or to pass on the nominated emergency contact details to appropriate agencies, the philosophical counsellor will endeavour, to the best of their abilities, to only disclose the most relevant information to the situation.

Breaking confidentiality is never easy for anyone involved, hence, it is only done when it is considered to be absolutely necessary by the philosophical counsellor.

In case you have any questions regarding confidentiality, please discuss this with your philosophical counsellor BEFORE signing this document. However, you are welcome and encouraged to continue to ask or request clarification on confidentiality at any time during philosophical counselling sessions with the philosophical counsellor.

Article 5 - Data Protection Policy

Client, prospective or otherwise, personal data will be stored on a solid state drive (SSD) and private cloud storage servers (such as, but not limited to; emails and google forms being stored on Google™ servers) by Get Philosophical SP in line with general data protection regulations (GDPR) as laid out by the information commissioner's office (I.C.O) with Get Philosophical SP. Christopher Mountford is the registered data protection officer for Get Philosophical SP. This personal data includes but is not limited to; names, address', contact information, emergency contact information, digital notes pertaining to the content of 1:1 philosophical counselling sessions (including content pertaining to the preliminary consultation), digital correspondences to, from and/or about the client, prospective or otherwise, such as emails, records of all appointment dates and times, any notes, digital drawings (or photos of physical drawings), photos, digital models (or images of physical models), audio recordings, video recordings, digital receipts, prerequisite digital sign up form(s) done before the preliminary consultation, assessments and all relevant legal documentation such as copies of this signed informed consent form and supplementary materials (such as the grounds for referral documents). By signing this document, the client, prospective or otherwise, understands that Get Philosophical SP has a duty to maintain the privacy of such data and that unauthorised or unlawful leaks of any personal data of a client, prospective or otherwise, with exception to policies laid out in this informed consent form (such as the "*breaking confidentiality policy*" and the "*exceptions to holding and erasing data policy*"), are a breach of this contract.

Section 1 - Holding and Erasing Data Policy:

Get Philosophical SP will retain the client's, prospective or otherwise, personal data throughout the time philosophical counselling sessions are taking place, beginning with the preliminary

consultation (this includes data sent when setting up the preliminary consultation, such as the prerequisite digital sign up form(s)). Get Philosophical SP will hold personal data for a period of 7 years after last contact with the client, prospective or otherwise.

If a client, prospective or otherwise, has not had a philosophical counselling session or preliminary consultation with the philosophical counsellor but has contacted the philosophical counsellor, then the period of holding person data will effectively renew and therefore said client's, prospective or otherwise, person data can from that last date of contact be kept by Get Philosophical SP for a period of 7 years from the date of that last contact.

The reason for retaining client, prospective or otherwise personal data for 7 years is to keep detailed records of sessions in the event that a client, prospective or otherwise, wishes to return to philosophical counselling. If a period of time greater than 7 years has passed, Get Philosophical SP will erase all client personal data held except client personal data which is exempt, see "*Section 2 - Exemptions to Holding and Erasing Policy*" for more details.

However, Get Philosophical SP may hold onto client, prospective or otherwise, personal data for much longer (including an indefinite period of time) if said data is being used for research/academic purposes as per the below "*Section 4 - Research Data Policy*". However, such data can only be held for longer than the stated 7 years to an indefinite period, if the above-mentioned personal data has been consented to being used for research/academic purposes in line with the "*research data policy*" with explicit consent from the client, prospective or otherwise. See the "*Section 4 - Research Data Policy*" for more details.

Section 2 - Exceptions to Holding and Erasing Data Policy:

In the interest of both the client, prospective or otherwise, and the philosophical counsellor, Get Philosophical SP will hold onto copies of this signed informed consent form as well as the accompanying signed grounds for referral documents indefinitely. Get Philosophical SP has chosen to keep this data indefinitely for the purposes of legal protection in the interest of both the client, prospective or otherwise, and the philosophical counsellor to have evidence of the contract made between the client, prospective or otherwise, and the philosophical counsellor and by extension the contract between the client, prospective or otherwise, and Get Philosophical SP. Get Philosophical SP will only share copies of the signed informed consent form with any other party if it is absolutely necessary for legal purposes, for example, should any legal action take place between the client, prospective or otherwise, and Get Philosophical SP then this signed informed consent form may serve as evidence of the contract made between the client, prospective or otherwise and the philosophical counsellor and by extension Get Philosophical SP. Although, Get Philosophical SP will hold onto copies of the signed informed consent form indefinitely, such documents will still be subject to general data protection regulations (GDPR) and can be requested by the client, prospective or otherwise, at any time (see "*Data Requests*")

for more information on requesting data) and Get Philosophical, SP will still be responsible for the protection of such data from breach of general data protection regulations (GDPR).

Section 3 - Exceptions to Holding and Erasing Data Policy:

Should the client, prospective or otherwise, wish to alter any personal data (see examples of personal data listed in “*Section 1 - Holding and Erasing Data Policy*” stored by Get Philosophical SP then the client, prospective or otherwise may do so by means of verbal or written communication, however, Get Philosophical SP prefer emails, phone calls or online calls in order to verify that the request is coming from the client, prospective or otherwise.

Get Philosophical SP will not change a client’s, prospective or otherwise, personal data without expression to do so and consent from the client, prospective or otherwise, aside from where there are reasonable exceptions such as erasing data (outlined in “*Section 1 - Holding and Erasing Data Policy*”) or altering personal data for research/academic purposes (outlined in “*Section 4 - Research Data Policy*”).

Section 4 - Research Data Policy:

Occasionally Get Philosophical SP will conduct statistical research for research/academic purposes, primarily to bolster the academic body of work relating to the newly emerging field of philosophical practice. Such data will only ever be used with explicit client, prospective or otherwise, consent.

The kinds of data used in these studies may vary. It may be relating to a particular client, prospective or otherwise, and their problem(s) or concern(s) as well as the general course of their (the client, prospective or otherwise) philosophical counselling sessions and the outcomes of their (the client, prospective or otherwise) philosophical counselling session(s), this is called a case study and as with any client, prospective or otherwise, personal data from Get Philosophical SP, it will only be used with explicit client, prospective or otherwise, consent.

Sometimes the data used for research/academic purposes by Get Philosophical SP will be anonymous statistical data, for example:

“X amount of clients who had Y amount of sessions with a philosophical counsellor from Get Philosophical SP reported an improvement in general mood and outlook after philosophical counselling sessions”.

Such data, although anonymous in nature, will not be used without explicit client, prospective or otherwise, consent to have their (the client, prospective or otherwise) feedback used in Get Philosophical SP’s research, as such research may be published or offered to other philosophical practitioners outside of Get Philosophical SP or used for academic purposes such as lectures/seminars within our outside of Get Philosophical SP.

Please note that Get Philosophical SP may hold client, prospective or otherwise, personal data for longer than the previously stated 7-year period (outlined in the above “*holding and erasing*

data policy”), up to an indefinite period if said personal data is being used for research/academic purposes. If the client, prospective or otherwise, has consented to their personal data being used for research/academic purposes in line with this “*research data policy*”, then they accept that any such personal data can and may be held for longer than the 7-year period outlined in the “*holding and erasing data policy*” and could be held by Get Philosophical SP indefinitely.

Any data consented to be used by Get Philosophical SP for research/academic purposes will (in public formats) always be anonymous, and no identifiable personal information will be used. This means that for case studies, real names and other personal information will not be used, instead pseudonyms will be used to describe the client, prospective or otherwise, in the case study. Or in the case of statistical data and feedback, the data will be anonymous in nature and not include private personal data of the client, prospective or otherwise.

By signing this informed consent document, you, the client, prospective or otherwise, are NOT consenting to having your data be used by Get Philosophical SP or anyone else for the purposes of research data. Should Get Philosophical SP wish to use any of your (the client, prospective or otherwise) personal data for research/academic purposes, Get Philosophical SP will contact you (the client, prospective or otherwise) and obtain your (the client, prospective or otherwise) consent after informing you (the client prospective or otherwise) about the intended uses of said personal data and answering any and all of your (the client, prospective or otherwise) questions to the best of our (Get Philosophical SP) abilities.

Article 6 - Grounds For Referral Policy

Grounds for referral are grounds (reasons) for a person being referred away from philosophical counselling.

Philosophical counselling is a counselling-style consultancy designed to use philosophical techniques to help improve a client's (prospective or otherwise) critical thinking and self-reflective abilities. It can be useful for persons with ordinary or ubiquitous problem(s) or concern(s), examples of which are detailed below. Note that while the list of problem(s) and concern(s) below is extensive, it is by no means an exhaustive list.

Ordinary or ubiquitous problem(s) or concern(s) are hereby defined as the kinds of problem(s) or concern(s) that most people will experience at some point during their lives, and are not necessarily mental illnesses that need to be treated by a medical and/or mental health professional. For example, breaking up with a long term partner can be difficult and emotionally distressing to the point that a person may seek out professional services to vent their emotions. But breaking up with a long term partner is not inherently a mental illness, nor is it a particularly unusual/uncommon occurrence. Therefore,

breaking up with a long term partner is one example of an ordinary or ubiquitous problem or concern. This is only one example of many problems or concerns which *would* be suitable for philosophical counselling.

However, a person claiming to hear voices in their head that tell them to harm others is *not* an ordinary or ubiquitous problem or concern as this is unusual/uncommon and is therefore not a suitable problem or concern for philosophical counselling and should a person present to the philosophical counsellor with such a problem it would constitute immediate grounds for referral. This is only one example of many problems or concerns which would be *unsuitable* for philosophical counselling.

The purpose of this policy is to inform clients (prospective or otherwise) about what can be addressed and what cannot be addressed through philosophical counsellor. The examples within this policy are to give an idea of what can and cannot be addressed through philosophical counselling. That said, the particulars of a client's (prospective or otherwise) problem(s) or concern(s) may feel unique to them, and that is OK. That is why all clients (prospective or otherwise), including returning clients (prospective or otherwise) must have a preliminary consultation before beginning philosophical counselling in order for the philosophical counsellor to ascertain the nature of the prospective clients (returning or otherwise) problem(s)/concern(s) and to subsequently judge whether or not the nature of the prospective clients (returning or otherwise) problem(s) or concern(s) are suitable for philosophical counselling or if said problem(s) or concern(s) constitute grounds for referral.

Philosophical counselling is *not* mental health counselling. It is not a diagnostic, advisory or treatment service for mental illness. As such, this policy also contains an extensive list of examples of problems or concerns which would *not* be suitable for philosophical counselling and would therefore constitute grounds for referral. This policy also contains an extensive list of problems or concerns which *would* be suitable for philosophical counselling. While the lists of problems and concerns in this policy are extensive, they are by no means exhaustive.

Section 1 - Ascertain Grounds for Referral

The process by which grounds for referral are ascertained are as follows:

Before philosophical counselling sessions can commence, any prospective client or returning client must have a preliminary consultation with the philosophical counsellor. In this preliminary consultation, the prospective client will explain their problem(s) or concern(s) to the philosophical counsellor and the philosophical counsellor will listen and ask questions to get an in-depth understanding of the prospective clients' problem(s) or concern(s).

The philosophical counsellor will then make a judgement of whether or not the prospective clients' problem(s) or concern(s) which have been discussed are suitable for philosophical counselling. This decision may be made during the preliminary counselling or the philosophical counsellor may tell the prospective client that they need more time to make a decision and will contact the prospective client with their decision by way of a phone call, email or online meeting.

The philosophical counsellor will use the DSM-5 - Fifth Edition and/or the ICD-11 and/or may use online resources as well to aid in the judgement of whether or not the prospective clients' problem(s) or concern(s) are suitable for philosophical counselling. If the philosophical counsellor, after consulting the DSM-5 - Fifth Edition and/or the ICD-11 and/or online resources decides that the problem(s) or concern(s) the prospective clients discussed with the philosophical counsellor in the preliminary consultation are *not* suitable for philosophical counselling then the philosophical counsellor will contact the prospective client by way of a phone call, email or by arranging an online meeting and explain to the prospective client that the philosophical counsellor believes that the prospective clients' problem(s) or concern(s) are best suited to other services, usually this will be mental health services, though it may be other services (for example if the prospective clients' problem(s) or concern(s) are financial in nature the prospective client may be referred to financial services such as the bank or if the prospective clients' problem(s) or concern(s) are medical in nature they may be referred to medical services etc).

The philosophical counsellor may recommend mental health services (if it is mental health services the philosophical counsellor has decided to refer the prospective client to) in order to aid the prospective client in their search for services that are more suited to their problem(s) of concern(s). However, the philosophical counsellor is not obligated to do so.

The philosophical counsellor *may* discuss the reasoning behind their decision to refer the prospective client to mental health services (or other services), but the philosophical counsellor is *not obligated to do so*. The philosophical counsellor is not qualified to diagnose mental illness and therefore should not suggest that the prospective client has any particular mental illness as the philosophical counsellor is not qualified to do so. Additionally, it may not be in the best interests of the prospective client to worry them with ill-informed speculation about mental illnesses the prospective client may or may not have and is therefore another reason that the philosophical counsellor should not suggest that the prospective client has any particular mental illness.

If the philosophical counsellor judges that the prospective client's problem(s) or concern(s) which were discussed in the preliminary consultation are suitable for philosophical counselling, then the philosophical counsellor will tell the prospective client that they (the philosophical counsellor) are willing to move forward and begin philosophical counselling sessions with said prospective client. If the philosophical counsellor has opted to not make said judgement during the preliminary consultation session but has judged that the prospective client's problem(s) or

concern(s) are suitable for philosophical counsellor, then the philosophical counsellor will contact the prospective client by way of a phone call, email or by setting up an online meeting with the perspective client to inform them that the philosophical counsellor is willing to begin philosophical counselling sessions with said prospective client.

If at any time during the course of philosophical counselling sessions the philosophical counsellor decides that the client's problem(s) or concern(s) are not suitable for philosophical counsellor, then the philosophical counsellor maintains the right to cease philosophical counselling sessions immediately and refer the client to other services (such as mental health services).

If the philosophical counsellor decides that the client's problem(s) or concern(s) are not suitable for philosophical counselling during a philosophical counselling session, then the philosophical counselling will advise the client during said session. However, Get Philosophical SP recognise that this may be upsetting to have a philosophical counselling session stopped mid-way through, especially as the client will have paid money for said session. So ceasing a philosophical counselling session on grounds for referral during a philosophical counselling session would only be done if it was deemed absolutely necessary.

If the philosophical counsellor decides that the client's problem(s) or concern(s) are no longer suitable for philosophical counsellor outside of a philosophical counsellor session, even after some philosophical counsellor sessions have taken place, then the philosophical counsellor will contact the client by way of a phone call, email or by setting up an online meeting with said client to advise them that the philosophical counsellor has made this decision. Subsequently, the philosophical counsellor maintains the right to refuse all services.

The philosophical counsellor may offer philosophical counselling sessions to a client that has previously been referred away from philosophical counselling sessions if the returning client is returning with different problem(s) or concern(s), provided that the problem(s) or concern(s) are discussed in a preliminary consultation and deemed to be suitable for philosophical counselling by the philosophical counsellor.

Ultimately, the decision of whether or not a prospective client or current client should be referred away from philosophical counselling is up to the discretion of the philosophical counsellor and the philosophical counsellor maintains the right to refer a prospective client or current client to other services at any time and the philosophical counsellor is not obliged to disclose their reasoning.

Should the philosophical counsellor deem it necessary to refer a client away from philosophical counselling during a philosophical counselling session then the money the client paid for the philosophical counselling session is non-refundable except on compassionate grounds, however compassionate grounds are up to the discretion of the philosophical counsellor. For more information, please see “*Article 2 - Cancellation Policy*” and “*Article 3 - Refund Policy*”.

Section 2 - Problems/Concerns That *CAN* Be Addressed Through Philosophical Counselling:

The following examples are in no particular order, and this list is by no means exhaustive. What constitutes problems or concerns that can be addressed through philosophical counselling is up to the discretion of the philosophical counsellor and the philosophical counsellor maintains the right to refer a client, prospective or otherwise, away from philosophical counselling at all times.

- Moral issues
- Values disagreements
- Political issues and disagreements
- Writer's block
- LGBTQ+ related issues
- Communication issues
- Time management issues
- Seeking meaning in life
- Seeking purpose in life
- Procrastination
- Career issues
- Job loss
- Problems with coworkers
- Disability issues (coping with or helping others who are disabled)
- Retirement
- Ageing
- End of life issues
- Midlife issues
- Adult children of ageing parents
- Problems with family
- Family planning issues
- In-law issues
- Breakups and divorce
- Parenting issues
- Becoming a parent
- Sibling rivalry
- Finding out one is adopted
- Falling in and out of love
- Grieving
- Loss of a pet

- Friendship issues
- Peer pressure
- Academic issues
- Rejection
- Discrimination
- Religion related issues
- Race-related issues
- Entertainment-related issues
- Metaphysical issues
- Ethical issues

Sections 3 - Problems/Concerns That *CANNOT* Be Addressed Through Philosophical Counselling:

The following is a list of indications, based on the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders - Fifth Edition (DSM-5)*, which would constitute grounds for referral to professional mental health services. The satisfaction of any single item in any of the given disorder categories in the below list constitutes grounds for referral, unless a specific arrangement has been made between the client, prospective or otherwise, and the philosophical counsellor in line with “*Section 4 - Exceptions*”. The following examples are in no particular order, and the below list is by no means exhaustive.

What constitutes problems/concerns that cannot be addressed through philosophical counselling is ultimately up to the discretion of the philosophical counsellor and the philosophical counsellor maintains the right to refer a prospective client or current client away from philosophical counselling at all times.

Neurodevelopmental Disorders

- Enduring pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity that is inconsistent with developmental level, which significantly impairs a major area of functioning such as social, academic, or occupational;
- Developmental deficits in capacity for social-emotional communication/interaction including non-verbal communication/interaction, and in forming and maintaining interpersonal relationships.

Psychotic Disorders

- Hallucinations;
- Delusions;

- Disorganised thinking or speech (loose associations, tangents, incoherence);
- Catatonic behaviour and other abnormal motor behaviour.

Bipolar and Depressive Disorders

- Manic episodes;
- Suicidal ideation (contemplating committing suicide) along with one or more of the following:
 - Specific plan;
 - Expression of intention
 - Past history of suicide attempts or threats
 - Family history of suicide
 - History of psychiatric diagnosis or commitment to inpatient facility;
 - Other serious health problems—perceived or actual
 - hopelessness,
 - self-damning
 - alcohol / substance abuse
 - history of trauma / abuse
 - cultural / religious/ personal acceptance of suicide
 - recent loss – relationship, financial
 - Access to lethal means
 - Impulsivity/aggressiveness
 - knowing others who have committed or attempted suicide
 - lack of support system, single or living alone
 - elderly or young adult male
- Sadness, emptiness, or irritable mood most of the day, on most days, which significantly impairs day-to-day activities ongoing for at least one year;
- Sadness, emptiness, hopelessness, or irritable mood, most of the day, on most days; and/or loss of interest or pleasure in all or most activities, most of the day, on most days; causing significant distress or impairment in social, occupational or other major areas of functioning; including at least *five* of the following changes:
 - Sadness, emptiness, hopelessness, or irritable mood, most of the day, on most days;
 - Loss of interest or pleasure in all or most activities, most of the day, on most days;
 - Significant, otherwise unexplained weight loss/gain or decrease/increase in appetite;
 - Insomnia, excessive daytime sleepiness
 - Psychomotor agitation (e.g., fidgeting, purposeless leg movements, or pacing) or psychomotor retardation (e.g., slowed speech or walking)
 - Chronic fatigue or energy loss

- Persistent feelings of worthlessness or inappropriate guilt
- Diminished ability to think clearly, concentrate, or make decisions
- Recurring suicidal ideation without a specific plan; with a suicide attempt; or with a specific plan.
- Chronic, severe, persistent irritability, including frequent temper outbursts and a tendency to be angry;
- Mood swings, tending to occur during the menstrual cycle.

Anxiety Disorders

- Phobias – persistent, ongoing, exaggerated, intense fear or anxiety about a specific sort of object (e.g. snakes) or situation (e.g. heights);
- Panic attacks –sudden intense fear peaking in minutes characterised by changes such as pounding heart and feeling unable to breath;
- Ongoing, day-to-day, excessive anxiety or worry about a number of different activities or events, which causes significant distress in social, occupational or other major areas of functioning.

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders

- Obsessions – repetitive, persistent, intrusive, unwanted thoughts, which interferes with or causes significant distress in social, occupational or other major areas of functioning;
- Compulsions – repetitive behaviour or mental activities one feels driven to engage in, having no real connection to what it is intended to guard against, which interferes with or causes significant distress in social, occupational or other major areas of functioning;
- Preoccupation with perceived bodily defects, which interferes with daily functioning;
- Hoarding – ongoing difficulty getting rid of things regardless of their actual worth such that clutter prevents room use, and causes distress in day to day living.

Trauma and Stress Disorders

- Flashbacks; nightmares; or intrusive, unwanted, distressing memories or thoughts about an event involving death, destruction, injury, or sexual violence.

Dissociative Disorders

- Dissociative identity – taking on two or more identities;

- Dissociative Amnesia—inability to recall specific events during a specified period of time, including periods of travel or wandering (so-called “dissociative fugue”); or general inability to recall personal identity or life history;
- Depersonalization – sense of being an outside observer of oneself
- Derealization – sense of unreality of one’s surrounding environment.

Somatic Symptom Disorders

- Distress about perceived or possible somatic (bodily) pains or health problems.

Feeding and Eating Disorders

- Purging, overeating, bingeing, self-starvation, poor appetite, or persistent eating of non-food substances.

Elimination Disorders

- Elimination problems –bed-wetting or clothes wetting; defecating in clothes or on floor.

Sleep-Wake Disorders

- Insomnia; excessive sleepiness or sleeping; breathing problems; sleepwalking; nightmares; sleep-talking; leg discomfort; or other sleep-related problems.
- Fatigue or loss of energy.

Sexual Dysfunctions

- Sexual problems – ejaculation, erections, arousal, penetration, low sex drive, or related problems;

Gender Dysphoria

- Distress about one’s gender.

Disruptive, Impulse-Control, and Conduct Disorders

- Persistent pattern of:
 - verbal aggression or outbursts;
 - physically violent behaviour, including threats or destruction of property;
 - fire setting;
 - torturing animals;
 - lack of conscience or remorse, i.e., seeing people as objects/pawns.

Substance –Related and Addictive Disorders

- Alcohol, caffeine, cannabis, hallucinogens, opioids, sedatives, hypnotics, anti-anxiolytics, stimulants, tobacco, gambling.
- Food related addictions/dependencies
- Pornography related addictions/dependencies
- Gaming related addictions/dependencies

Neurocognitive Disorders

- Neurocognitive decline – Delirium, Alzheimer's, Dementia, and other brain diseases.

Personality Disorders

- Enduring, deeply ingrained pattern of maladaptive and inflexible behaviour and thinking across a broad spectrum of areas of living, which interferes with or causes significant distress in social, occupational or other major areas of functioning, including:
 - paranoid ideation;
 - social detachment;
 - instability of interpersonal relationships, self-image, and affect;
 - grandiosity;
 - inability to empathise;
 - social inhibition;
 - submissiveness;
 - fear of separation;
 - preoccupation with orderliness.

Paraphilias

- Voyeurism, exhibitionism, frotteurism, sexual sadism or masochism, paedophilia, fetishism, transvestism.

Philosophical counsellors whose case(s) falls into a grey area or who have questions about whether the given case falls under any of the above disorder categories may counsellor a licensed mental health professional with the expressed consent of the informed prospective client or client.

The mental health related issues, illnesses or conditions in the above list were taken from the DSM-5™ (American Psychiatric Association (2013). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. 5th ed. American Psychiatric Publishing).

Section 4 - Exceptions

There may be exceptions to the grounds for referral if it is mutually agreed between the philosophical counsellor and the client, prospective or otherwise, during the preliminary consultation phase of the philosophical counselling service. In such cases the philosophical counselling and client, prospective or otherwise, may endeavour to explore philosophical counselling services which may go against the grounds for referral. But this will be decided on a case by case basis, with express understanding of the scope of philosophical counselling and the capabilities of the philosophical counsellor (evidenced by the signing of the informed consent form) and after express agreement has been reached between the philosophical counsellor and client, prospective or otherwise, before or during the preliminary consultation phase of the philosophical counselling service.

Examples:

The following is a list of fictional scenarios to help illustrate how the referral process might work in practice and how exceptions to the grounds to referral might be made.

Scenario 1:

A client has had several sessions with the philosophical counsellor relating to his recent break-up with his long term partner. During one of the philosophical counselling sessions the client admits to occasionally having nightmares but has decided these are stress related, and they do not cause a serious issue to their day-to-day life on account of being infrequent.

While nightmares could indicate a sleep-wake disorder, the particulars do not match up with the guidelines in the DSM-5 nor does the client seem particularly distressed by them. Additionally,

the nightmares are not always about the client's ex-partner and are not the primary focus of the philosophical counselling sessions. As such, the philosophical counsellor does not consider this grounds for referral and continues philosophical counselling sessions as normal, but does ask the client to keep them informed if the nightmares increase in frequency or intensity.

Scenario 2:

A prospective client comes to a preliminary consultation seeking philosophical counselling for their writer's block. During the preliminary consultation, the prospective client explains that they have been diagnosed with bipolar disorder. But that their condition is well managed, medicated and that they see a mental health professional to help them cope with their bipolar disorder.

Although bipolar disorder is beyond the scope of philosophical counselling, the client's bipolar disorder is not the focus of the philosophical counselling sessions that the prospective client is wanting to have with the philosophical counsellor. As such, the philosophical counsellor does not consider this to be grounds for referral and takes the prospective client on and books them in for a philosophical counselling session. While it is true that during the course of philosophical counselling sessions, the topic of the client's bipolar disorder may come up, this is OK so long as the client is aware that the philosophical counsellor is not qualified to advise or treat mental illness and so long as the focus of the philosophical counselling sessions does not primarily become about the client's bipolar disorder.

Scenario 3:

A client has had a number of philosophical counselling sessions with the philosophical counsellor, primarily relating to discussing meaning in life and seeking purpose. This client generally seems to be experiencing low mood and confides in the philosophical counsellor that they have begun to dabble in recreational drugs in order to cope with their low mood.

While the philosophical counsellor will listen to the client and do their best to make them feel heard and do whatever the philosophical counsellor can to help, this would constitute grounds for referral as this client appears to be declining in their mental health and has begun to show signs of mental illness and is therefore beyond the scope of philosophical counselling. The philosophical counsellor will discuss with the client the referral process and assist the client in any way that they can. While in this scenario the philosophical counsellor will cease philosophical counselling sessions, there is no reason the client cannot return to philosophical counselling sessions in the future to continue discussing meaning in life and seeking purpose as that topic is still within the scope of philosophical counselling. The referral in this case was

simply to get the client in touch (with their consent) with appropriate mental health services, as this is in the best interest of the client at that time.

Scenario 4:

A female client is having philosophical counselling sessions to help to improve her communication skills. She is particularly interested in improving her communication skills with her boyfriend. However, after a few sessions she explains to the philosophical counsellor that her boyfriend has recently begun to physically assault her, and she is hoping that the philosophical counsellor can help her communicate to her boyfriend that she is frightened of him and doesn't want him to hit her any more.

While improving one's communication skills is within the scope of philosophical counselling, the particulars of this scenario constitute grounds for referral as not only is domestic violence beyond the scope of philosophical counselling, but this client may be in imminent danger and needs to be referred to more appropriate services because this is in her best interest for safety.

Scenario 5:

A male prospective client attends a preliminary consultation and discusses how they suspect they might be gay and how this is causing them some concerns about their self identity and their place in society. The philosophical counsellor takes them on as a client and books them into philosophical counselling. However, in the second philosophical counselling session, the client starts to suggest that they are also questioning their gender and suspect they might be a trans woman.

Although sexuality outside of heterosexuality is suitable for philosophical counselling and questions about how one's sexuality might affect their view of self and their view of their place in society is a perfectly acceptable topic for philosophical counselling as it constitutes an ordinary or ubiquitous problem or concern, being trans is a specialist subject that out to be dealt with by a specialist in gender dysphoria as gender dysphoria can be a very delicate subject that needs specialist care. While questioning one's gender is not particularly uncommon or unusual and while asking oneself such questions might not mean one has a mental illness or will be diagnosed with gender dysphoria, it still falls beyond the scope of philosophical counselling and in this scenario, the client would be referred to other services that are more suitable for their needs at that time. In this scenario, given that the client's concerns about gender may be closely linked with their original concerns about self-identity, their place in society and their sexuality the philosophical counsellor would also end philosophical counselling sessions as the alternative

services the client is being referred to should also be able to help with those topics as well. However, if that same client wished to return to philosophical counselling at a later date after receiving help from those other services, even if they wanted to discuss similar topics as in the original sessions but exploring the more existential and sociological side of those topics instead of the particular personal aspects which out to be managed by the other services the client was referred to, then the client would be more than welcome to do so. So long as that client was willing to undergo another preliminary consultation session to review if their new or altered topics are suitable for philosophical counselling or not. Likewise, this client would be more than welcome to return to philosophical counselling after having used those other services they were referred to if said client had other unrelated topics they wished to discuss.

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