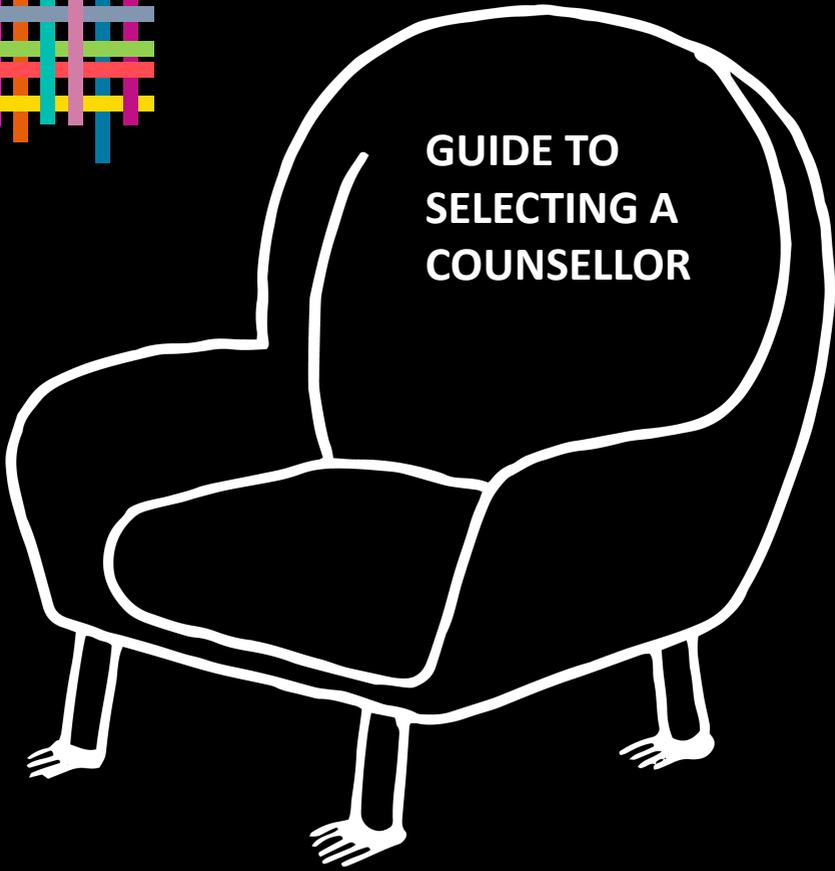


# GUIDE TO SELECTING A COUNSELLOR



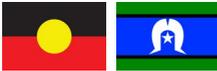
A guide for people who have experienced domestic, family or sexualised violence.

# INSIGHT EXCHANGE

Insight Exchange centres on the expertise of people with lived experience of domestic and family violence and gives voice to these experiences. Insight Exchange is designed to inform and strengthen social, service and systemic responses to domestic and family violence.

Launched in November 2017, Insight Exchange was designed by Domestic Violence Service Management (DVSM), in collaboration with Dr Linda Coates and Dr Allan Wade from Centre for Response-Based Practice, Canada. Insight Exchange has been established, developed and is governed by Domestic Violence Service Management (DVSM) a registered charity (ABN 26 165 400 635). Insight Exchange has been sustained through the generous donations of individuals and a silent donor for the benefit of many.

**[www.insightexchange.net](http://www.insightexchange.net)**



Insight Exchange acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our work and services operate and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We extend this respect to all First Nations peoples across the country and the world. We acknowledge that sovereignty of this land was never ceded. Always was, always will be Aboriginal land.



Insight Exchange upholds Tino Rangatiratanga in partnership with Māori – the generations who have gone before, and the generations yet to come. We extend this respect to all Indigenous peoples. We acknowledge sovereignty was never ceded.

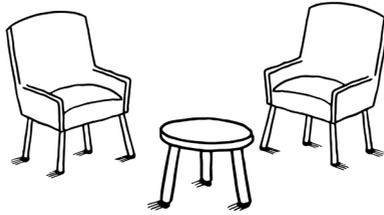


This guide is for all people. Insight Exchange respects the diversity of all sexualities and gender identities including but not limited to; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer and asexual + identities as well as heterosexual and cisgender identities.

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## Thinking about talking to someone about your experiences?

### Thinking about talking to a counsellor?

Talking with someone about your experiences of violence and abuse is a personal decision. It can be valuable but is worth thinking carefully about. One of the people you may choose to talk to is a counsellor or therapist.

It's important that it is your choice *if* and *when* you decide to speak to a counsellor about your experiences of domestic and family violence, and abuse.

This Guide to selecting a counsellor may help you select a counsellor who is the right fit for you.

## COUNSELLING

Counselling is one way of talking about your experiences. There are a wide range of different types of 'therapy' or counselling approaches and every counsellor will be different in some way.

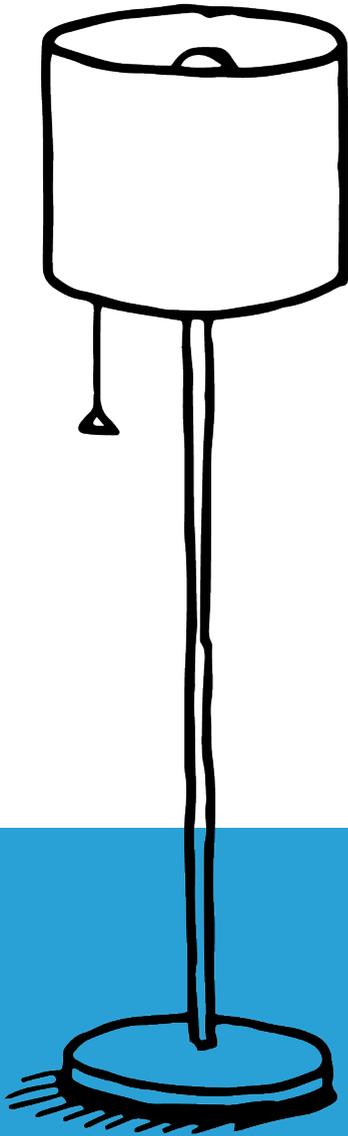
For the purpose of this guide we will simply refer to a 'counsellor', however you may find the guide useful when thinking about talking with a:

- counsellor
- psychologist
- therapist
- social workers
- other mental health professionals such as a psychotherapist.



## OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES

Support service contacts for Australia and New Zealand are listed from [page 54](#). These are examples of services, and these lists are not exhaustive.



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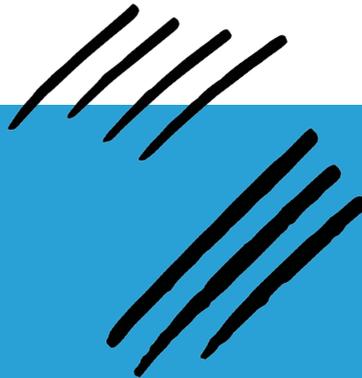
I was in a relationship for 17 years and the red flags were waving their fury from day one. I suppose I turned a blind eye and thought ‘maybe he’ll change’. I’d make excuses; ‘it’s the alcohol doing it’, or ‘it’s his gambling that’s doing it’. I realise now it wouldn’t have mattered whether he gave up the alcohol or gambling; he was an abusive, violent man.

I see my son fortnightly but it’s only interim orders. It’s like I’m the one that’s paying for my ex being an alcoholic, a sex addict, and a gambler. I mean he had these horrendous addictions. He used to say to me all the time, ‘you’re the only girl I hit’.

”

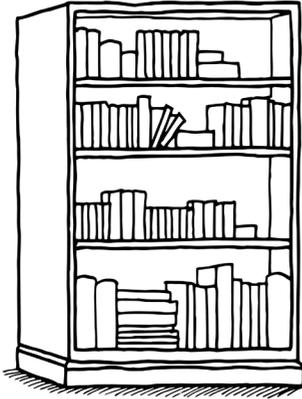
Excerpt from lived-experience narrative of financial abuse: [Deb](#)

[www.insightexchange.net/my-economic-safety/](http://www.insightexchange.net/my-economic-safety/)



## CONTENTS

You can read the parts that matter most to you at the time and in any order.



Understanding Violence and Abuse | [Page 7](#)

Supporting Safety | [Page 14](#)

Supporting Access | [Page 23](#)

Before Counselling | [Page 33](#)

During Counselling | [Page 38](#)

After Counselling | [Page 50](#)

Support Services | [Page 54](#)

Throughout this guide we share people's examples of lived experiences using pseudonyms. The extracts we share are just a very small part of a more extensive set of experiences and they come from Insight Exchange participants across a variety of backgrounds, locations and situations.

Throughout this guide the term **'violence'** is used to include a range of oppressive, abusive, controlling, undermining and overpowering behaviours.

In this resource we will refer to the counsellor as a **'violence-informed counsellor'**.

A violence-informed counsellor may or may not be in a 'domestic violence counsellor' role or service. Most importantly they need to understand and be able to respond safely to your needs and experiences of domestic, family and sexualised violence.

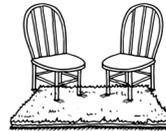
You may have already started with a counsellor and want to read only the part most relevant to the questions you have.

## What you talk about at counselling is your choice.

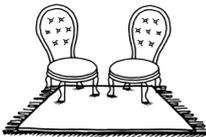
If you are experiencing domestic, family and sexualised violence you may want to talk with a counsellor about the details of your experiences, or you may only want the counsellor to know about the violence and abuse so that they protect your safety throughout the counselling sessions.



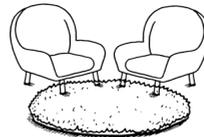
**"I want to talk about what's going on in my relationship** but am not certain about how much I want to share. I'm not sure if I am experiencing violence and abuse."



**"I want to talk about something that's important to me but I need the counsellor to know and understand** I am experiencing (or have experienced) violence and abuse."



**"I want to talk but don't want the counsellor to know** about the violence and abuse I am experiencing (or have experienced)."



**"I want to talk about the violence and abuse I am experiencing (or have experienced)."**

If you are not sure you are experiencing domestic, family or sexualised violence there are some information and reflection resources listed on [page 58](#) that may support you with this question.



“

Please remember, there may be much more going on than I care to say - until I know you're safe to share with. If you try to make decisions for me and tell me what to do, I might feel more unsafe than before I shared with you.

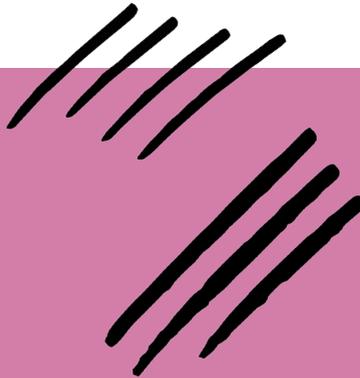
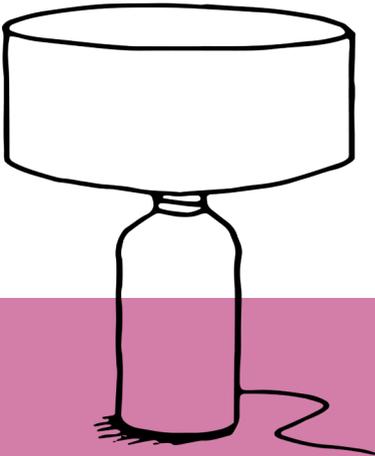
I may not know what I want you to do; I may want you to do nothing; I may want you to do something. I may want your quiet support alongside me, or I may want you to do something proactive, or a mix of these things. Listen to me and follow my lead. Let me decide what's needed and what's next.

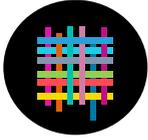
Let me lead the pace and the precision of any steps. Let me lead.

All of this may take time.

”

Excerpt from Follow My Lead  
[www.insightexchange.net/follow-my-lead](http://www.insightexchange.net/follow-my-lead)





## ***A violence-informed counsellor will understand what domestic and family violence is.***



### **What is domestic and family violence?**

Domestic and family violence refers to behaviour that occurs in: a current or former intimate partner relationship, a domestic or family relationship, or in an extended family or kinship group.

It can be perpetrated by a partner, spouse, family member, carer, house mate, boyfriend or girlfriend.

Domestic and family violence is behaviour in one of these relationships which is threatening, abusive, violent, coercive or controlling; causing a person to live in fear and to be made to do things against their will.

Domestic, family and sexualised violence can happen to anyone and can take many forms.

Some of the behaviours that may represent domestic and family violence include:

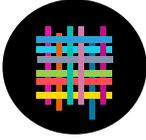
- emotional or psychological abuse
- physical violence
- sexualised violence
- reproductive coercion or abuse
- economic abuse
- stalking and intimidation
- technology-facilitated abuse
- spiritual or religious abuse
- systems abuse.

View the short animation [‘What is DFV?’](#) (4mins)

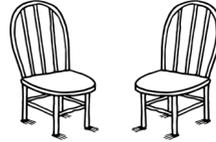
Read the fact sheet [What is domestic and family violence?](#) (PDF)



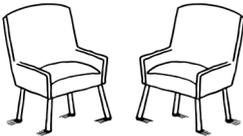
Privacy: This is a static QR code to eliminate any collection of your data when scanning. Insight Exchange website has a quick-exit button.



**A violence-informed counsellor will understand that dignity and safety are central to the counselling.**



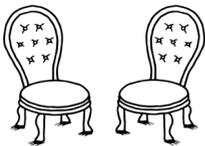
They will know that if you say something about your experience of violence and abuse **it may be the first, only, or last time you seek support.**



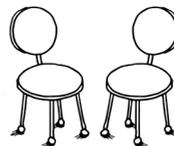
They will know that even though definitions about domestic, family and sexualised violence and criminal codes vary, **the use of violence and abuse is never ok and not your fault.**



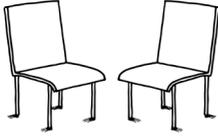
They will know that that **your dignity matters** and that the person using violence and abuse (in any form) may use humiliation and other behaviours to increase their control and undermine your safety and wellbeing.



They will know you **make meaning** of your circumstances and experiences of violence and abuse **through social interactions**. What people, community, services, and systems expect of you, how they judge you, and how they interpret what you do and don't do.



They will know that that the use of **violence and abuse is a choice** and that the person (or people) using violence and abuse against you are not 'out of control' but 'in control'.



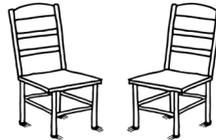
They will know that **when a person uses control, abuse, and violence against you, you resist**. Resistance to violence and abuse can be verbal, physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, financial, practical and more. They will know that often your resistance is hidden to stay safe.



They will know that their response (and the responses of others) **can be helpful, unhelpful or harmful**. They will know that **you have taken a risk to trust them**.



They will know there may be **many reasons why you don't use, or try to avoid contact with some services or systems**. This may be because of mistreatment of you (or others in your community) and concerns you have about what will happen if services/systems are involved.



They will know that **the words they use to ask about, talk about and write notes about your experiences of violence and abuse can be helpful, unhelpful or harmful**.

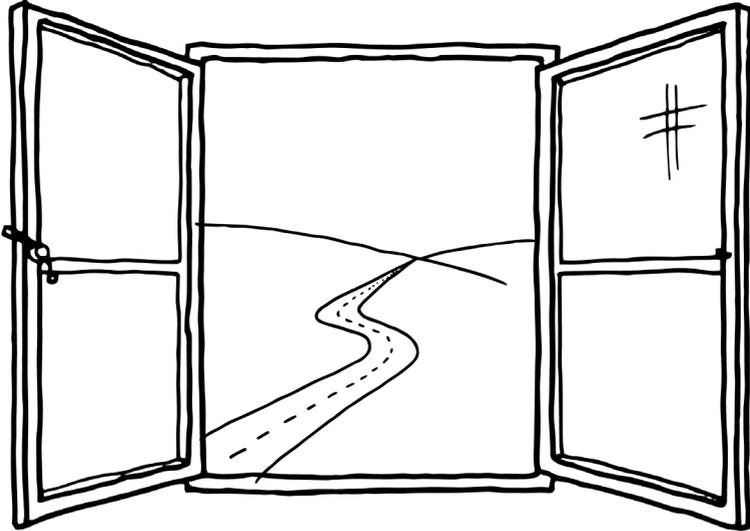
### **“What if I feel nervous about talking?”**

That's ok and makes sense. Talking to someone is a big step and can make a big difference. Being careful about who you talk to and how much is part of creating safety and keeping safe.

Some or all of the concerns on [page 13](#) might be important to you. A violence-informed counsellor will be interested in and careful about concerns you have in the conversations together.



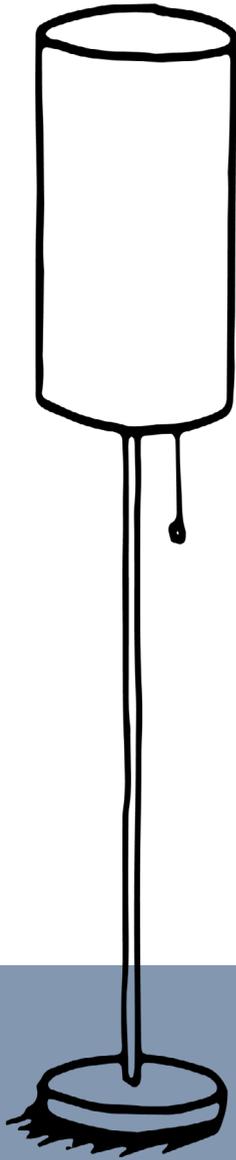
***A violence-informed counsellor will follow your lead.***



This doesn't mean they won't ask questions, but it does mean they will be led by you on what you are comfortable and safe to talk about, and what happens next.

Some counsellors may ask about your safety and whether you are experiencing violence and abuse. Sometimes counsellors use 'screener' or 'assessment' tools with structured questions so that they can understand your situation and safety needs. The counsellor should explain when they are using tools and the purpose of the tools so that you are aware of what is going on.

Whether or not the counsellor uses screeners and assessments, the way they ask you questions should involve following your lead on what you are open to talking about in the session.



“ If I do say something, I’ll be looking to see:

If I will be believed.

If I will be blamed (directly or indirectly).

If the way I responded to the assault or assaults makes sense to others, or if you will put me in a position where I have to educate, explain or justify myself to you or others.

If I have to talk about the details of the assault, and to some extent re-live really adverse experiences.

If the ways that other people respond to me this time will be as bad as my earlier experience of talking about it.

If my decision to not talk about it earlier will be understood.

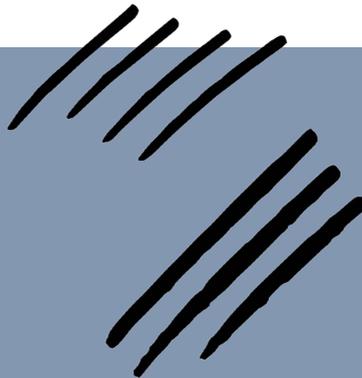
If violence will escalate.

If you want to impose advice.

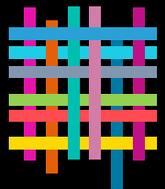
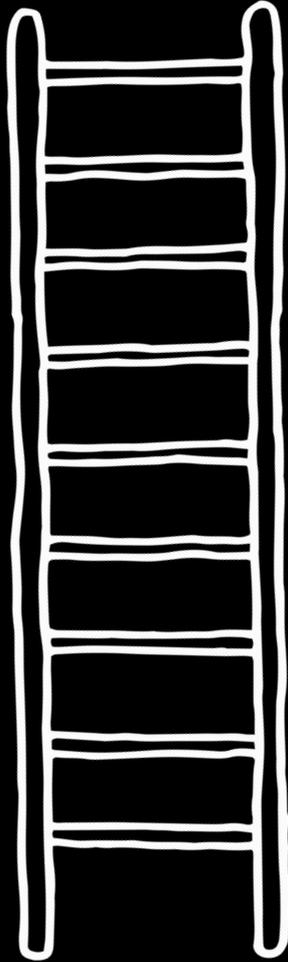
Many other things; perhaps how upset I might get, what the legal implications might be of speaking up, how my current partner might respond, and so on.

If you uphold my dignity. ”

Excerpt from My Dignity – My body is mine  
[www.insightexchange.net/my-dignity/](http://www.insightexchange.net/my-dignity/)



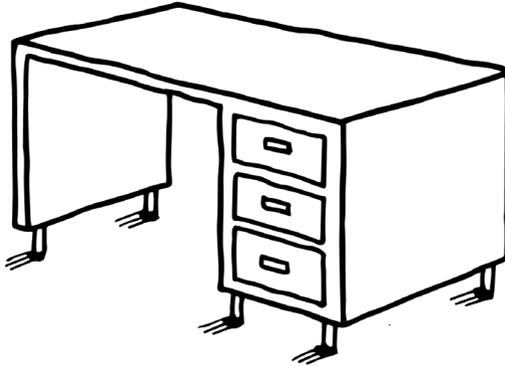
# SUPPORTING SAFETY



## “Do counsellors work to professional codes and guidelines?”

Counsellors can be bound by different ‘professional codes’, guidelines and legislation.

Not all counsellors have the same qualifications, or be registered as a member of a professional organisation. The professional status, codes, guidelines, legislative requirements and responsibilities of a counsellor can vary. This can make a big difference to your rights to privacy and confidentiality and their responsibilities as a counsellor.

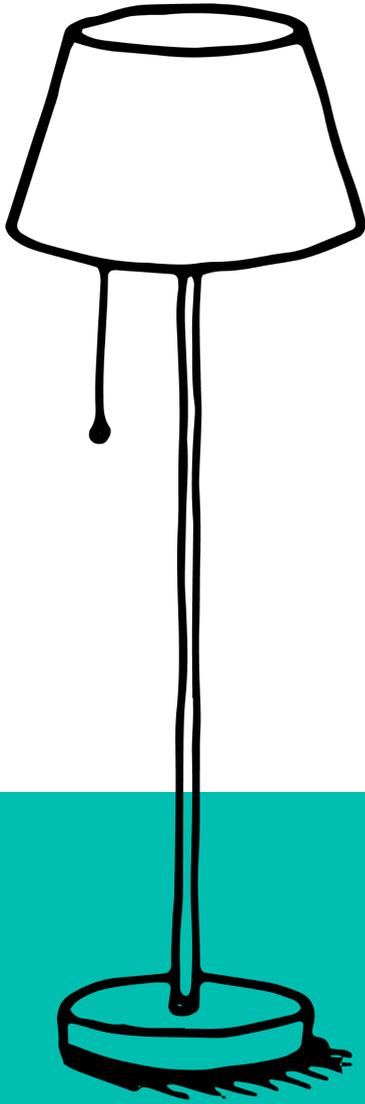


Information about codes of ethics and guidelines are available online from the relevant professional organisations:

- Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA): [www.ahpra.gov.au/](http://www.ahpra.gov.au/) (only registered health professionals are regulated by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency)
- Australian Psychological Society: [www.psychology.org.au](http://www.psychology.org.au)
- Australian Association of Social Workers: [www.aasw.asn.au](http://www.aasw.asn.au)
- Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia: [www.pacfa.org.au](http://www.pacfa.org.au)
- The Australian Counselling Association: [www.theaca.net.au](http://www.theaca.net.au)
- Australian Institute of Family Therapists: [www.aaft.asn.au](http://www.aaft.asn.au)

If you think the code of practice has been breached, you can make a complaint.

For more information, visit the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency: [Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency - Concerns about practitioners \(ahpra.gov.au\)](http://Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency - Concerns about practitioners (ahpra.gov.au))



“

I went to see a psychologist because I was provided these psychological services. I went to two sessions. But the professional that saw me, I don't think she had an idea of what it is to be an immigrant student woman here, relying only on herself.

I shared with her my concerns, like how I need to find a job. I'm really concerned about getting a job, and on the other hand, my psychological and mental health is definitely not good. But I'm still concerned because I have no one to rely on financially. The first thing she said was, 'you don't have to worry about jobs. You can't. You need to focus on your mental health. Stop worrying about that. Go find some activities that would just contribute to your mental health. Maybe dancing'.

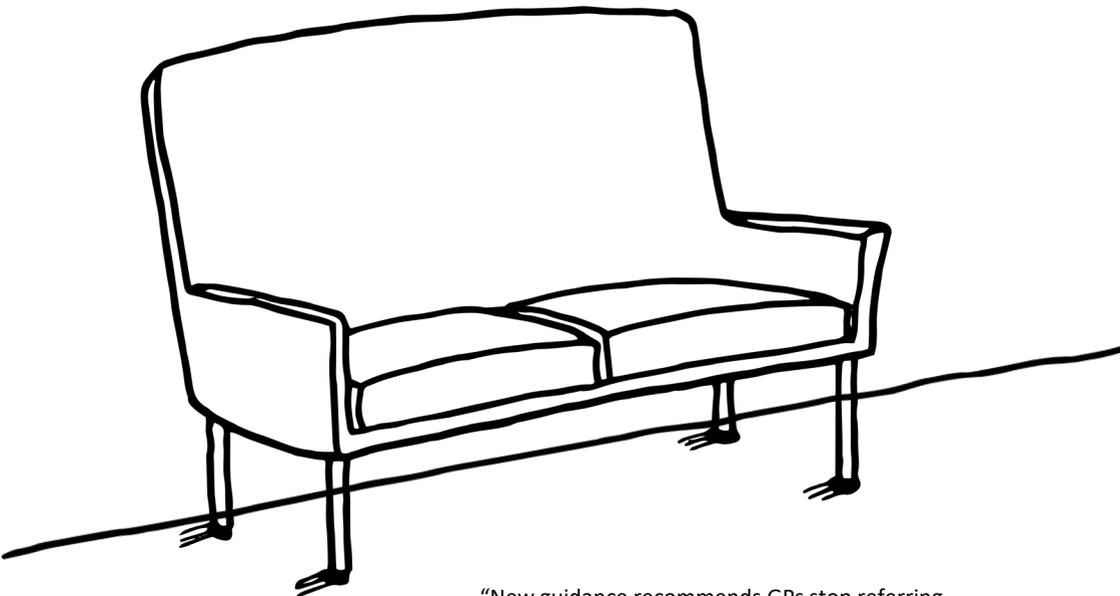
What advice is that? She doesn't understand my reality at all. I wish I could just go walking on the beach and go swimming or whatever, but that felt really insensitive. And I felt like, okay, this is not for me.

”

Voices of Insight | [Janine](http://www.insightexchange.net/voices-of-insight/)  
[www.insightexchange.net/voices-of-insight/](http://www.insightexchange.net/voices-of-insight/)



## “Should I try ‘couples counselling’ first? Or do some sessions together?”



“New guidance recommends GPs stop referring couples to therapy if domestic violence is suspected within a relationship.

“Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) president Karen Price described therapy is a ‘no-no’ in domestic violence cases. ‘It can exacerbate the situation and can be used against the victim,’ she said.

“Couples therapy or marriage counselling typically assumed an equal responsibility for problems in relationships, Dr Price said, but this assumption could exacerbate a power imbalance in an abusive situation.”

See: Daniel, D. (30 November 2021) Stop referring violent men to marriage counselling, GPs told. *The Guardian*. Retrieved via: [Domestic violence: Stop referring violent men to marriage counselling, GPs told \(ampproject.org\)](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/nov/30/stop-referring-violent-men-to-marriage-counselling-gps-told)

Couples or relationship counselling might be recommended to you by friends and family who are trying to be helpful. They might see this as supporting you to 'fix' the relationship, but this isn't necessarily helpful, and can be a confusing experience of judgement.

If your partner is abusive, violent and controlling in the relationship, it's not the 'relationship' that needs to be fixed, it is their actions that needs to change, and that is their responsibility to change, not yours to 'fix'.

Couples counselling can wrongly assume that both people are at mutual fault and have the same amount of power and control in the relationship (see quote and article on [page 17](#)).

**If you are not confident that couples counselling is a safe option for you, you are under no obligation to take that option.**

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**"I am in 'couples counselling' and it is not working, what can I do?"**

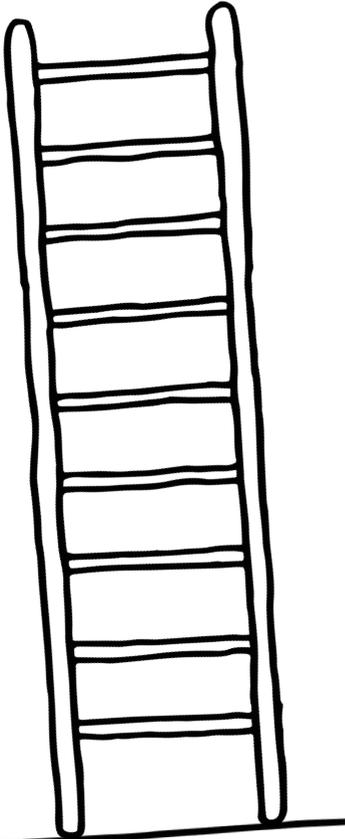
If you are not confident that couples counselling is a safe option for you, you are under no obligation to continue.

There may be many things to consider when ending couples counselling to manage your safety.

Thinking about who to speak with about exiting the counselling, and how, can be important. You may choose to seek support from a different counsellor or support person first. You may ask them to discuss the matter with your counsellor directly.

#### **Tips for asking**

"I'm not feeling safe to speak honestly in the sessions we've had. Is there a way I can get some individual support so I can speak more honestly about what's going on?"



It is important that you can:

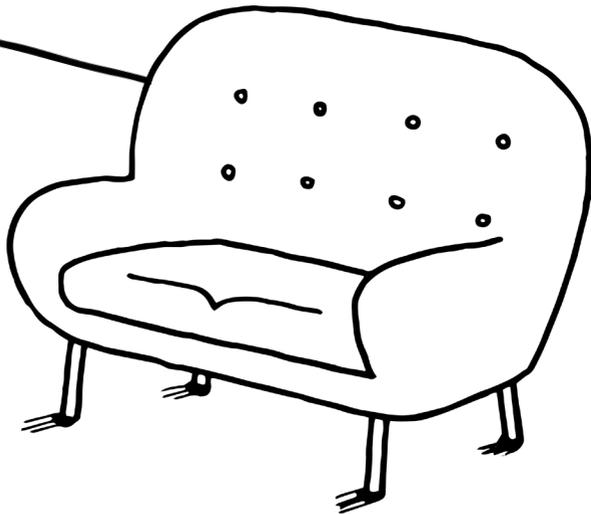
- talk freely on your own where you are heard and not judged
- explore more clarity about your situation
- see your efforts to preserve your dignity and safety (and the people you care about).

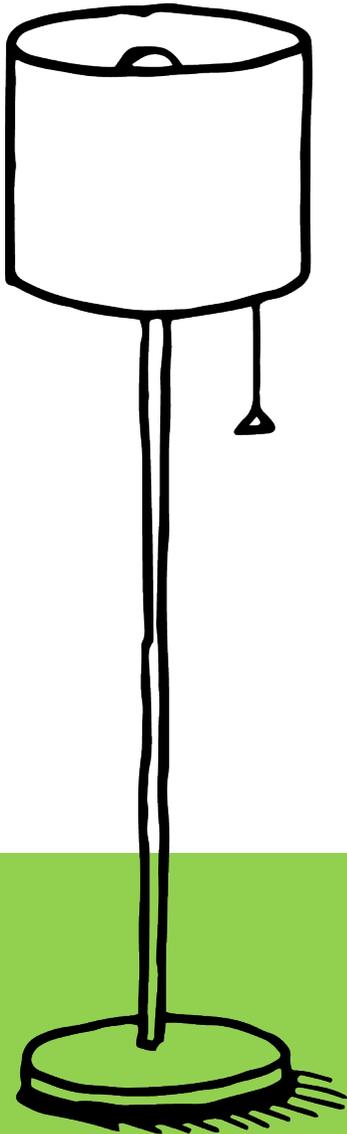
If you have any reason to fear being minimised, degraded or undermined either during or after the session, it's important to trust your instincts and expertise about which option to take.

It may be useful to speak to someone who understands domestic and family violence, so you can talk about your concerns and options.

If you do choose couples counselling, some questions to keep in mind might include:

- “How safe would I be to talk openly about the violence and my experiences, ideas and feelings?”
- “How likely is that the person using violence and abuse will want to hear my experience?”
- “How aware and capable is the counsellor to manage against being persuaded or influenced by the person using abuse during the session? And how capable and ready are they to support my immediate and ongoing safety?”
- “Will this be used against me later on?”
- “How safe will I be in between counselling sessions?”
- “If couples counselling becomes an unsafe option or isn't working, what options do I have?”



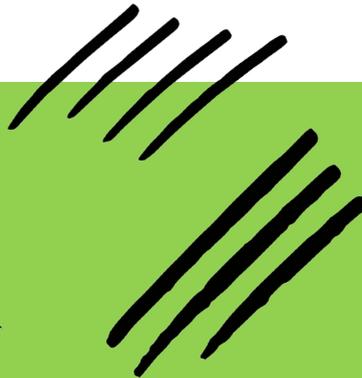


“

I saw somebody in person who told me I should do meditation and take deep breaths, and just didn't get the whole context.

”

Voices of Insight | [Sally](http://www.insightexchange.net/voices-of-insight/)  
[www.insightexchange.net/voices-of-insight/](http://www.insightexchange.net/voices-of-insight/)



## Supporting my safety: “How will you or the service contact me?”

If you are experiencing domestic, family or sexualised violence, your safety matters and can change rapidly. You will be the best guide on how best to contact you. It's ok to be clear and specific, and to change things.

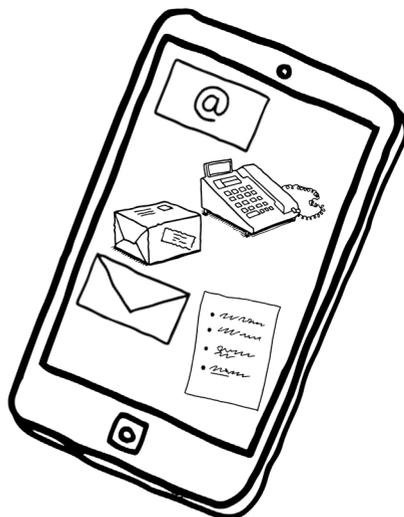
It's important that the counsellor/service asks you about suitable methods of contact, so that the contact they make with you does not undermine your safety.

Some examples to think about:

Does the counsellor or counselling service

- send emails
- call landlines
- call mobiles
- leave voice messages
- send texts
- send post.

You may also want to ask about the visibility of billing in statements.



## Tips for saying something about your safe-contact needs

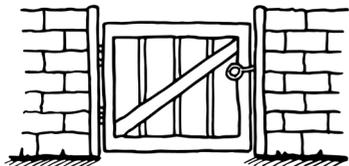
“How I am contacted really matters – is there somewhere I can make a note of the best ways to reach me?”

“There are just a few, or only one safe channel to reach me – can I let you know that and make sure it’s clear for the reception team?”

“At the moment these are the best ways to contact me but if my safety changes I will let you know.”

“My safety needs have changed so I need to change my contact preferences with you.”

**“I am anticipating that the person abusing me will not want me to see a counsellor”**



The person using violence and abuse might do things to get in the way of participating in counselling.

They may see your access to counselling as a threat to their control and power, or a threat to their reputation and avoidance of accountability. They may become defensive and try to get in the way of you starting sessions.

They might do things to undermine you before and between your appointments, or your ability to continue attending sessions.

For example, they might make sure you have no money on the day to pay for your session, not bring the car back on time, or ridicule the counsellor and people who go to counselling. They may even try to contact the counsellor without you knowing to paint a negative picture of you. They may try to obtain your medical records from the GP, or try to listen in (directly or through other devices) to your telehealth sessions.

**It can be important to watch out for these things and talk to your counsellor about this, so that actions like these don't prevent you from accessing support.**

It's up to you whether you tell anyone about seeing a counsellor, particularly if you have reason to fear that it will be used against you through humiliation or undermining tactics. These concerns are something you can talk about with the counsellor.

If you do not want to reveal that you are talking with a counsellor, you may want to think about location options.



Sometimes accessing counselling services within a multipurpose or discrete building can reduce the chance of your partner finding out, particularly if you already attend that building for other events or services.

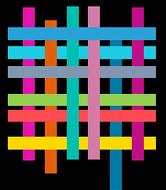
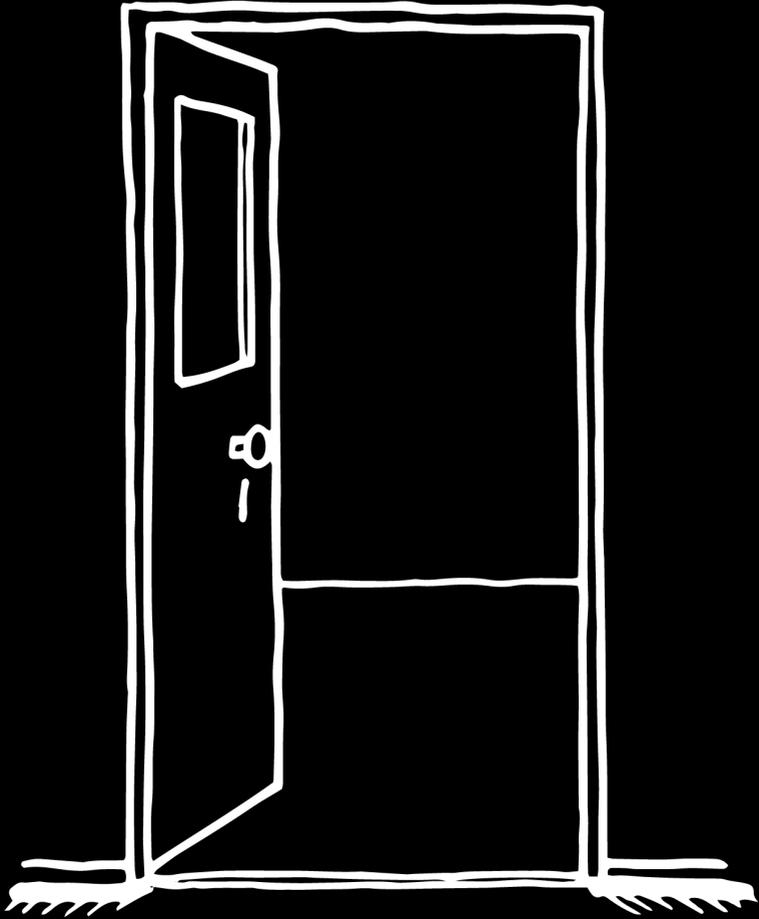
You can ask the counsellor if they're prepared to meet in locations that assist with your safety.

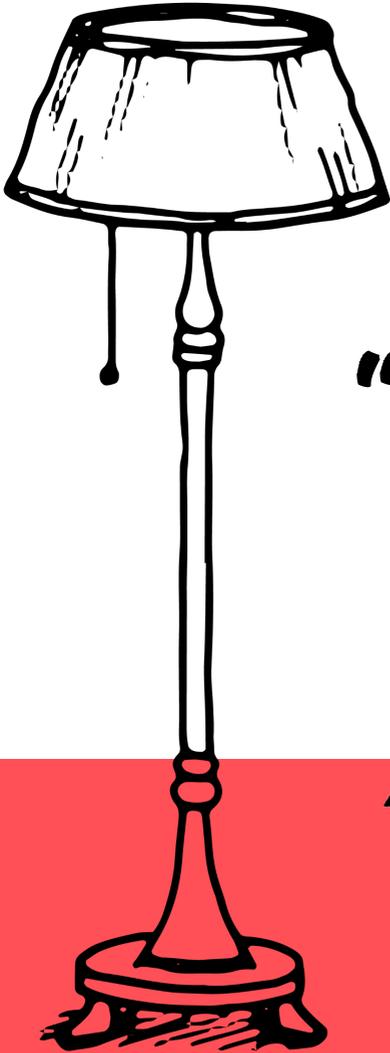


*“In a rural area I used to meet a client in a neighbourhood centre where she had to submit her Centrelink form. She also attended a mother's group there, so it reduced the abusive partner's suspicion of what she was doing there which helped her to feel more comfortable during the session. That wasn't clear to me when she initially requested the location, so I'm glad I agreed.”*

(Qualified and accredited mental health social worker and counsellor)

# SUPPORTING ACCESS





“

I don't see many people. Not at all.  
No strangers. When I go to the  
doctor, he always comes with me.  
He's never let me go out on my own.

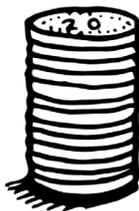
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(Anon. 2020)

## OPTIONS & AFFORDABILITY

There are a range of ways to access counselling that is free, subsidised or affordable.

A healthcare card, concession card and/or private health insurance may also assist you with covering costs.



### **Mental Health Plan**

You can ask your doctor to put you on this plan to claim free or subsidised counselling sessions with an accredited mental health social worker or psychologist.

### **Accredited mental health social workers and psychologists**

These professionals are recognised providers who deliver face to face, online and phone counselling at a reduced rate or bulk-billed through Medicare.

### **Accessing a social worker**

This can be done at no cost by calling the Centrelink Employment Services line or visiting your local service centre and ask to speak with a social worker.

### **Victims of Crime**

Each state and territory has an individual Victims Support Scheme for people who have experienced a crime; this includes domestic, family and sexual violence. You can access information, referrals and financial compensation which can help you access and pay for counselling.

### **Health and community services**

It is worthwhile checking in your local area for free counselling services delivered through hospitals, health centres, and community support agencies.

### **Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)**

EAPs are a work-based intervention program designed to enhance the emotional, mental and general psychological wellbeing of all employees and includes services for immediate family members. Many employers across Australia and New Zealand offer EAP supports. This includes government, non-government and private sector employers.

Many EAPs are members of the peak body Employee Assistance Professional Association of Australasia (Inc) EAPPA. The list of EAPs and related workplaces is not public so you will need to check with your workplace whether it has an EAP, and if so, who provides the service.

### **Private counsellors/therapists**

The average cost of a 1-hour session is between \$100-\$200. Some offer reduced rates, or can access funds through Medicare, NDIS, or Victims of Crime to reduce rates. If you have a particular counsellor in mind, asking them if any subsidies or special rates apply might prompt them to inform you of options. A concession card or private health are other ways cost can be reduced.

Note: Some counselling options may be time limited and it is best to check with the service.

**Finding a counsellor may be made easier by using these links:**

[Find a Social Worker - AASW - Australian Association of Social Workers](http://www.aasw.asn.au) (www.aasw.asn.au)

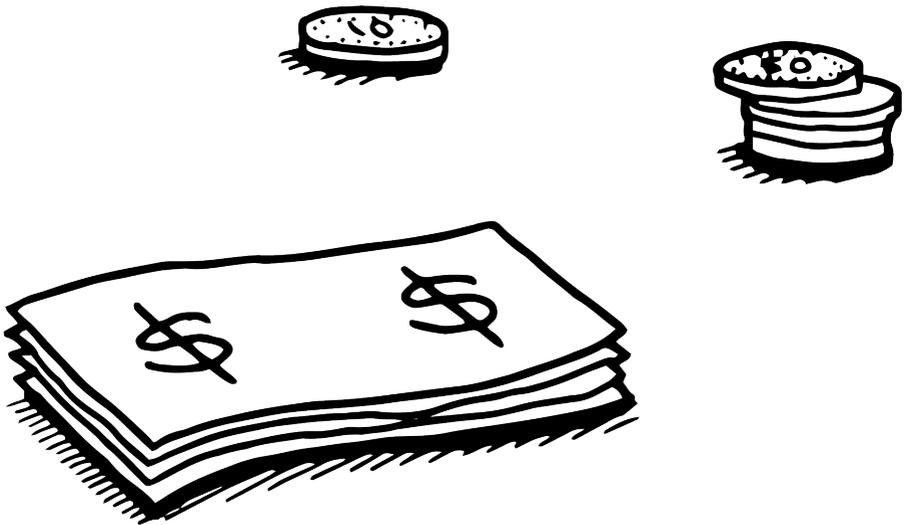
[Find a Psychologist | APS](http://psychology.org.au)  
(psychology.org.au)

[Australian Counselling Association](http://theaca.net.au)  
(theaca.net.au)

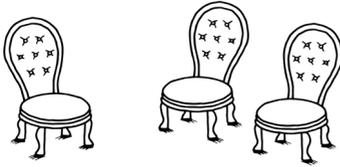
[Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia](http://pacfa.org.au)  
(pacfa.org.au)

### **Helpline support**

Helpline support can be a useful step to get started by offering you short-term support, and discussing options for support, counselling and referrals. See [pages 56-57](#) for examples of national contacts in Australia and New Zealand.



## INTERPRETER



If you speak a language/s other than English you might prefer to talk in this language throughout the counselling. This can be important when talking about violence and abuse.

You could check with the counsellor to see if they have access to an interpreter for this language.

Resources are limited so it's not always possible to find an interpreter but still worth asking about.

**Information about Translating & interpreting Services (TIS):**  
[www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

Bridge the communication gap e-brochure:  
<https://www.tisnational.gov.au/~media/Files/Promotional%20material/PDF/Bridge%20the%20communication%20gap.ashx>

TIS National multilingual poster:  
<https://www.tisnational.gov.au/~media/Files/Promotional%20material/PDF/2018%20TIS%20National%20Multilingual%20poster%20Web.ashx>

More contact options for TIS  
<https://www.tisnational.gov.au/en/Help-using-TIS-National-services/Contact-TIS-National>

Some communities are small, so it's possible you may know the interpreter.

It's important to check this first so you have the opportunity to think about your privacy.

Not all counsellors have worked with interpreters, so ask if they have had previous experience.

Check if they understand that the role of an interpreter is to be non-judgmental when they translate what you say. They are not to speak on your behalf or interpret what you mean.

A good practice for counsellors is to meet with the interpreter first to brief them about domestic violence so they are prepared and supported.

You could ask about this if you have any concerns about how they will deal with hearing about your experience. Knowing this could give you peace of mind so you can freely open up without having to worry about the interpreter.

## PHYSICAL ACCESS

You might have questions about how the counsellor will address any physical needs or access barriers that get in the way of you participating in counselling.

Considerations regarding accessibility may include:

- external accessibility
- internal accessibility
- door and lift access
- transport
- parking
- toilet access
- ramps
- accessible emergency exits
- utilities.

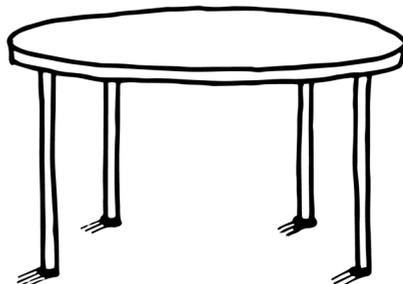
You may have other accessibility concerns, for example, asking if they can accommodate your companion or service animal.

### Further information regarding support and advocacy:

Disability Advocacy Fact Sheet:  
[https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/12\\_2018/disability-advocacy-fact-sheet.pdf](https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/12_2018/disability-advocacy-fact-sheet.pdf)

Disability Advocacy Finder:  
<https://disabilityadvocacyfinder.dss.gov.au/disability/ndap/>

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) information:  
<https://www.ndis.gov.au/>



It's a good idea to check if they have any assumptions about your situation to see if you would be comfortable enough to work with them.

You could ask "Have you worked with others in my situation? What did you learn and do to address access issues?"

It's also worth checking if the counsellor understands that people who use violence and abuse may use the victim-survivor's disability to silence, threaten, exploit and abuse them.

You may also want to talk to them about whether you do or don't want to involve a support carer or person in some way.

## SEXUAL IDENTITY AND GENDER DIVERSITY

You might have questions about how the counsellor will respect sexual identity and gender diversity as you participate in counselling. You may want to ask things like:

- “What education have you received about my identities?”
- “What’s your experience working with LGBTIQIA+ individuals?”

The counselling service may communicate on its website its respect for and understanding of sexual identity and gender diversity.

The service may also outline LGBTIQIA+ identifying or LGBTIQIA+ ally counsellors, where this may be important to you, as you select the best person to talk with.



### Information about LGBTIQIA+ resources:

QLife - National LGBTIQIA+ support:

[www.qlife.org.au/](http://www qlife.org.au/)

ACON:

[www.acon.org.au/what-we-are-here-for/domestic-family-violence/](http://www.acon.org.au/what-we-are-here-for/domestic-family-violence/)

Say It Out Loud - NSW-based initiative with helpful information about LGBTIQIA+:

<https://sayitoutloud.org.au/>

Switchboard - Victoria based phonenumber and helpful resources:

<https://www.switchboard.org.au/>





“ I could tell my counsellor was trying hard to stretch her understanding of domestic and family violence in straight relationships to try fit my gay relationship. I wished she had asked me about my partner’s controlling behaviors, rather than focusing on our gender identities and trying to work out who was the more ‘masculine’ one in our relationship. ”

(Anon. 2020)

## REGIONAL/RURAL

Living in a small town can be a challenge when trying to find a counsellor where you are comfortable with how much or how little they are connected to your day-to-day life and community.

If you have found a counsellor (who is someone you already know in the community) you could ask them how they will manage that they know you (or may know people in your life that you might want to talk about in the counselling).

It can be useful to ask really practical questions early on to see how they will support and protect your privacy. For example:

**“Will knowing lots about me already get in the way of our conversations?”**

**“How can we manage sensitive situations like being at the same party or school event?”**

**“What happens if someone I talk about is someone you know?”**

**“What happens if someone I have been talking about also wants counselling from you?”**



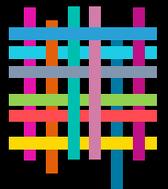
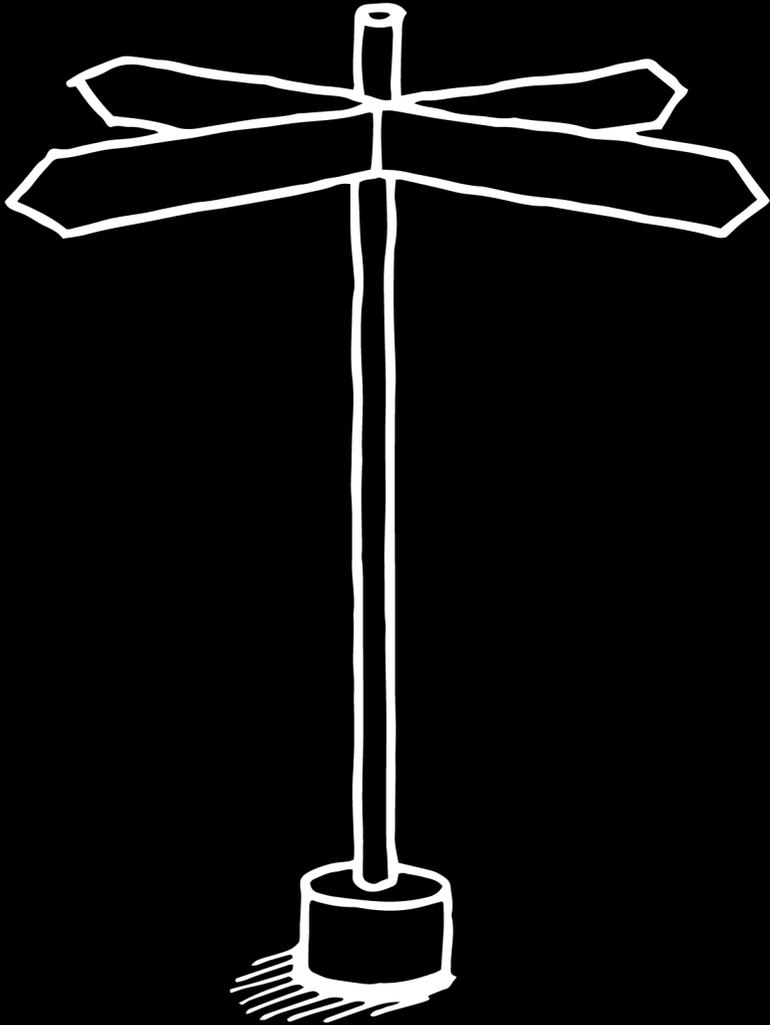
*“One thing I say to new clients is that I’ll never acknowledge them in public unless they acknowledge me first, and then I’ll be guided by the way they interact as to what level of familiarity with them I will display. I also ask things like this before we are in the situation, ‘Given we’re both friends with ..... and it’s likely we’ll see each other again at one of his parties, how would you like me to approach our interactions?’”*

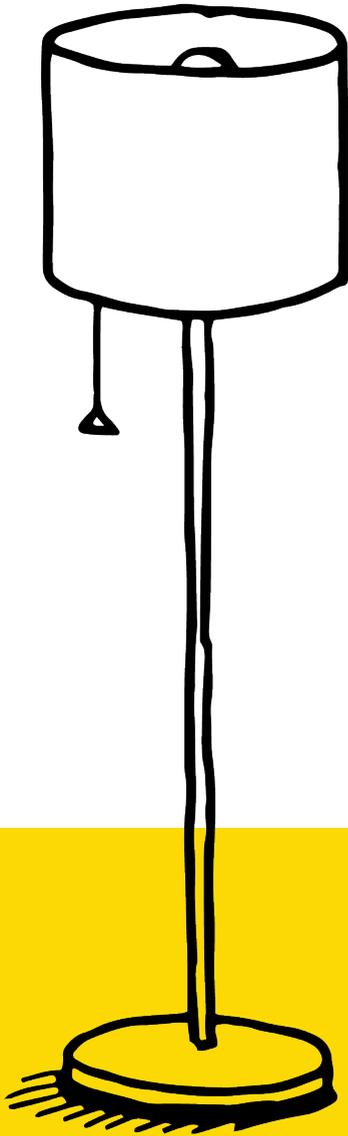
(Qualified and accredited mental health social worker and counsellor)



If your community is too small to have the privacy you need, you might want to seek a counsellor in another town close by or look at telephone or online counselling (such as telehealth). It's important to go with what is right for you and what you will be comfortable with.

# BEFORE COUNSELLING



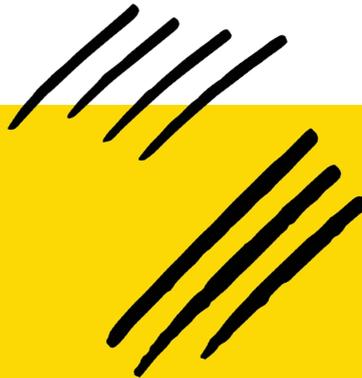


“

I think if the doctor and others I was referred to had put the pieces together, I wouldn't be checking in to the mental health unit so often when I have severe flashbacks or breakdowns now, or into the emergency department when my migraines debilitate me. Sometimes I feel like I'm trapped in a revolving door at the hospital. And it's been years since that relationship ended.

(Anon. 2020)

”



## Before counselling

Here are some other things to consider before the first session:

### **“Will our conversations be confidential?”**

The counsellor should clarify confidentiality, which may vary depending on the state or territory you live in, and the type of service or arrangement you've chosen. You can ask about this before you decide to start sessions, and at any time in sessions.

If the counsellor is concerned about your safety or the safety of others, they may need to report this without your permission. Many counsellors are also mandatory reporters about risks to children. It is worth clarifying with your counsellor what limits to confidentiality are in place and what would be considered a notifiable/reportable risk.

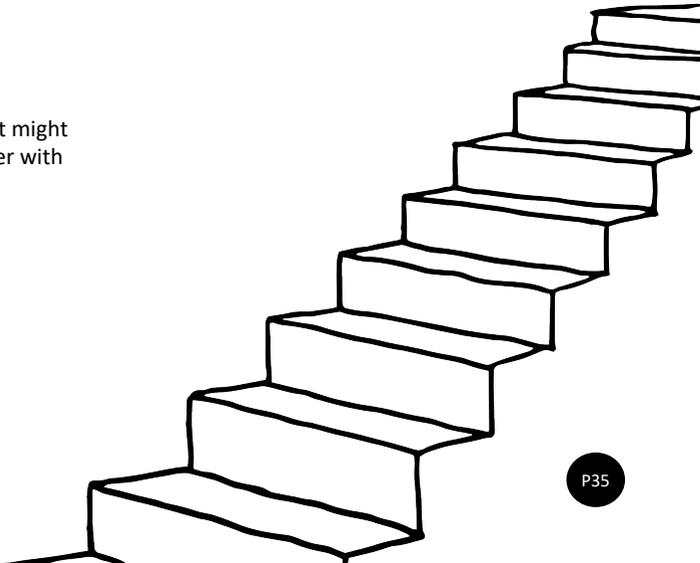
If a criminal matter arises, the defence or prosecution can potentially subpoena notes. It might be useful to discuss this further with your counsellor.

### **“Am I able to give you feedback?”**

Finding out if a counsellor will actively seek your feedback helps toward checking if they will be orientated to what matters to you. They may use formal and informal feedback tools or questions to understand if your conversation or work together is 'on track'.

Counsellors cannot assume that their conversation, ideas and interventions are useful. How could they know if they don't ask? And continue to check?

The counsellor really needs your feedback to be able to follow your lead. 'Following your lead' means that you determine what being 'on track' looks like, not the counsellor.



### **“How will my information be stored and secured?”**

You might want to know exactly what is written in your notes, where these are kept and who has access to them.

Some counsellors are required to keep notes for a specified length of time. It's ok to ask about how long your notes are stored, and if and when they are destroyed.

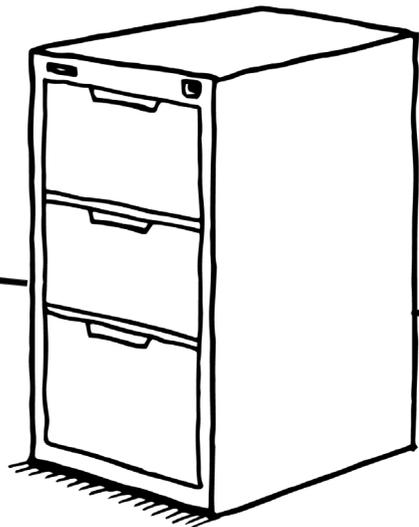
### **“How will my information be shared?”**

It's important that the counsellor seeks your permission to share your information. They may need to give written feedback to the GP, for example, if you are referred under a mental health care plan (or similar). You can ask to see what is written about you.

You may want to establish how the counsellor will manage enquiries (if any) from family, friends or other support people.

### **“What will you do if the person using violence and abuse contacts you?”**

If you are concerned that the person using violence and abuse may contact the counsellor to check up on you, it's important to ask what they will do if this happens. The counsellor should be prepared for this possibility and not identify you as their client or provide any information about you, without your permission.



## Boundaries and clear expectations

Clear expectations and understanding between you and the counsellor can help maintain safety. You might want to ask:

- “Can I call or text you between sessions?”
- “Can I message you via social media?”
- “What will you do if we bump into each other in the street or on a bus?”

Your counsellor should be able to give you clear answers and reasons for how they manage agreements and expectations with clients and examples of what they do or avoid doing.

## “What about costs and cancellations?”

Counselling can be expensive if you are not able to access a free service or low cost service. Even then, there may be cancellation fees or limits on the number of sessions, or other barriers to you being able to access the counselling. Before you start it’s a great idea to ask the counsellor about the cost, period of time you can cancel without being charged a fee, and the method of payment.

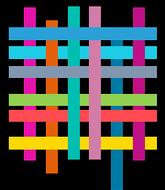


## “How often should we meet?”

There is no right or wrong answer to this. It will depend on what suits you, as well as the counsellor’s availability and the service they offer.

To start, some people find weekly or fortnightly sessions useful as there might be a lot to discuss, and then drop back to monthly sessions. You can determine the regularity of sessions, and change it to suit your needs.

# DURING COUNSELLING



## DURING COUNSELLING

**“How will I know if the counsellor and counselling is working for me?”**

Here are some questions you might find useful to think about during counselling.



**“Am I talking with someone who I feel comfortable with, safe and not judged?”**



**“Do I know that I am being respected and believed?”**



**“Am I being listened to in a way that supports me to talk openly?”**



**“Am I talking about what I decide is important and personal to me?”**



**“Is the counselling helping me to be clearer about what’s going on and what steps (if any) I want to take?”**

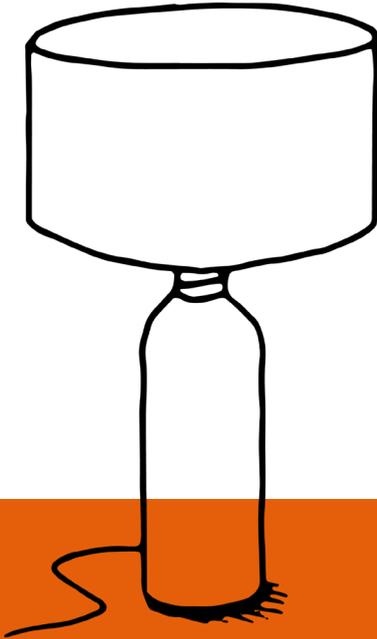


**“Is the counsellor asking me for feedback about how I am finding each session, and checking if it’s making a difference in my day-to-day life?”**

“

When I did go to an appointment for something, the person could rarely tell me about where else I could go for my other needs. I think if they'd 'joined the dots' and not made me feel like I had all these separate individual problems, I would have trusted services more and reached out earlier when things escalated.

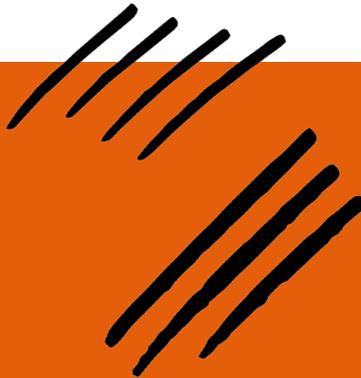
(Anon. 2020)



I was really lucky; the woman that I was first shown to worked with a domestic violence shelter as well. She recognised the patterns straightaway; the isolation and financial control. She used to say to me, 'how does it feel being a single mother? Because what you're doing is bringing up your family by yourself and you're a single mother'. She noticed a pattern that whenever my son had this huge mental emotional breakdown was when my husband was home.

”

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[www.insightexchange.net/voices-of-insight/](https://www.insightexchange.net/voices-of-insight/)



## Beginning counselling

### “What should I take to counselling?”

It can be helpful to bring a note pad so you can take notes during the session. This can remind you of the important things you or the counsellor said. You may decide to share things like letters or diary entries with the counsellor so they get an understanding of your situation. This is up to you.

### “How does the session start?”

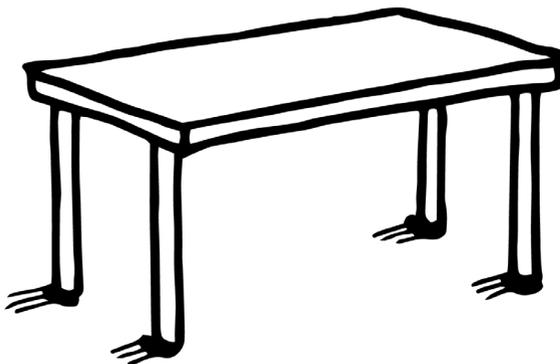
At first, attending counselling may feel a bit clunky especially if this is a new experience.

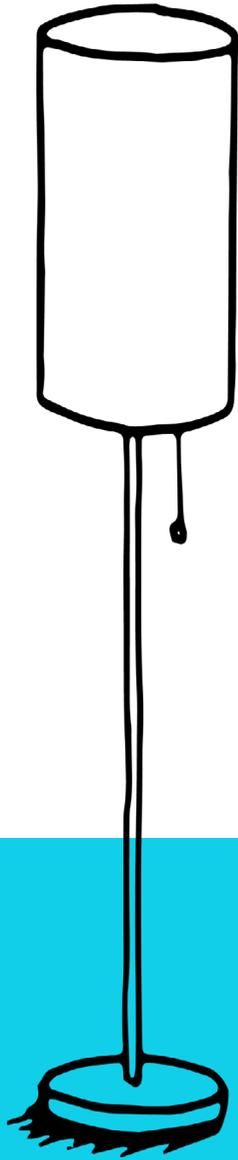
Usually, counselling sessions start off with some general ‘chit chat’ just to help you relax.

The counsellor should outline how the service operates, and explain note-taking and confidentiality. The counsellor should clearly discuss the limits of confidentiality in the first session.

The counsellor should spend time getting to understand what you want to get out of the counselling.

They might ask some questions to help you clarify this. It’s important that you are supported to find the right place for you to start off the conversation so the counsellor can follow your lead.





“

It is amazing how clear it is that I have been abused, hurt and violated. I have done the best I could to survive and make it through but somehow that is forgotten, and I get seen as the problem, or ‘having problems’.

Anon. 2020

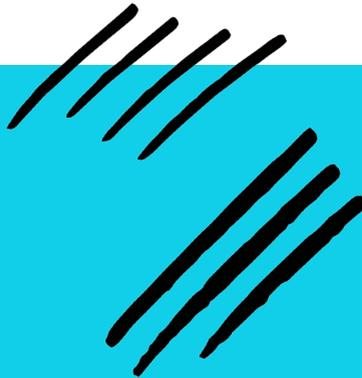
I was about to be court-marshalled, but instead I ended up with the senior medical officer with him talking to me and working out what was happening for me.

He was probably one of the most open people that I've ever spoken to, to be able to talk openly and honestly with me without any judgment, without offering me any solutions.

He was someone who listened and just let me know his door was always open. And I think that probably, in some ways, was the most powerful thing I've been given. It was at a crucial time that that happened.

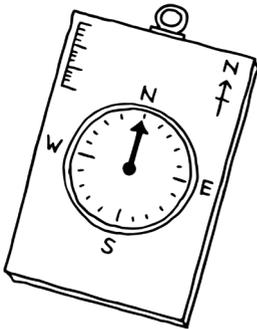
”

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[www.insightexchange.net/voices-of-insight/](http://www.insightexchange.net/voices-of-insight/)



## “What do we talk about?”

There is no recipe for what should be talked about during counselling. Some people may want to talk about their experiences from beginning to end in a chronological order; others may want to focus on one or two key events. There may be a plan in place to talk about key things that are important to you, but then something urgent pops up and you decide it's best that you focus on this instead.



## “Do I have to talk in detail about what's happened?”

No. The counsellor should follow your lead on what you want to talk about and the level of detail you are safe to talk about.

Keep in mind that counselling can focus on what has happened and is happening to you, how others have been responding to you and how you are you wanting things to be different. This may also include practical things like securing childcare, getting a job or your future education.

## “What is important in the focus of our conversation?”

Some counsellors may guide conversations in a ‘problem-focused’ way, listening for and asking questions about what has happened in your life and how that has impacted you. The effects of violence and abuse are important to think about. For example, there may be impacts on your finances, health, housing or even your freedom of movement. Focusing only on these effects can make people feel like they are the problem and can miss so much about your experiences.

Counsellors who take this approach might have more difficulty following your lead. However, if the counsellor also focuses on your responses and resistance to violence and abuse, this can help you to understand your efforts, struggles and strategies.

It can be useful if the counsellor is curious about your skills, qualities and values and what you already do that works for you, and what is important to you in your next steps.



### Tips for asking

“Can you support me to see the ways I have resisted and responded to the violence and abuse?”

“Can we talk about the strategies I have been using and what has worked and not worked for me?”

“Can I let you know if the focus of our conversation isn't where I want to spend our time?”

## **“Is the counsellor doing their role well?”**

Here are some questions you might find useful to think about when considering how well the counsellor is doing during your session.



**“Are they following my lead?”**



**“Are they considering my culture and identity?”**



**“Are they exploring and listening to my situation and circumstances?  
And asking about my responses?”**



**“Are they asking me about how well the people and systems around me are responding to me?”**



**“Are they representing the violence and abuse I experience accurately? In our conversations and in the notes?”**

### **Tips for saying something:**

“This isn't helpful.”

“I am not sure why we are talking about this.”

“I need a break.”

“Can we talk about [xxx] instead.”

**It's ok to take a break to reflect during a session to consider these questions. You may already be familiar with how unhelpful conversations can play out. If this happens it's ok for you to say something.**

### **“What if the counsellor gives advice, do I need to take it on?”**

A counsellor may offer advice and it's up to you if you take this on. If a counsellor makes directive statements like you “should leave your partner” or “you should get relationship counselling” this can be unhelpful as their role is to help you decide what's best for you rather than tell you. It may be important to raise this with them.

#### **Tips for leading your way**

“Thanks for this suggestion.”

“I will think about it.”

“That idea won't work for me.”

### **“What if the counsellor is negligent, unsafe or inappropriate?”**

Your dignity is important, and it is important to trust your instincts if you feel violated, unsafe or uncomfortable. If this happens to you during a session, you have the right to end the session immediately. You don't have to give a reason if you are not comfortable.

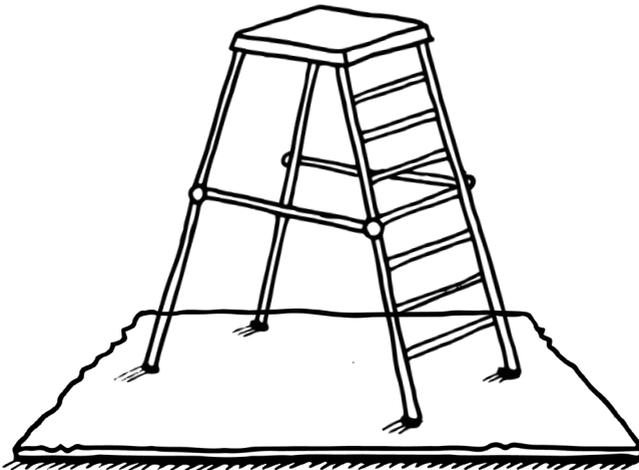
#### **Tips for ending the session suddenly**

“I would like to stop now.”

“I need to leave.”

“This is not ok for me.”

It may be after the session that you start to feel uneasy. You do not have to return. You could consider making a formal complaint either directly to the counsellor, anonymously, or to the relevant body in your state. See [page 15](#) for more information.

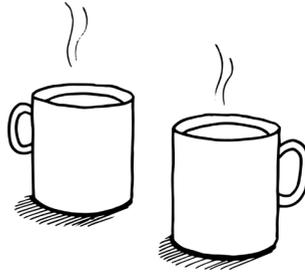


## “How do I know if the counselling is working or not?”

If you have been experiencing violence and abuse for some time you probably are well aware of how ideas about ‘recovery’, ‘learning to live with it’, ‘needing to relax’ or ‘getting over it’ can be used in inaccurate and unjust ways.

Sometimes these ideas are used to place the responsibility for change on the person who has experienced the violence and abuse not on the person using the abuse. Messages like this might also feel insulting and isolating.

If the session involves these ideas or leads you to feeling less understood and less affirmed about your skills or competence, this may not be the support you need, or the session needs to take another direction.



If the session is helping you to develop a more accurate description of your experience, you may start to feel:

- ✓ **increased safety to talk**
- ✓ **increased sense of safety between sessions (safety can be emotional, social, physical and more)**
- ✓ **confidence in what you want to do**
- ✓ **clearer about how you want people to respond to you**
- ✓ **more certain of your existing skills and competence.**

Between counselling sessions, new insights may come to mind. For example, you notice yourself resisting or responding in ways that involves caring for yourself and others. You may want to share these with your counsellor at the next session.

## End of a session

### “How does a session finish?”

Usually the counsellor will check in with you to see how you are and how the session went. They might summarise the things you talked about and share their reflections on the conversation.

They should ask if you want to book another appointment and when would be a good time.

Although there can be business models where the counsellor asks you to book a further session you do not need to commit to this.

Many experienced counsellors will invite you to take some time to think about the session, and if and when you would like to meet again.

### “What happens if we go over time?”

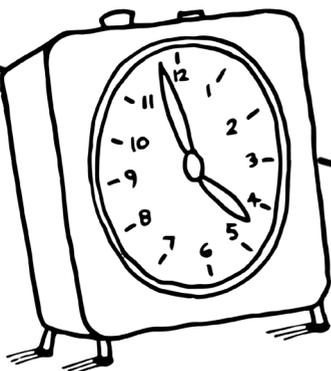
It's the counsellor's role to keep an eye on the time as they may have another appointment booked soon after, or are aware you have other commitments to get to.

They will usually avoid bringing up new topics toward the end of a session.

However, sometimes going overtime might be unavoidable to ensure your physical and emotional safety. This is something you need to negotiate together as you talk.

### “What if I've got more to say?”

For some sessions the time goes fast, and you might be left with more things to talk about. Helpful conversations can open up new thoughts and reflections. If these are important for you to discuss at the next session, you may want to write them down to help you remember.



### Tips for leading the frequency of sessions

“I will think about whether another session is useful.”

“I will think about how long I might need before the next session.”

## **“Was I asked if the session was useful?”**

A counsellor might ask you or provide you with written questions at the end of each session to help check if they are on track. These might include questions like:

“Did you feel heard, understood and respected during the session?”

“Did we cover what you hoped we would talk about?”

“Did my counselling style work for you?”

“Overall was today’s session useful?”

You may or may not be confident to ask questions, challenge, or disagree with your counsellor. But if the counsellor is able to show you they are open to your direct or indirect feedback, this is important to the conversations you are having.

## **“How do I offer feedback if I haven’t been asked?”**

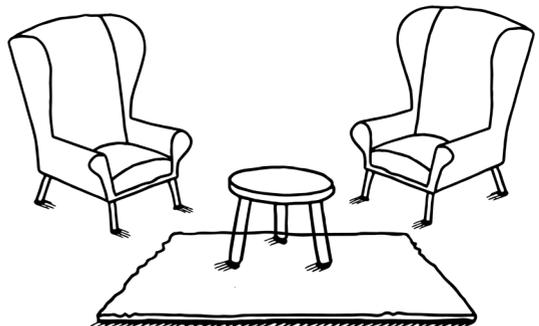
There may be something the counsellor said that left you feeling unsettled, judged or pressured into doing something. It can be important to raise this with them to clarify what they meant and let them know how this impacted you.

Preparing some feedback in advance can be useful. You may want to think about what has been helpful and what hasn’t been, and what you need the counsellor to do differently. It might be useful to let the counsellor know at the beginning of the next session.

### **Tips for offering feedback**

“I want to start this session by giving you some feedback...”

“I just want to check what you meant when you made that comment...”





After a session you might be exhausted, relieved, worried, surprised, or have a whole mix of feelings about how the session went.

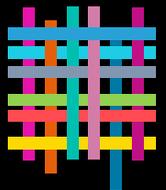
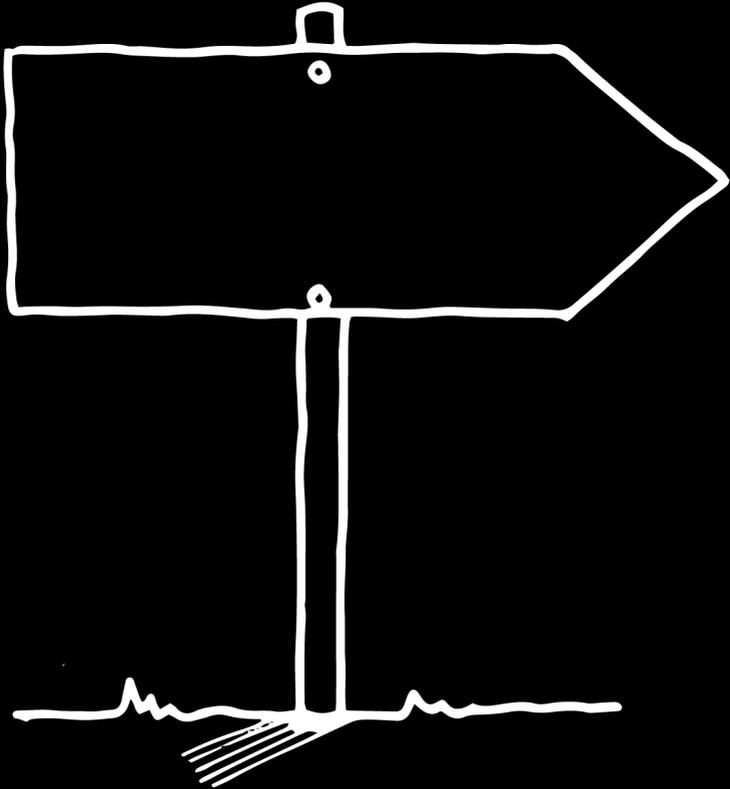
There might be things you didn't plan to share and did, and things you did plan to share and didn't. This can happen in any session and for all sorts of reasons, such as testing the waters with the counsellor, getting a sense of how they respond, the direction of the questions and conversation, your insights and your instinct in the moment to decide what way or how much you will share. Or it might be that once you start sharing it's hard to stop because you've not the safety until now to share it.

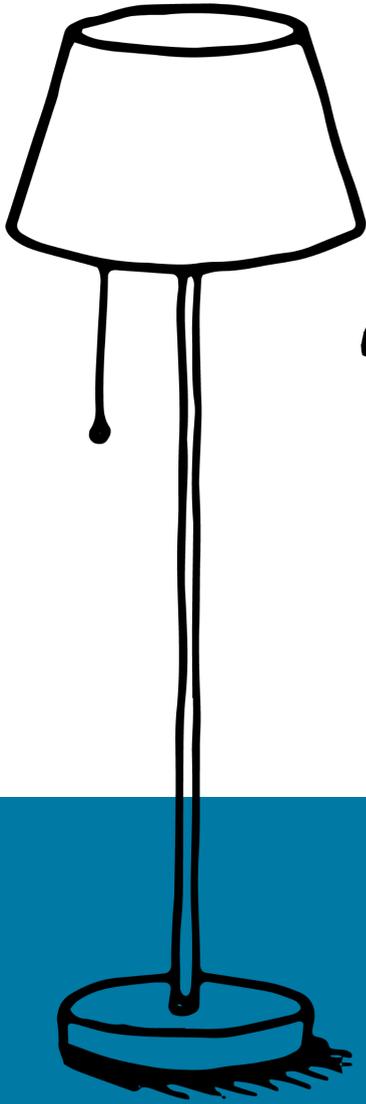
Your thoughts and feelings in the session and between sessions are important to notice in yourself so that you can lead the pace and steps that support your safety and wellbeing.

Depending on your situation, you might want to plan or make time for yourself straight after the sessions. This can give you some space to reflect on the sessions and the response from the counsellor before you have to be somewhere.

You might want support from a friend to process how the first session went and how you found it. You might want a friend to know that you're going to counselling, because you want them to know it's important to you, even if you don't talk about the details.

# AFTER COUNSELLING



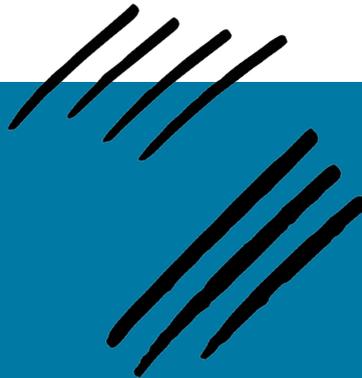


“

I felt good afterwards. It was good to have that opportunity. I think I always felt like my abuse wasn't that bad. I don't know if that makes sense. It's probably why I never went to any services or anything because I felt like it wasn't bad enough.

”

Voices of Insight | [Maya](http://www.insightexchange.net/voices-of-insight/)  
[www.insightexchange.net/voices-of-insight/](http://www.insightexchange.net/voices-of-insight/)



## After counselling

### “Do I have to keep going to sessions?”

No. You are under no obligation to return. Even if the counselling went well it may not be the right time for you.

A counsellor may invite you to continue sessions and will explain why they think that might be useful. They will ask about how you see things continuing, changing or stopping. If the counsellor is pressuring you to return, this maybe a sign they are not the right person.

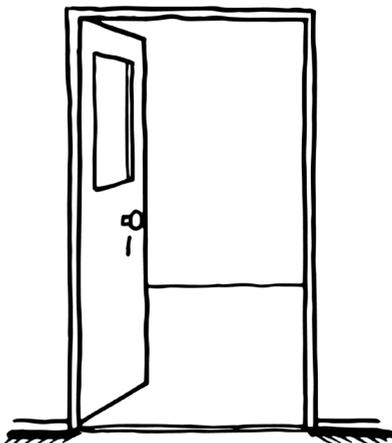
If the counsellor doesn't feel like a 'good fit', you do not have to go back, and you may wish to try again with a different counsellor. It is up to you whether or not you want to provide direct feedback to the counsellor about this.

#### Tips for saying you want to end sessions

“I think its time for me to start winding up counselling.”

“I would like our next session to be my last one.”

“I would like to talk about a plan for stopping counselling sessions soon.”



### “Counselling has been great but I think it's time to finish.”

Sometimes ending counselling can be harder than starting, especially if it has been useful and a good working alliance has been developed between you and the counsellor.

Counselling is time limited. If you are feeling that you are getting close to wanting to finish or it's time to finish, it's a good idea to let your counsellor know.

Ending counselling can be an important way to honour what you have achieved and what you will take with you from this experience.

## **“Can I return to counselling in the future if we decide to end our sessions for now?”**

When finishing up it may be worth asking the counsellor could you come back for another session if you decide this in the future.

Some people find it helpful to return for another session down the track to share achievements and further insights.

### **Tips for keeping your options open**

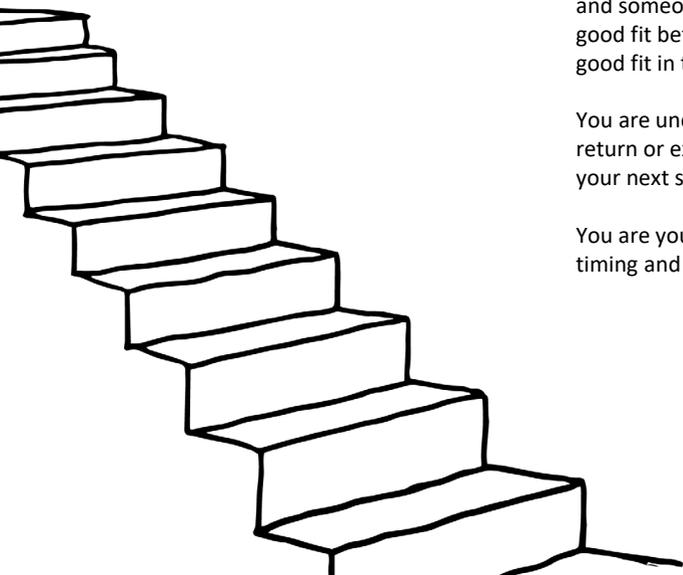
“Is it possible if I call you in the future for another session?”

## **“If I start counselling again do I need to go to the same counsellor?”**

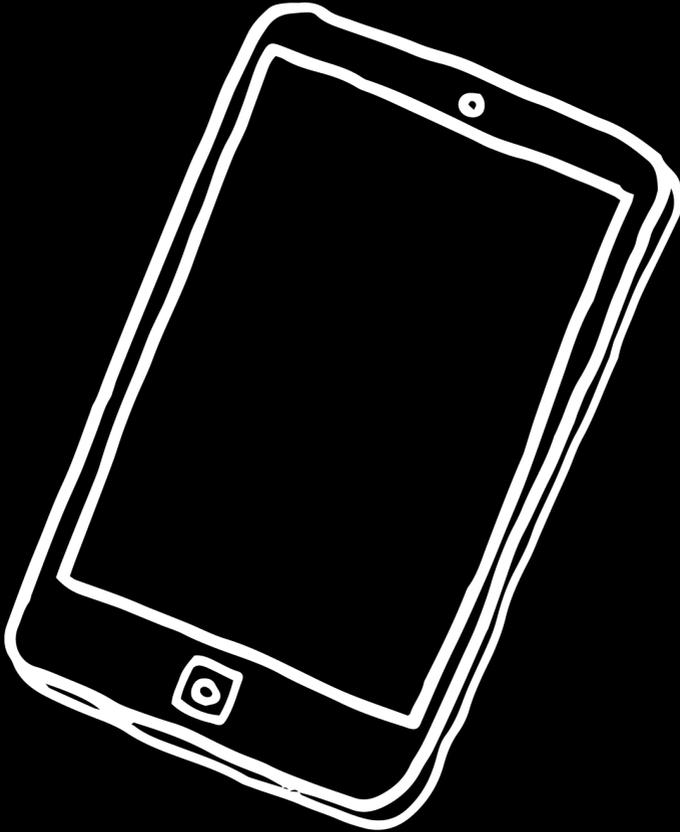
Selecting a counsellor is personal, and someone who may have been a good fit before may or may not be a good fit in the future.

You are under no obligation to return or explain to a counsellor your next steps for support.

You are your own best guide for the timing and fit for your needs.



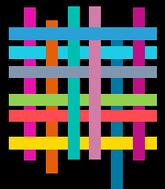
# SUPPORT SERVICES



## About this directory

The list is not intended to be exhaustive. It includes frequently accessed services that may be a useful starting point for you to explore further in your state or territory.

Quick-exit buttons: Allow you to exit quickly. Browser history is not cleared.





**Responses from others are significant and play a part in my safety.**

When someone is controlling and abusing me, my situation is complex. No matter how much I try, no matter what ways I resist and respond, the abuser overcomes my resistance. Just because I cannot stop the abuse doesn't mean I let it happen.

I might want to talk to someone about what is going on or to keep thinking about things first. I might want to think about who I want to talk to, and what I will say.

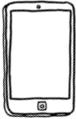
If or when I do reach out to someone (a person or a service), I don't have to make any decisions, or all my decisions at once. And no-one should be expecting me to.

I might want to talk with someone about my experience and all the things I am doing already to stay safe. I might want to talk about where I might need support from others.

I might want to talk to someone on the phone, or to talk with someone in person.

Excerpt from My Safety Kit  
[www.insightexchange.net/my-safety-kit/](http://www.insightexchange.net/my-safety-kit/)





## AUSTRALIA | NATIONAL CONTACTS

If you are in immediate danger, call Triple Zero (000) and ask for the police.

### 1800-RESPECT

Confidential 24/7 information, counselling and support service, to support people impacted by sexual assault, domestic or family violence and abuse.

T: 1800 737 732 W: [www.1800respect.org.au](http://www.1800respect.org.au)  
1800 Respect has a quick-exit button.

### Full Stop Australia

Sexual, Domestic and Family Violence Helpline  
Available 24/7 T: 1800 943 539  
Rainbow Sexual, Domestic and Family Violence  
Helpline Available 24/7 T: 1800 497 212  
Sexual Abuse and Redress Support Service  
T: 1800 211 028  
NSW Sexual Violence Helpline T: 1800 424 017  
Online counselling available 24/7  
W: [fullstop.org.au](http://fullstop.org.au)  
Full Stop Australia has a quick-exit button.

### Kids Helpline

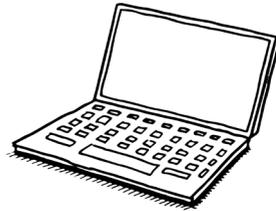
Australia's free, private and confidential 24/7  
phone and online counselling service for young  
people aged 5 to 25. Anytime. Any Reason.  
T: 1800 55 1800 W: [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)  
Kids Helpline does not have a quick-exit button.

### For men experiencing domestic and family violence

If you are a man experiencing domestic and family violence you can contact:

**Mensline:** 1300 78 99 78 or [www.mensline.org.au](http://www.mensline.org.au)  
Mensline does not have a quick-exit button.

**1800-RESPECT:** 1800 737 732 or  
[www.1800respect.org.au](http://www.1800respect.org.au) 1800 Respect has a  
quick-exit button.



### About economic abuse

Read about Economic Abuse at the  
Centre for Women's Economic Safety  
(CWES) [www.cwes.org.au](http://www.cwes.org.au)

### Fact Sheet (CWES)

- [What is economic abuse](#)
- [First steps to economic safety](#)
- [Next steps to economic safety](#)
- [Economic abuse and the law](#)

These fact sheets above are available in Arabic, Simplified Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Thai, Spanish and English.

### Directory of information and services

If you are experiencing economic abuse from a current or former partner, or you are still dealing with the consequences of abuse, there are organisations that can support you. The CWES directory provides links to some of these <https://cwes.org.au/directory>.



## AOTEAROA | NEW ZEALAND CONTACTS

If you are in immediate danger, call Triple One (111) and ask for the police.

If it's not safe to speak, push 55 on a mobile (any number on a landline) to be put through to police.

### Age Concern

#### Elder Abuse Helpline

T: 0800 32 668 65 | 24 hours

[www.ageconcern.org.nz/](http://www.ageconcern.org.nz/)

### Are you OK?

T: 0800 456 450 | 9 am – 11 pm, 7 days

[www.areyouok.org.nz](http://www.areyouok.org.nz)

### Kokiri marae – affiliated Māori women's refuge

T: 04 566 5025 | 24 hours

<https://takirimai.org.nz/KōkirimaraeMāoriWomensRefuge>

### National Network of Stopping Violence Services

T: 03 391 0048 | Office hours

<https://nnfvs.org.nz/>

### New Zealand Police

T: 111 | 24 hours

[www.police.govt.nz/advice/family-violence/help](http://www.police.govt.nz/advice/family-violence/help)

### Women's Refuge

T: 0800 733 843 | 24 hours

<https://womensrefuge.org.nz/>

### Community Law

Family/domestic violence and civil/family legal aid. Rape, sexual assault, and family (domestic) violence.

Visit website for regional contacts

[communitylaw.org.nz](http://communitylaw.org.nz) Free Legal Advice

### Pasefika Proud

Visit website for Regional contacts

[www.pasefikaproud.co.nz/](http://www.pasefikaproud.co.nz/)

### Find sexual assault support near you

Visit website for regional contacts

<https://sexualabuse.org.nz/resources/find-sexual-assault-support-near-you/>

### Get Help TXT or Call

T: 1737 | 24 hours | Anytime text or call General Helpline

### Shakti

T: 0800 742 584 | 24 hours

<https://mherc.org.nz/directory/all-listings-alphabetical/shakti-crisis-line/visit> | For migrant and refugee women (multilingual)

### Shine

0508 744 633 | 24 Hours | 7 days

<https://www.2shine.org.nz/> | Confidential Helpline

### Te puna ōranga

03 381 8472 | Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm

<https://mherc.org.nz/directory/all-listings-alphabetical/te-puna-oranga>

### Te whare rokiroki – Māori women's refuge

T: 04 802 5898 | T: 0800 733 8430 | 24 hours

<http://www.tewharewhanaupurotu.org.nz/>

### What's Up

0800 942 8787 | Mon-Fri 12pm-11pm | Sat/Sun 3pm-11pm

<https://www.whatsup.co.nz/>

A safe place for you to talk about anything at all.

# INSIGHT EXCHANGE

## Other examples of information and reflection resources

### My Safety Kit

My Safety Kit is a reflection resource for people who may be reflecting on their own relationships and (possible) experiences of domestic and family violence.

To read My Safety Kit and view the short My Safety Kit animations, scan the QR code or open the My Safety Kit landing page [www.insightexchange.net/my-safety-kit/](http://www.insightexchange.net/my-safety-kit/)

### My Dignity – My body is mine

My Dignity is an information and reflection resource about sexualised violence. This resource is for any person who may be experiencing, or has experienced, sexualised violence, and for anyone who may be responding.

To read more about My Dignity, scan the QR code above or open the link [www.insightexchange.net/my-dignity](http://www.insightexchange.net/my-dignity)

### Voices of Insight collection

The Voices of Insight Collection is a series of original artworks inspired by the Insight Exchange Voices of Insight narratives. After opening the collection, click on a specific image to open the associated lived-experience narrative.

[www.insightexchange.net/insight/arts-lab-collection/](http://www.insightexchange.net/insight/arts-lab-collection/)

### Follow My Lead

Follow My Lead is an awareness-raising resource about domestic and family violence for responders.

Follow My Lead is for any person who at some point may be listening to and responding to their friends, family members, colleagues, peers; or to the people who use their service, who are experiencing domestic and family violence.

To read more about Follow My Lead and to view the short animation scan the QR code to open the Follow My Lead landing page [www.insightexchange.net/follow-my-lead/](http://www.insightexchange.net/follow-my-lead/)



## References:

Coates, L., & Wade, A. (2007). Language and Violence; Analysis of Four Discursive Operations. *Journal of Family Violence*, 22 (7), 511-522.

Wade, A. (2000). Resistance to interpersonal violence: Implications for the practice of therapy. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Victoria, Victoria, BC.

Wade, A. (1997). Small acts of living: Everyday resistance to violence and other forms of oppression. *Journal of Contemporary Family Therapy*, Vol 19, pp. 23–40.

Daniel, D. (30 November 2021) Stop referring violent men to marriage counselling, GPs told. *The Guardian*. Retrieved via: Domestic violence: Stop referring violent men to marriage counselling, GPs told (ampproject.org)

## Lived-experience quotes:

The lived-experience quotes used in this resource are not exhaustive. They are sourced from one the following:

- Insight Exchange | Voices of Insight
- Insight Exchange | Financial Abuse Collection
- Insight Exchange Associate sessions facilitated in 2020.

## Thanks

This guide has been developed over time with international and local content experts and lived-experience expertise. Our particular thanks go to the Centre for Response-Based Practice, to the individual donors who make this work possible, and most significantly to the people who have shared their lived-experience insights for the benefit of many.

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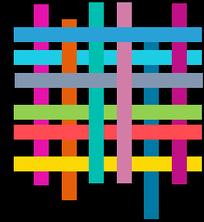
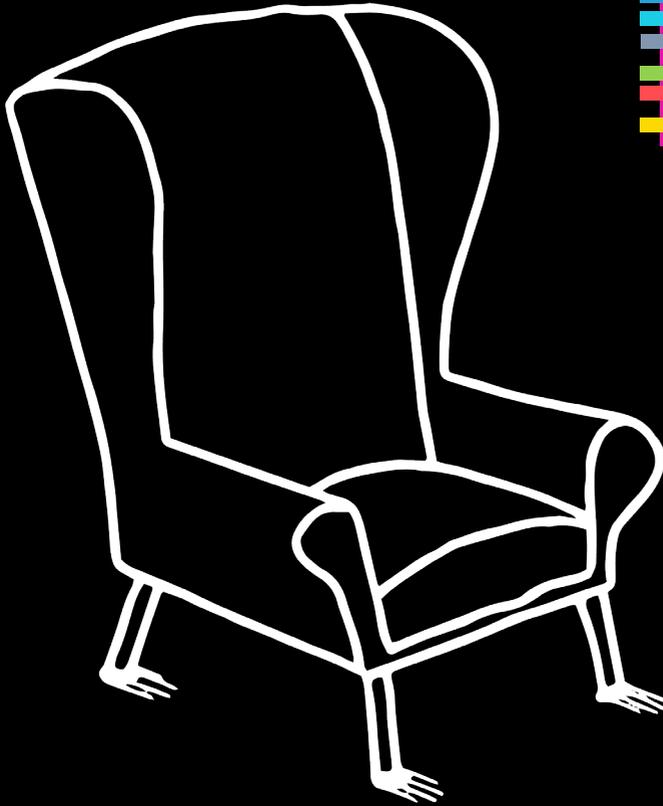
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[www.insightexchange.net/guide-using/](http://www.insightexchange.net/guide-using/)

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**www.insightexchange.net**

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