WHILE YOU ARE WAITING...

You are now on our waiting list...

We know that it may have been difficult for you to approach the University Counselling Service for an appointment initially. Once you have made the decision to seek help it can be hard to learn that there is a waiting period before you can be offered a meeting with a Counsellor.

You will be offered an initial **Exploratory session** of **half an hour** with a Counsellor, when one becomes available. The aim of this session is:

- To hear a little about what brings you to the Counselling Service.
- To decide whether this is the best service for you and if not to give you information about other resources which, may be more appropriate.
- To tell you more about counselling and this service and to explore what you need and what we can offer. Some people find that they need just a few sessions; others find that they need longer. Sometimes people uncover issues in the process of counselling which take longer to deal with. Clients who use this service usually have a 50 minute appointment on a regular basis. We will work with you to reach an agreement about what would be best for you, within the bounds of our resources.

If you decide after the Exploratory session that you would like to try ongoing Counselling, the Counsellor will add your name to the waiting list and our Secretary will contact you when a counselling slot becomes available. If you wish to see the same Counsellor who you saw for the Exploratory session you can specify this at the time. Sometimes this may mean that you have to wait longer for counselling if the Counsellor does not currently have any spaces.

**Emergencies:** If you consider your circumstances to be urgent in that your situation would deteriorate if you did not have the opportunity to speak to someone immediately or that you would no longer be able to cope, please let us know. We have several emergency appointments every week for those in crisis.

How we work....

Counselling is a process which offers you the opportunity to explore any issues which are causing you concern or distress. These matters can be emotional or social or they might be connected to your work or studies. Counselling can create time and space to explore these issues in a confidential setting with a trained Counsellor who is not directly involved. This may give you a chance to find a new perspective on your problem and often to become more accepting of yourself in the process.
While you are waiting....

Although you may understandably have preferred to start meeting a Counsellor for ongoing counselling as soon as you contacted us, there may be ways you can find support while you are waiting, such as keeping a journal of your thoughts and feelings, making time each day to relax and look after yourself and to reflect on the issue you are bringing to counselling. It may also be helpful for you to identify your existing support systems.

If you feel that it is becoming too difficult for you to wait any longer, you can get in touch with us again and ask for an emergency appointment with a Counsellor. This may only be a one-off appointment to give you the opportunity to share how you feel and look at immediate strategies for support.

The following resources may be helpful....

University Counselling Service Resources:-

- The University Counselling Service website: www.abdn.ac.uk/counselling
- There are links to a number of useful websites, information about local resources and our leaflets on various issues are available for downloading.
- We have a library of self-help books which can be borrowed for up to 4 weeks with a deposit of £5 per book.
- Download our two-part Relaxation CD available in mp3 format from our website at no cost. The CD is also available to purchase from our reception at a cost of £1.25.
- We have a wide selection of leaflets on various issues in the University Counselling Service which can be picked up from the service.
- We have “Exam Relaxation Packs” which include information about how to plan your studies and how to deal with exam anxiety. These are available to take away from our entrance and are downloadable from our website.
- We have a light box which can be booked for use in half-hour slots at the University Counselling Service. This is for those whose mood is affected by lack of light, known as “Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)”.

Other Services and Individuals:-

Other services and individuals within and outwith the University may also be able to help.

- **Student Advice & Support Office** in The Hub which offers welfare advice, disability and international student advice.
  Tel: 01224 273935
  Email: student.support@abdn.ac.uk
• **The Chaplaincy Centre** which is open to all students of all faiths or none.
  Tel: 01224 272137
  Email: chaplaincy@abdn.ac.uk
  www.abdn.ac.uk/chaplaincy

• **Your GP**

• **Hall Wardens**

• **Your Adviser of Studies, Regent or Personal and Professional Tutor**

• **Student Learning Service (SLS)** offers individual and group assistance with academic study issues such as; essay writing, presentations and exams.
  Tel: 01224 273030
  Email: sls@abdn.ac.uk
  www.abdn.ac.uk/sls

• **Students’ Association (SA)** offers advice on welfare issues, private accommodation, academic appeals and financial advice.
  Tel: 01224 272965
  Email: ausa@abdn.ac.uk
  www.ausa.org.uk

• **Niteline** is an overnight student information and listening service run by students for students (term time only)
  8pm-8am (7 days a week)
  Tel: 01224 272829

• **Samaritans** are available to listen 24 hours a day.
  Tel: 08457 909090
  Email: jo@samaritans.org
  www.samaritans.org

**If your circumstances change....**

If you decide that you no longer want to see a Counsellor it would be helpful for us if you could let us know so that we can remove your details from our waiting list. If you change your mind in the future, we can always add your details again.

If your contact details (telephone or mobile number or email address) change, please let us know so that we have the correct information to enable us to offer you an appointment as soon as one becomes available.

**A full list of both internal and external support resources can be found on our website**
www.abdn.ac.uk/counselling/links