



Client Contract & Informed Consent

Please read the document to ensure you are fully informed.

Welcome to YOU&I Counselling.

Counselling provides an opportunity to explore thoughts, emotions, experiences and challenges in a safe, respectful and supportive environment.

YOU&I Counselling takes a collaborative and person-centred approach. You are encouraged to be actively involved in identifying your goals, discussing what is or is not working for you, and shaping the direction of your counselling.

Please read the following information carefully before commencing counselling. This document explains how the service operates, what you can expect, and the limits of confidentiality.

Commitment to Your Wellbeing

YOU&I Counselling is committed to providing a respectful, inclusive and supportive counselling environment. Counselling may involve exploring personal experiences, emotions, relationships, behaviours, challenges and goals. The counselling process will be guided by your individual needs, circumstances and preferences. You will not be expected to discuss anything you are not ready to explore, and you are encouraged to communicate if you would like to slow down, change direction or take a break during a session.

How Counselling Works

The counselling relationship is collaborative.

Sessions may involve:

- discussing current concerns or challenges
- exploring thoughts, emotions and behaviours
- developing greater self-awareness
- identifying strengths and existing resources
- developing coping and emotional regulation strategies
- exploring relationships and communication
- setting personal goals
- developing strategies for meaningful change

The approaches used will depend on your individual needs and may include person-centred, strengths-based, solution-focused, CBT-informed, motivational, trauma-informed and other appropriate counselling strategies within the counsellor's scope of practice.

Telehealth Counselling

YOU&I Counselling is primarily a telehealth counselling service.

Sessions are provided online using an agreed video or communication platform.

You are encouraged to attend sessions from a location that is:

- private
- safe
- reasonably free from interruptions
- suitable for confidential conversation

You are responsible for having access to an appropriate device and reliable internet connection.

Although reasonable steps are taken to protect privacy and confidentiality, online communication carries some risks, including technical interruptions, internet failure and potential privacy or security issues.

If a telehealth session is interrupted by technical difficulties, reasonable attempts will be made to reconnect. If the session cannot continue, alternative arrangements may be discussed.

Gaming-Informed Counselling

Where appropriate and agreed upon, gaming may be incorporated into counselling as an engagement tool. Gaming-informed counselling may be particularly useful for clients who feel more comfortable communicating while engaging in a shared activity.

Gaming remains part of the broader counselling process and will only be used where it is appropriate to the client's needs, goals and circumstances.

Benefits of Counselling

Counselling may support improvements in areas such as:

- emotional wellbeing
- self-awareness
- coping skills
- relationships
- confidence
- communication
- emotional regulation
- motivation
- decision-making
- personal development

Individual experiences and outcomes vary, and counselling cannot guarantee a particular result.

If you feel that the counselling approach is not suitable for you, you are encouraged to discuss this openly. Where appropriate, alternative services or referral options may be considered.

Potential Risks

Counselling may sometimes involve discussing difficult or distressing experiences. At times you may experience uncomfortable emotions, memories, thoughts or reactions during or following a session.

You are encouraged to let your counsellor know if the process becomes overwhelming or uncomfortable. Sessions can be adjusted to support your emotional safety and proceed at an appropriate pace.

Session Length and Frequency

Counselling sessions generally run for approximately 50 minutes.

Sessions may occur:

- weekly
- fortnightly
- periodically
- as otherwise agreed

The frequency of counselling will depend on your needs, goals, availability and funding arrangements. The need for ongoing counselling may be reviewed periodically.

If you are unable to attend a scheduled appointment, please provide as much notice as possible.

Fees and Funding

YOU&I Counselling may provide services to:

- private clients
- eligible NDIS participants
- clients funded through other approved arrangements

Fees and funding arrangements will be discussed before counselling commences.

Where services are funded through the NDIS, counselling must relate to the participant's funded supports and goals and be delivered in accordance with applicable funding requirements.

Clients are responsible for ensuring that sufficient funding is available where services are being paid through an external funding arrangement.

Any fees payable by the client will be explained before the first paid session.

Cancellation and Missed Sessions

Late cancellations or missed appointments may incur a cancellation fee where permitted under the applicable service agreement, funding arrangement or cancellation policy.

Any applicable cancellation terms will be explained before counselling commences.

If YOU&I Counselling needs to cancel or reschedule an appointment, reasonable efforts will be made to provide as much notice as possible.

Confidentiality

Information discussed during counselling is treated as confidential.

Your information will generally not be disclosed to another person or organisation without your consent. There are circumstances where confidentiality may need to be limited, including where:

- you provide consent for information to be shared
- disclosure is required or authorised by law
- there is a serious concern regarding your safety
- there is a serious concern regarding the safety of another person
- child protection or other mandatory reporting obligations apply
- information is required under a lawful court order or legal process

Where appropriate and safe to do so, concerns about disclosure will be discussed with you.

Professional Supervision

Professional supervision is an important part of ethical counselling practice.

Your counsellor may discuss aspects of client work with an appropriately qualified supervisor for the purpose of professional development, ethical practice, case reflection and maintaining appropriate standards of care. Reasonable steps will be taken to protect your identity and confidentiality during supervision.

Professional supervision is also subject to confidentiality requirements.

Privacy and Client Records

YOU&I Counselling collects and stores personal and sensitive information for the purpose of providing counselling services.

Client information is managed in accordance with the YOU&I Counselling Privacy Policy and applicable privacy obligations.

Records may include:

- intake information
- referral information
- contact details
- session notes
- correspondence
- relevant consent documentation
- funding or service information

Reasonable steps are taken to protect client information from loss, misuse, unauthorised access or disclosure. You may request access to or correction of personal information held about you, subject to applicable legal and professional requirements.

A copy of the full YOU&I Counselling Privacy Policy is available on request or through the website.

Communication Outside Sessions

Email, telephone and text messaging may be used for:

- appointment scheduling
- cancellations
- administrative communication
- basic service enquiries

These communication methods are not intended to replace counselling sessions.

Highly sensitive counselling information should generally be discussed during an arranged session rather than through text or email.

Responses outside scheduled sessions may not be immediate.

Crisis and Emergency Support

YOU&I Counselling is not an emergency or crisis service and cannot provide continuous or immediate crisis support.

If you are experiencing an immediate emergency or believe that you or another person is in immediate danger, contact:

Emergency Services – 000

You may also contact your GP, local hospital, crisis service or another appropriate emergency mental health service.

Children and Young People

Where counselling is provided to a child or young person, consent and confidentiality arrangements will be discussed before counselling begins.

Consideration may be given to:

- the young person's age
- maturity
- capacity to provide consent
- involvement of parents or guardians
- involvement of authorised nominees
- safety and wellbeing

Where appropriate, the young person's privacy will be respected while also meeting relevant legal, ethical and safeguarding obligations.

NDIS Participants

Where counselling is provided to an NDIS participant, information may sometimes need to be communicated with an authorised person involved in the participant's supports, such as a:

- nominee
- support coordinator
- plan manager
- parent or guardian
- referring professional

Information will generally only be shared with the client's consent unless disclosure is otherwise required or authorised by law.

Consent to communicate with particular people or organisations may be discussed separately.

Recording of Sessions

Counselling sessions must not be audio recorded, video recorded, photographed or otherwise captured by either party without prior agreement and informed consent.

Social Media and Professional Boundaries

To maintain professional boundaries and protect confidentiality, personal friend requests, follows or private social media communication with clients will generally not be accepted.

YOU&I Counselling social media accounts may provide general information, education and service updates but should not be used for confidential counselling communication.

Review of Counselling

Progress may be reviewed periodically throughout counselling.

Reviews provide an opportunity to discuss:

- progress toward goals
- what has been helpful
- any concerns about the counselling process
- whether goals need to change
- whether counselling should continue
- whether another service may be more appropriate

Feedback is encouraged.

Ending Counselling

You may choose to stop counselling at any time.

Where possible, a final session is encouraged so that progress can be reviewed, outstanding concerns can be discussed and the counselling relationship can conclude appropriately.

YOU&I Counselling may also recommend ending or referring counselling where:

- the service is no longer appropriate to your needs
- another service is better placed to provide the required support
- counselling is outside the counsellor's scope of practice
- there are ongoing difficulties maintaining safe or appropriate professional boundaries
- agreed service conditions are repeatedly not met

Where appropriate, reasonable efforts will be made to discuss alternative supports or referral options.

Informed Consent

By signing this document, I acknowledge that:

- I have read and understood the information contained in this Client Contract and Informed Consent document.
- I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the counselling service.
- I understand that counselling is voluntary and that I may stop counselling at any time.
- I understand the potential benefits and risks associated with counselling.
- I understand that YOU&I Counselling is primarily delivered through telehealth.
- I understand the limits of confidentiality.
- I understand that information may be disclosed where required or authorised by law or where serious safety concerns exist.
- I understand that professional supervision may form part of the counsellor's professional practice.
- I understand the fees, cancellation arrangements and funding conditions applicable to my service.
- I understand that YOU&I Counselling is not an emergency or crisis service.
- I consent to the collection, storage and use of my personal information for the purpose of providing counselling services in accordance with the YOU&I Counselling Privacy Policy.
- I voluntarily consent to participate in counselling with YOU&I Counselling.

Client

Client Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Client Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent / Guardian / Authorised Representative
Complete where applicable.

Name: _____

Relationship to Client: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Counsellor
Youssef Moukachar
YOU&I Counselling

Signature: _____

Date: _____