

# **Counseling & You: What's it all about?**

## **What is counseling?**

Counseling is a change (growth: healing) process in which people (individuals, groups, couples, and families) are helped to:

- Express themselves (catharsis) in a safe, supportive, collaborative, non-judgmental climate; identify, sort-out, clarify their problems
- Identify non-helpful patterns (e.g. “Crisis” pattern)
- Learn, where appropriate, more helpful coping skills (e.g. “assertive skills”)
- Identify and achieve goals that are important to them

## **What you can expect from a counselor:**

- Someone who is interested in listening to your concerns and takes those concerns seriously
- Expect your counselor to focus the session on you, and not on others
- Counselors may assign “homework”
- Counselors have no magical skills or knowledge
- Your counselor will work with you, but won't do for you what you are capable of doing for yourself
- Encouragement as change and personal development happens

## **My responsibilities in counseling:**

- Attend your regularly scheduled sessions
- Be open and honest
- Complete tasks or “homework” assignments
- Communicate with the office whether you are running late or unable to make your appointment

## **Tips on how to benefit from counseling:**

- Be ready to focus on a specific problem or issue
- Be prepared for your sessions
- Attend your sessions and take an active part in them
- Complete (or at least attempt) any “homework”
- Tell your counselor if you don't think you're being helped

“Our wounds are often the openings into the best and most beautiful part of us.”

— David Richo