

Our Services

Individual Counselling

With the therapist's guidance and support, the individual learns to better understand personal difficulties which include depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, indecisiveness and a general inability to cope with life's problems and stresses.

Marriage Counselling

Couples who want to stay together and improve their relationship learn skills in the areas of communication, conflict resolution and values clarification.

Family Counselling

Family problems which involve all members are more difficult to resolve. In counselling sessions we foster improved communication and encourage co-operation, tolerance and mutual respect. We frequently deal with conflicts over values, discipline and behaviour.

Child Psychological Services

Today's parents struggle to raise well-adjusted children. We provide developmental guidance and support, and modeling of appropriate parental behaviours. Treatment is available for childhood behavioural problems - e.g. disturbances of sleep and eating or problems arising from stress in the family.

Adolescent Counselling

The adolescent often experiences poor self-image, peer pressure and discomfort over sexual maturation resulting in rebellion against authority, social maladjustment or under-achievement at school. The counsellor, as an objective yet compassionate outsider, can offer work with the adolescent when family members cannot.

Grief and Bereavement Counselling

Our culture has shielded and protected us from an inescapable reality of life - the fact that we are mortal. All of us will face and deal with the dying and death of parents, friends, family members and ultimately the finiteness of our lifespan. Many of us are not prepared for the intensity of emotions that flow from this experience. Gentle, compassionate and supportive counselling allows individuals and families to better understand what is happening and to deal with the often conflicting and almost always intense emotionality of this inevitable stage of life.

Sexual Counselling

Because it's difficult to acknowledge or talk about sexual concerns, many individuals and couples unnecessarily suffer anxiety and lack of sexual enjoyment. Concerns we frequently address include impotency, vaginismus, conflicts over differing sexual desires, individual orientation and same-sex couple counselling.

Stress Management

The client who suffers chronic headaches, anxiety, insomnia or inability to relax is taught specific relaxation techniques designed to provide lasting relief and a greater enjoyment of life.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselling

Skilled counselling and support helps alcohol or drug abusers overcome their debilitating addiction. Greater insight into the underlying reasons for the addiction often serves as a platform for a sense of 'personal power' and happiness.

Sport Psychology

Athletes/performers need to strengthen their "mental game" just as they do their physical game. Interventions are available on an individual or group basis to deal with issues such as performance anxiety, confidence, and concentration. By learning thought and attention control skills as well as imagery and relaxation techniques, athletes can perform at their peak level in key situations. Plus, these skills and techniques can benefit other performers, including musicians, actors and dancers. And, when competition becomes too intense and problems develop, such as disordered eating and "burn-out", help is available to pave a path back to wellness.

Psychological Testing

Psychological assessment is most useful when there is concern or some confusion about how someone is behaving, learning or feeling. Having objective measures of these factors can often help with providing a clear direction for treatment or remediation. When general adaptations or modifications are not enough and questions remain unanswered, further investigation into the difficulties may be necessary.

Grieving & Depression: What's the Difference?

Dr. Virginia L. Walford, Ph.D
Registered Psychologist

A significant loss impacts upon our lives on several levels: physically, emotionally, cognitively, behaviorally and spiritually.

Here are some examples of healthy grief reactions:

Physical: muscle weakness, shortness of breath, lack of energy
Emotional: sadness, anger, guilt, relief, anxiety
Cognitive: disbelief, confusion, sense of presence of deceased
Behavioral: sleep/appetite disturbance, social withdrawal
Spiritual: lack of meaning in life, why?

These symptoms range from mild to severe in *healthy* grieving. Grieving can last for a year or more. The intensity and duration of the mourning process is determined by the nature of the loss and the significance of the relationship to the deceased.

"Grieving is as natural as crying when you are hurt, sleeping when you are tired, eating when you are hungry, or sneezing when your nose itches. It's nature's way of healing a broken heart."

- Doug Manning



Grief is often referred to as a *reactive depression*. This term can be confusing. When we hear the word *depression* we envision feelings, behaviors and thoughts, which are maladaptive and unhealthy. However, grieving is not depression in the clinical sense.

Individuals diagnosed with clinical depression or someone who has a history of depression still need to grieve. However, often they are afraid to do so

Continued on page 3

Our current newsletter highlights some of the issues and concerns that are regularly addressed by our counselling group. If there are particular areas of interest you would like to see addressed in upcoming issues, please feel free to contact us at our office (454-6166).

Roth Associates is committed to providing sensitive, professional counselling to help resolve personal crises. Drawing on the knowledge and experience of our many counsellors, we create an atmosphere of trust and safety that protects the dignity of our clients and enables them to confront issues previously considered too threatening or overwhelming. Male and female counsellors with a wide range of expertise are available days, evenings, and Saturdays. We know problems can arise requiring immediate attention; we therefore make every attempt to provide our clients with same-day or same-week appointments whenever possible. We also believe fees should not be an additional source of stress for people in distress. Our payment plans are flexible. Some supplemental health insurance policies cover a percentage of the fees for registered psychologists, which may be tax deductible.

When Fear Becomes a Factor

**Angela MacPhee, M.Sc.
Registered Psychologist**

Fear is defined as a feeling that a specific object or activity threatens our wellbeing; anxiety is an ominous feeling that danger is imminent. Fear and anxiety are normal, helpful, and adaptive emotions that mobilize us in the face of actual and potential threat. A moderate amount of anxiety about something new or important, such as a presentation at work or joining a new group, causes a state of alertness in our minds and bodies that motivates us to perform at our best.

Fear or anxiety can become a problem when it is out of proportion to the actual threat posed, such as when a complete panic reaction is triggered by the sight of a garter snake, or the prospect of speaking at a committee meeting. A problem can also arise when fear or anxiety is associated with something not normally seen as threatening, such as feeling terror at the sound of water running, or a touch on the shoulder (or other sensory experiences).

However, we can all think of objects or activities to which we respond in irrational ways. A great many of us would become highly agitated if someone said, "There's a mouse right behind you", or "Don't move, you have a spider on your neck". So how do we know when fears and anxieties are truly cause for concern? A good indication that fear or anxiety has become a "factor" in a person's life is when



that person has both an irrational reaction in the presence of an object, activity, or sensory experience AND that reaction causes that person's quality of life to be impaired in one or more important ways.

Imagine for a moment you are afraid of flying. The thought of sitting on a plane causes your heart rate to increase, your palms to sweat, and your throat to become tight. In fact, the thought makes you want to run as far as possible from a plane. This fear may never create a problem for you; you simply don't take trips that require flying. But imagine that you suddenly are required to travel for job-related training, your child's wedding, or to care for a sick loved one – and you can't practically get there traveling on the ground. Fear has suddenly become a factor for you.

Likewise, imagine you are anxious about speaking in public, going to parties, or sleeping in the dark. But the anxiety goes beyond discomfort when placed in these situations. The anxiety is intense and unbearable. It keeps you awake at night, changes your eating patterns, makes you irritable and unable to function and cope effectively. It causes you to miss out on important, enriching, and

Continued on page 3

Grieving continued

because they think they will worsen their depressive symptoms. Actually, suppressing grief reactions can result in an exacerbation of depressive symptoms.

*Grieving complicates depression
Depression complicates grieving*

Grief reactions and clinical depression have similar symptoms. Here are a few differences as proposed by J. Schneider (1984).

Grieving

- The loss is recognized by the bereaved
- Mood shifts quickly from sadness to more usual states in the same day
- Open anger and hostility
- Weeping
- Variable restrictions of pleasure

In summary, we all need to grieve a significant loss. If we don't, we are at risk of developing clinical depression or worsening depressive symptoms. If you have been diagnosed with clinical depression or if you have a history of depression, don't deprive yourself of the right to grieve.

When Fear Becomes a Factor continued

positive experiences. Anxiety has become a factor for you.

The good news is that fears and anxieties are highly treatable. People do not have to go through their lives experiencing the physical, psychological, and lifestyle consequences that go along with the presence of anxiety concerns. We have a strong body of research demonstrating the effectiveness of the techniques that are used to address these difficulties. Furthermore, there are a number of options for treatment that can be tailored to each specific type of fear/anxiety, situation, personality, and level of readiness. The pace of treatment is set between the client and the clinician, ensuring that the client does not move so quickly that the anxiety becomes too hard to

Don't be afraid to feel what you feel. Your feelings make you human.

"If I am unable to identify what is causing me to feel continually disturbed, I'll talk it out with someone who can help me gain perspective on my feelings. There is no need for me to live with feelings of anxiety. By getting help, I can feel clearer and freer and more directed."

- Carol Staudacher

Depression

- The loss is not recognized by the bereaved or is seen as punishment
- Low mood states continue from day to day and there is a constant state of depletion
- Absence of externally directed anger and hostility
- Difficulty in weeping or in controlling weeping
- Persistent restrictions of pleasure

Please consult a qualified health care professional to assess your individual needs.

cope with (e.g. does not go from being unable to speak in public to attempting to speak in front of 100 people), while also ensuring that progress is being made toward the end goal.

Facing and conquering fears and anxieties takes incredible courage, but is also incredibly gratifying. Often, as the consequences of holding onto the fear or anxiety become increasingly difficult to live with, people begin to feel ready to do the work required to free themselves from the hold that fear has on them. If you know an adult, child, or youth struggling with fears and anxieties, help is available, and there is good reason to believe change is possible.