

 **Checklist: How to Prepare for Your First Counselling Session****1. Acknowledge your decision**

Taking the first step to seek help is a big deal. Give yourself credit for being brave and proactive about your mental health.

2. Reach out before the session if needed

If you have questions about how the counsellor works, their experience, or the session format, don't hesitate to ask. A quick message or call can make you feel more prepared.

3. Think about why you're coming to counselling

Take a moment to reflect on what's bothering you and what you hope to gain. You don't need to have all the answers—just knowing your main concerns is enough.

4. Note down key topics of discussion

Write down anything you want to discuss—stress at work, relationships, worries, or habits. This helps you remember important points during the session.

5. Reflect on patterns in your thoughts or emotions

Notice situations or thoughts that regularly cause stress or anxiety. Being aware of these can help your counsellor understand your challenges better.

6. Dress comfortably and plan your time

Wear something that makes you feel at ease. Arrive/login a few minutes early so you're relaxed and not rushing.

7. Check practical details

Confirm session time, duration, fees (if any), cancellation policy, and confidentiality rules. Knowing these helps reduce any worries before you begin.

8. It's okay to not know everything

You don't have to have all your thoughts or feelings figured out. Silence, hesitation, or uncertainty is normal and completely okay.

9. Give yourself a little extra time

Plan a few minutes before and after your session to settle in and process your feelings afterwards.

10. Keep an open mind

Counselling is a journey. You don't have to commit long-term right away—just focus on exploring and seeing if it feels helpful.