

## Sample Treatment Plan for Anxiety

The following plan gives you an idea about what you can expect from counselling/therapy for anxiety. We won't necessarily work on all of these areas, but this gives you a general outline for the types of things we'll do and the order in which we'll approach them. The exact nature of what we cover and order we do it in will vary from person to person, and depends on the main issues or challenges you're dealing with and what you want to get out of our work together.

Often people come to therapy as the result of a specific situation that's causing anxiety—either something you're going through right now or something that's coming up. If this is the case, the first thing we do is explore strategies to help you get through this situation, and calm and reduce the anxiety and worrying you're experiencing related to it.

In addition to helping you deal with any immediate issues that are causing you anxiety, we'll look at ways to reduce your anxiety in general. This involves some or all of the following, in whichever order makes most sense for your individual situation:

- Strategies to cope with and reduce worrying, over-thinking, racing thoughts and similar symptoms of anxiety
- Planning how you can return to doing activities and taking on commitments that you've been avoiding due to your anxiety
- Helping you learn to tolerate and calm anxious feelings; other distressing emotions, moods or feelings of depression related to your anxiety; and physical symptoms or sensations that often accompany anxiety
- Techniques to transform negative thoughts and negative self-talk related to your anxiety
- Exploring the underlying issues contributing to your anxiety which may include things such as low self-esteem, lack of confidence, perfectionism, fear of failure, negative or traumatic events from your past, etc.
- Helping you with any other issues or concerns related to your anxiety such as:
  - ways to reduce and cope with panic attacks, stress, social anxiety and/or health anxiety
  - learning skills related to assertiveness, problem-solving, decision-making, tolerating uncertainty, etc.

**Length of Therapy:** The number of sessions you'll find most beneficial depends on your current situation and how much anxiety you're experiencing, as well as what you want to get out of therapy. You don't need to commit to a certain number of sessions in advance, and you can discontinue our sessions at any time (though I require 24-hours notice to cancel a session that's already scheduled).

*4-6 Sessions:* If you're primarily looking for help with your immediate situation, getting some relief from the anxiety you're currently experiencing, and learning some strategies to deal more effectively with anxiety, you might find 4-6 sessions provides you with what you want to get out of therapy.

*8-12 Sessions:* If you're looking to make more fundamental changes that help you not only cope better when you are anxious, but also reduce the amount of anxiety you experience on a long-term basis, this often takes about 8-12 sessions.

*Ongoing/Occasional:* You may decide to continue with therapy on a regular basis for ongoing support, or to occasionally return for a session or two as needed to help keep yourself on track or to get some help during a difficult time.