

WHAT IS COUNSELLING?

Whoever you are, whatever your age, whatever situation you are facing, whether you are worried, depressed, confused, feeling bad about yourself, wanting to make some changes in your life, or coping with unwanted change or crisis, it can help to talk things over with an outsider in confidence. Good objective listening is the basis of all good counselling.

Do not expect to be told what to do. Good counselling is a lively, human, personal and mutual exchange between two people; it is a process which requires commitment of time and effort by both parties, though the number of meetings will vary with individual circumstances. The aim is to help you find your own answers and to become more in charge of your life.

You will not be judged, assessed nor diagnosed - these may be appropriate in other forms of helping, but not in counselling.

A first meeting with a counsellor is an opportunity to discuss whether continued

counselling would be appropriate to your needs and is without obligation on either side. Practical things like time, cost and the aims of counselling would be discussed and agreed. Cost is usually around £15 per hourly meeting. There are some voluntary organisations which provide free counselling for specific problems. Feel free to ask any questions you wish as you need to know where you stand and to satisfy yourself that the counsellor is a person you feel you can trust and with whom you would like to work.

Counselling can sometimes make you feel a little worse before you feel better! It can involve talking about painful things. However, do give it a chance, just as you would not be hasty about entering into counselling, do not be hasty in withdrawing from it.

The relationship between client and counsellor is an essential part of the process and happy counselling usually provides experiences which lead to growth for both.

William T. Lunt.

LOCAL ARTIST DISPLAYS WORK

A local artist, Hellene Chapman, is having some of her paintings shown during the month of August in the gallery corridor of the Warneford Hospital in Oxford. The Warneford holds monthly selected art displays to brighten the surroundings, and Hellene's work was chosen after it was viewed by a senior staff member of the hospital. There will be about fifteen paintings in the display, most with a theme of flowing washes of colour, like transparent clouds with light shining through, or water flowing and splashing over landscape.

A relative newcomer to the Wychwoods, Hellene came from the USA, where she recently completed a Masters Degree in Art. She is married to Ivor Chapman, an instructor at the BTI Training College at Leafield and treasurer of the Milton-u-Wychwood Allotment and Garden Association. She has become quite settled in her new life here and feels fortunate to be living in a community which has so warmly welcomed her.

Should you wish to view, or obtain further information, she may be contacted on 830838.