

Factsheet 15: What is counselling and how can it help?

Counselling is a private and safe space where you can share worries and concerns with a person who is trained to listen and help you find solutions. Your counsellor can also connect you to support for practical problems and help you to understand how Australia works.

What is discussed is confidential to only you and the counsellor (and an interpreter if needed). It is not discussed with anyone else without your permission (unless there is danger to your life or someone else's).

QPASTT counsellors are caring and compassionate and are specially trained to work with people who have experienced torture and refugee-related trauma. They understand how trauma and adjustment to a new culture may be affecting you and are trained to support you to cope and thrive in Australia.





How can counselling help you?

Counselling can help you to feel safe and restore a sense of hope and meaning in your life.

A counsellor may work with you to find possible solutions to your problems or strategies that help you cope with painful or unpleasant symptoms you are experiencing. Counselling may also help you express difficult emotions in a way that feels safe and supported so they no longer impact upon you.

QPASTT counsellors can also support you if you are experiencing barriers living in Australia. QPASTT counsellors can advocate to help you to achieve your basic needs and link you in with other services.

We understand that healing takes courage and time. We can support you for however long it takes for you on your recovery journey.

Many people think that counselling has something to do with being mentally ill. They may be reluctant to access counselling because they do not want to be viewed in that way.

The types of symptoms that survivors experience are often very normal reactions to the terrible events that they have experienced.

When survivors are helped – through counselling – to understand their reactions and the reasons they occur it can be very reassuring for them to learn that many of these responses are normal and not a sign of mental illness.

To speak with QPASTT or find out more about our services, please call 07 3391 6677 or visit qpastt.org.au.

QPASTT is the Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma. It is a community organisation which provides a variety of flexible and culturally sensitive support services to people who have been tortured or who have suffered refugee-related trauma. QPASTT has offices across Queensland.