

About me

Hello and welcome. My name is Carrie Munday. I am a qualified counsellor registered with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and ACTO (Association for Counseling and Therapy Online) (and as such I am bound by their Code of Ethics and Good Practice, a copy of which can be found at http://www.bacp.co.uk/ethical_framework/ and <https://acto-org.uk/professional-conduct-code-ethics/>

As well as offering both face-to-face and online counselling in my private practice, I also work for a local charity supporting victims of crime. Prior experience has seen me working with young clients in a primary school setting, supporting the bereaved and terminally ill patients at a local hospice and working with clients in a busy general medical practice.

My qualifications

- Certificate in Online Counselling
- Diploma in Integrative Counselling
- Certificate in Online Counselling Skills

As an Integrative Counsellor, I can draw upon a range of approaches and theories to suit your specific individual requirements. I will provide an accepting, empathic and confidential space for you to explore your life situation. Whatever you want to talk about is ok. I will hear you and be inquisitive in order to fully understand how you have and are now experiencing life. I will not advise you or tell you what to do but I do aim to be alongside you in a very attentive and immediate way whilst you make your own discoveries. I may have expertise however I believe the client is the expert on their own life. My aim is to empower you and help you to find your own ways that work for you thereby leaving you feeling less burdened than when you came to therapy.

About online counselling

Online counselling is an alternative way of obtaining support from a counsellor. Online counselling can provide you with support at a time and in a place which is convenient to you, providing you with the opportunity to explore your difficulties and express your feelings in a confidential and supportive environment. If you start with a particular medium and find it's not working for you as you had hoped we can discuss changing to an alternative medium.

What types of online counselling do I offer?

1. Counselling by email (using ProtonMail)

In advance of our initial counselling session you will need to set up a free Proton email account. Email counselling will involve a set number of email exchanges between us. We will agree a set time frame in which emails are sent and responded to. I suggest that you spend 50 minutes writing each mail and that the email is no longer than 750-900 words. We will agree on the day and time for you to finalise your weekly emails and I will send my response within 48 hours. I will in return spend 50 minutes on reading your email and composing my reply to you.

2. Instant messaging counselling (using VSee)

In advance of our initial counselling session you will need to set up a free Skype or VSee account. This method of communication provides you with an instant real time response which can be comforting for those who wish to interact and respond immediately.

3. Video counselling (using VSee)

Your computer will need to have a webcam and microphone so that we can both see and hear each other. It is advisable to make yourself comfortable and check you have a robust internet connection before you start. You will also want to ensure you are alone and will not be disturbed during our meeting.

Online Platforms:

VSee (www.vsee.com) is a secure application that is fully encrypted to a high standard and is HIPAA compliant, which is an additional protection that is required by law in the US (but not in the UK). This means that it is very difficult for a third party to hack into the communication and all stored data remains fully encrypted.

Proton Mail (www.protonmail.com) is a secure email web service that is fully encrypted to a high standard and is protected by Swiss privacy laws. This means that it is very difficult for a third party to hack into the communication and all stored data remains fully encrypted.

There is no guarantee that online counselling is 100% safe, but provided care and consideration is used, the risk that a third party can hack in to the communication is minimal.

What sort of issues can I contact you about?

Online counselling can help you with a wide range of issues such as anxiety, stress, depression, anger issues, eating difficulties, loneliness, relationship problems, bereavement, self-esteem, life style choices and many more. However, not all types of issues can be resolved through online counselling and I will advise you if I consider that face-to-face counselling or some other form of support might be more appropriate to your personal needs and presenting issues. Where I consider that online counselling would not be the most suitable means of support, I will make every effort to assist you in a referral to a suitable alternative source of support.

If you are in a crisis and feeling suicidal I would recommend that you visit www.samaritans.org or www.befrienders.org for suitable help or contact the emergency services. If you have a severe mental health issue such as psychosis, your needs are also best met through face to face counselling. Online counselling cannot provide an emergency service for clients. In the event of an emergency arising whilst you are engaged in online work, I will discuss with you the appropriate support that you could access during this period. Please note I am not able to provide online counselling to any person who is under the age of 18. If this applies to you, I can help with directing you to other agencies providing face-to-face counselling services or online work which is specifically directed to a younger age group.

Issues related to counselling using written communication

As there are no visual or auditory cues with email or instant message online counselling there is a greater risk of misunderstandings between us. To help minimise this there may be times when I ask questions about what you have written to me for further clarification and to gain a clearer understanding of your situation. I would encourage you to do the same if you have misunderstood anything which I have said or that you may feel I have implied.

Some people find not being face to face with a counsellor liberating and are able to express their feelings more freely – this is called online disinhibition. Whilst it can be helpful to the counselling process, sharing too much too quickly can leave you feeling exposed and vulnerable therefore I would encourage you to take the process at a pace which is comfortable for you.

Fees & Payment

Sessions will be charged at £50. To secure your appointment, payment is to be made by BACS 48hrs in advance of the scheduled session (not just the day before). Sessions will not take place unless payment has been received. Should payment not be forthcoming then no further work will take place until the outstanding fee is received. If you pre pay for a block of sessions and choose not to make use of all the sessions available to you within the agreed timescale, the fee will not be refunded.

Cancellation Policy:

Missed appointments or those cancelled with less than 48hrs notice (not just the day before) will incur the full tariff – the only exception being emergency medical issues for yourself or immediate family which should be supported by a letter from your GP/hospital. Sessions may, where circumstances allow, be rescheduled for later in the same working week (Mon – Thu only) but please note this may not be possible and should not be assumed/relied upon. If rescheduling within that same working week is not an

option then the full cancellation fee will be payable. Payment of missed/cancelled sessions is to be received within 48hrs of cancelling/non attendance before anymore sessions will take place.

In the unlikely event of my cancelling within 48hrs then the session will be rescheduled where possible (taking into account mutual availability). Failing that, the fee can be used for the next session instead or a refund processed.

Why is this Cancellation Policy in Place?

- It encourages regular client engagement with sessions
- It encourages clients to prioritise their counselling
- It encourages clients friends/family to respect clients counselling
- It demonstrates a respect of the therapeutic work and the counsellor
- It reminds clients that the client/counsellor relationship is a professional arrangement
- The counsellor invests time and resources preparing for each session beforehand
- The counsellor has ongoing overheads to pay for e.g. continued training, insurance, maintenance, professional membership fees, advertising, regular supervision fees, secure storage platforms etc
- The counsellor is unable to offer the session to others who may wish to attend.

Should you decide to end counselling, please discuss this with me so that we can arrange a closing session reviewing whatever we need to in order to end the process in a safe and appropriate way.

Technology Issues

If for some reason you are unable to get online at the appointed time or the session is disrupted due to technical issues then you may contact me via the number listed at the top of this agreement. I will ask you for a mobile phone number for the same reason. This contact method is really important in case either of us is unable to get online or if issues arise part way through a session.

Contact between scheduled appointments

Please note that communication with clients outside of scheduled appointments is not provided other than to re-schedule appointments or to review technical issues that may have occurred.

Social media

To protect and respect the boundaries of the therapeutic relationship I do not communicate with clients, past or present, on any form of social media.

How many sessions will I need?

It can be difficult to know how many sessions are needed or wanted, but this is something we can discuss during our first meeting and in our reviews. We may agree a set number of sessions, usually up to six, followed by a review. Alternatively, a more open ended arrangement with regular reviews might be more suitable – it really does depend upon each clients individual needs.

Confidentiality and security of our communication

The content of your emails or our synchronous communication will not be communicated with a third party except for the purposes of supervision. As a member of the BACP, it is a requirement that I have regular supervision. This is to support me in my work with you and ensure I work with your best interests in mind. My supervisor is also bound by confidentiality.

All personal information and clinical notes, emails and instant messaging will be stored securely using the BACPAC online system <https://bac-pac.co.uk/> which is fully encrypted. Anything stored offline will be in a locked filing cabinet with a client code only.

I will not share the content of our sessions with a third party. The only exceptions would be: a) disclosure of abuse of a child or vulnerable adult that is currently at risk, or b) serious danger to yourself or someone else, or c) a legal obligation on my part to disclose (e.g. court subpoena). I would always discuss a

potential breach of confidentiality with you in advance, if at all possible. For your information, I also have professional indemnity insurance and I have been DBS checked (formerly called CRB).

Maintaining the privacy of your online exchange

It is important to ensure you have sufficient privacy when communicating online. To this end I would encourage you to choose a location where you are unlikely to be disturbed or where others can view your screen. Similarly, I will respect your privacy and ensure nobody can see my screen. My laptop is password protected and has the latest antivirus and firewall protection installed.

How do I begin?

- If online counselling sounds like your preferred option then please use the contact form or contact me via email (insert details here) so that I can send you my initial assessment form and therapeutic agreement.
- Once you contact me, I will reply to you as soon as possible – usually within 24hrs.
- If your presenting difficulty is appropriate for online therapy, depending on your preferred format we will agree to meet at an arranged time/day for me to receive your first email and I will respond within 48hrs.
- If you are happy to continue and I am able to offer appropriate support via the medium requested then we can agree future weekly sessions. If you are unsure which type of online counselling would be preferable do not worry, we can change mediums during the process if you prefer.
- If you choose to meet via email, I will send you a quick acknowledgement to say I have received it. It would be helpful if you could do this to so that we both know the technology is working. I will then respond to you fully within 48hrs **on my working week Monday – Thursday.**