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**Soul Centred Counselling - A Revolutionary Practice**

Soul Centred Counselling was developed from the very basic **Classical Person Centred Counselling** method which is taught internationally and is predominantly used in the private sector In the UK. It was devised by Carl Rogers in the 1950s and its survival is testament to its value. However, in its most basic form, it is limited to those clients who respond to a therapy which requires them to talk while the therapist listens. It is quite ‘hands off’. Whilst the method was revolutionary at the time, its limitations are apparent in the poor development of mental health in the last 70 years in comparison to physical health which has come on by leaps and bounds. We can remove a tumour from the centre of a brain but not so easily resolve some traumatic malware in there. It was Freud who initially founded this listening method, but he then got lost in Greek mythology and the needs of a niche clientele.

Many therapists now practice a broader version of Classical Person Centred Counselling called **Integrative Person Centred Counselling**. The term covers any recognised addition to the basic method, typically Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Psychodynamic methodologies, although few such practitioners will have done intensive training in all their various add-ons.

My experience of the basic Classical Person Centred Counselling training was disappointing, so I started to listen to what clients really wanted. I developed **a new process**, still based on the premises of Person Centred Counselling. It started off with a simple visual aid called the **Circle Diagram**. I described it in Therapy Today in June 2015. We place the issues on the table in a diagram so that we are not confused between the person of the client and the issues they are subjected to. The diagram is then developed as we travel through their issues. It illustrates that whilst there are many differences between us all, there are many absolutes too which we can all recognise. We can identify that we all basically animals and that we are effectively created by the people and circumstances that are around us. These are not of our own making. The philosophy of Adverse Childhood Experiences expresses this concept. It seeks to place clients’ experiences and feelings into a theoretical framework to allow them to perceive their issues from a different perspective. It utilises accessible neuroscience in its theoretical construct. I ask my clients what is it that augments them and what diminishes them. They learn to distinguish between the two and find the courage to pursue the good stuff and reject the bad stuff.

**Soul Centred Counselling** acknowledges that whilst there are some wonderfully positive experiences in our lives, there are some devastating ones to. It accepts that the reason clients seek help is pathology - some sort of internal malfunction. Why else? The pathology may be theirs or it may be in someone who is oppressing them. The method proposes pathological models based on observation rather than the application of diagnoses derived in the psychiatric world.

It offers a particular form of **meditation** which has an amazing track record in changing clients’ lives. Sometimes it is the key to the therapy when nothing else would work. See the You Tube:

[Meditation Can Transform Your Life: - Mental Health](https://youtu.be/Uf5r6gT4lzw)

**Note taking** is a seriously underestimated function of talking therapy. My training discouraged this in session. Having gone through a career which required detailed minuting of meetings, I chose to continue this in my therapy work. I cannot rely solely on memory after a client has left. They will expect me to know everything they have ever told me. Unless you have a very special mind, you will need to make notes, not only at the end, but during the therapy. Clients rarely object. I have developed a way of writing and listening at the same time. I can never catch it all, but I do pick up on my memory afterwards. I then make my notes legible so that, just before the next session, I can go through them and get my client back into my mind again. It respects what the client is saying. Any notes taken are totally confidential and can never be shared. Where an institution requires client notes, separate briefer notes can be recorded.

The method **tracks performance.** It requests questionnaires both before and after therapy which give numerical outcomes. It divides one score by the other to give measure of progress. Whilst it can help understand an individual client, it cannot be used as a substitute for assessment. It is however useful when aggregated with other clients’ scores to give the therapist a measure of their own success. It is a secondary measure, and must not be used to direct decision making.

In amongst some very poor practice, there are very competent practitioners. I know that because I have met them. It is not that Soul Centred Counselling provides results necessarily better than all the others. It is that this is a defined and repeatable process which can be taught and which can routinely achieve far better results than the current Classical Person Centred Counselling methodology. My book [So Now I Get It](https://www.amazon.co.uk/So-Now-Get-Soul-Centred-Counselling/dp/1916981879/ref=sr_1_1?crid=RE9H31F2PJB5&dib=eyJ2IjoiMSJ9.RodTuJPJvLFwNYDXIbJAfncIlFpoTaAcilzZWvwqlnDtALj9CoRysMDeIzqHmVS-1VVRNaN3od1R3baS9lTGDrPx_WIJWqw4x62SLFyOMq34tIIPwqbbKdGjsWKRPosK-Mysy00PNosTVZDcz_Zv-R3EHexMfZGk_8SxzXCymdoBLChmKfDVRc08bx6i_PsV66sa-zcvx3ZYs2cb59Mjm-0n-RLt5mGP8Qa-areeK5Q.xAw5cydXWaesae4sswjYU27qO8o4PcmWAHeMmclcNq0&dib_tag=se&keywords=so+now+get+it&qid=1708192231&sprefix=so+now+get+it%2Caps%2C188&sr=8-1) describes it.

I would like to see this method offered in all the educational establishments, at least as an option. We desperately need to make mental health treatment far more effective than it is now.

David Waite

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