

COUNSELLING SERVICES

The Association for Services to Torture and Trauma Survivors - ASeTTS - has been providing counselling and support to refugees since its incorporation in 1992. ASeTTS provides culturally sensitive services carried out by experienced and professionally qualified staff. ASeTTS employs bilingual staff and uses interpreters where required.

Counselling is available to individuals, families and groups for problems arising from torture and trauma experiences which have occurred in a person's country of origin, during their flight to a country of asylum or while in detention.

WHAT IS COUNSELLING?

Counselling helps people to talk about their problems and difficulties so they feel less troubled and more in control of their lives. It helps people to feel strong again, to feel more at peace, and to enjoy life and better relationships. ASeTTS staff work with a 'model of recovery' that respects people's stories and experiences and also helps them to rediscover their strengths, talents and confidence.

ASeTTS Counsellors-Advocates are professionally qualified and are trained to use a range of skills to assist and support people. Counselling can take many different forms such as talking and listening, art work or drawing, exploring dreams, writing, or providing information and explanations. You will never be forced to do anything that makes you scared or uncomfortable.

WHY ATTEND COUNSELLING?

Most people find that talking with a counsellor helps them to understand their experiences and feelings and assists them to overcome their problems. Counselling at ASeTTS may be useful if you think your problems are related to your experience of torture, war zone conditions, abuse and harassment by soldiers, rebels or officials, abduction, detention and imprisonment, or other unpleasant or dangerous experiences.

It is normal for people who have experienced and survived these terrible experiences to have individual problems or difficulties with other people or family.

Some of the more common problems are:

- Disrupted sleep
- Unwanted thoughts and memories
- Overwhelming feelings of anger
- Often feeling sad
- Feeling nervous and not understanding why
- Not wanting to be around other people
- Not wanting to be reminded of your past
- Poor appetite
- Heart palpitations and sweating (for which there is no medical explanation)
- Trouble concentrating
- Family conflict
- Trouble learning or remembering

If you have been feeling troubled or distressed by any of these problems it is worth talking with a counsellor. ASeTTS staff know that some people find it difficult to talk with a stranger but you will be treated gently and with respect and courtesy.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The service is CONFIDENTIAL. This means we will not pass on any information about you without your consent unless legally required to do so. Any interpreter who works at ASeTTS is also bound by confidentiality.

COMPLAINTS

If you are not happy with the help you are given or with the worker, you have right to make a complaint or request a change of worker. You can discuss this with the worker or ask to see a manager.

HOW TO CONTACT US

At ASeTTS we work with individuals and groups requiring assistance regardless of their country of origin, political or religious beliefs. All client services are FREE.

To obtain more information or to see a counsellor please ring ASeTTS on 08 9227 2700.

You can also get TIS (131450) to call ASeTTS.

Agency referrals 'referral forms' are available from the ASeTTS website, www.asetts.org.au