



# National Counseling Month



## What is Counseling Awareness Month?

Counseling Awareness Month is an annual observance that is celebrated in April to educate the public about the role of counselors in helping individuals to live healthier, happier, and more productive lives. It is sponsored by the American Counseling Association (ACA). The theme for this year's observance is "Celebrating 50 Years of Excellence."

## What is counseling?

Counseling is a collaborative effort between a counselor and a client. According to the ACA, "Professional counselors help clients identify goals and potential solutions to problems which cause emotional turmoil; seek to improve communication and coping skills; strengthen self-esteem; and promote behavior change and optimal mental health."



## Why is counseling so important?

Every day, some form of counseling makes a difference in the lives of individuals around the world. Counseling can be beneficial in many instances. For example, counseling can help when a person is making a life-changing decision and needs assistance with putting things in perspective, or when a person needs help with improving or developing life skills. In addition to mental health counseling, other types of counseling include pastoral or spiritual counseling, marriage counseling, job and business counseling, education counseling, and genetic counseling.

## Benefits of counseling

The main benefit of counseling is that it helps you to have a life which you can more fully enjoy and appreciate. It can help you to become the sort of person you want to be. It can also help you to more deeply enjoy your important relationships.

You might use therapy to:

- feel better about yourself
- feel more at peace, more comfortable, or more secure in the world
- feel more successfully (and more joyfully) connected with others (including your spouse/partner)
- reduce stress (which promotes physical health too)
- work through problems with a skilled, and compassionate professional
- identify your goals
- (those which can support the kind of life you would like to have)
- learn new behaviors and/or responses which can help you to achieve your goals
- establish ways and techniques for reaching your goals
- understand your own thoughts, feelings, and responses better
- understand your loved ones better
- have a safe and friendly ear; someone to use as a sounding board
- speak with a skilled and interested professional about your fears and perceptions
- talk with a compassionate professional about troubling or private concerns
- work towards greater self-fulfillment and self-mastery