

Welcome!

You're reading this because you think that counselling may help you. This pack contains everything you need to access our counselling support. So pop the kettle on, put your feet up and have a read. If you have any questions just email hello@brainstrust.org.uk or call Helen on 01983 292405.

Coaching? Counselling? What's the difference?

We don't want people to be alone on their brain tumour journey – whatever their role. *brainstrust* is a gateway to all kinds of experienced based brain tumour support. Real world, or virtual world, you can click on links, pick up the phone, meet, type, talk, text and share, but most of all, know that you are not alone.

We believe that this is because we are 'not just a phoneline'. Instead, we offer a range of personal support services that embrace the ways that brain tumour patients and carers want to communicate, and that are accessible when these people need to use them. And these services include our highly regarded coaching and counselling help.

When we are no longer able to change a situation we are challenged to change ourselves. You are the person who is ultimately going to have the greatest impact on your life. Our help enables you to face these challenges, so that you learn how to develop resilience and utilise resources fully.

Counselling creates the space for you to talk through your feelings in a safe and confidential place. It will help you to develop strategies for managing your future.

So how is this different from the coaching support we offer? The answer lies in the relationship between the parties.

The **coaching** relationship is built on collaboration. It is not essential that the person coaching has more experience of the coachee's situation than the coachee and the coach will use questions to facilitate the coachee's thinking. At *brainstrust* we listen, listen some more and then ask questions. We focus on achieving specific immediate goals which relate to specific issues. For example, weighing up the pros and cons of having a particular treatment, or overcoming a problem encountered as a carer. We also know that, through coaching, clients can also experience a sense of healing, as they make courageous decisions about their lives and work. Coaching focuses on helping people to not just face the future, but achieve a better quality of life, through developing practical solutions which work for them.

Counselling comes into play when support is needed to understand psychological distress associated with, what is sometimes referred to as, 'problems with living'. For example, it may be helpful for someone who is struggling to cope or feeling very anxious or depressed. Counselling tends to have a broader focus and greater depth than coaching. It helps people to explore and understand the feelings which are causing them grief and to identify and explore steps for moving beyond these feelings to make positive changes in their lives. Counselling can be very challenging as it can often unearth very painful feelings, make people confront unresolved personal issues and challenge them to change the way they go about their lives today and in the future. Counsellors help people by building a supportive relationship which is based on the essential qualities of acceptance/warmth, genuineness and empathy. Like coaching, they do not offer solutions or advice, but instead help the client to identify their own issues and ways of moving forward.

Both counselling and coaching can transform the way that people see themselves, how they can move forward and deal with the challenges they face and how they might have a better quality of life. At *brainstrust* we are delighted to be able to offer both of these services to patients and carers as part of our extensive commitment to provide practical, effective support.