An Introduction to
Counselling *and*
Psychotherapy

From Theory to Practice

2nd Edition

ANDREW REEVES

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Counselling *and* Psychotherapy

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CONTENTS

1

WHAT ARE THE COUNSELLING PROFESSIONS?

FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

Chapter outline

Chapter overview

- The chapter will begin with an outline of the structure of the book
- This chapter will then consider key definitions of counselling and psychotherapy
- Additionally, it will explore the emerging concept of the 'counselling professions', and what this means in practice
- It will outline the debate on the relationship (in terms of differences and similarities) between counselling and psychotherapy
- In addition, it will reflect on the position of counselling and psychotherapy within wider helping professional roles

Chapter videos

- What is Counselling?
- Counselling and the Medical Model

INTRODUCTION

It is difficult to imagine when thinking of counselling and psychotherapy in today's context that, not too long ago, things were quite different. The proliferation of therapy across a range of settings and the subsequent embedding of therapy as viable choices for proportions of the population would be almost unheard of just a few decades ago. Indeed, I recall clearly in the mid- to late 1980s when I began my training that finding placements proved to be a significant challenge. Not, as is the case today, because of the number of people chasing the same opportunities, but rather because it was difficult to find counselling and psychotherapy in many settings at all outside of independent practice or specialist environments. Therapy in primary and secondary care was very limited, with opportunities existing mostly in the third sector.

A number of factors have led to change in the intervening years. They include: work by a number of professional bodies to communicate the benefits of counselling and psychotherapy; increasing acknowledgement of the importance of mental health and the link between mental and physical wellbeing; a slow move away from a medication culture, with a population more willing perhaps to question the treatment they receive; an increasing evidence base demonstrating the efficacy of the psychological therapies across a range of difficulties; a challenge (led by mental health charities) to the stigma of mental health distress and the promotion of help-seeking; a higher profile of counselling and psychotherapy in the media; and a change in policy, particularly around mental health, towards a greater involvement of service users and the increasing potency of the client/patient voice.

When I qualified as a social worker and began working in adult mental health secondary care settings, a medicalised-informed psychiatric perspective was still a very dominant force:

the psychiatrist was rarely questioned and intervention for people experiencing acute and chronic mental health distress typically consisted of medication, or in- and out-patient care. Over the intervening years the dominance of psychiatry has waned: the psychiatrist remains an important figure, but one who is now part of a mental health team. Nursing, social work, advocacy and psychological wellbeing practitioners (PWPs), for example, have become more prominent and hospital admission is seen very much as a last alternative.

Advances in medication have given medical personnel greater treatment options, and people experiencing difficulties have demanded alternatives to medication and hospitalisation. Counselling and psychotherapy have increasingly come to be seen as a viable and beneficial alternative or addition to other forms of support. The emergence in the UK of the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) programmes for adults and children and young people has furthered the prevalence of the psychological therapies as a viable option for people experiencing mental health distress, particularly anxiety and depression. Therapy has moved from the periphery into the mainstream. In the process, it has further embedded itself into mainstream culture, such as in films, music, literature, art and television and, in doing so, has entered the public consciousness.

This change has brought challenges. Counsellors and psychotherapists need to be equipped by their training to work in a wider variety of contexts and to acquire skills and knowledge to meet a wide range of presenting issues. Each working context demands its own level of competence, with therapists trained on generic courses needing to undertake further training to equip them for their role. With this proliferation too comes the need to ensure that practice remains ethically and legally pertinent, offering high levels of care and integrity to those accessing help. With a greater demand for innovative and effective treatments comes a necessity to demonstrate efficacy in the face of falling budgets and closing services. Counsellors and psychotherapists need to develop competency as researcher-practitioners, or at least as competent critical consumers of research. The imperative is for counselling and psychotherapy to clearly and unequivocally demonstrate a sound evidence base for practice. We cannot just assume that what we do works: we need to demonstrate it in the language of commissioners, budget holders and policy developers. The development and implementation of benchmarking tools and outcome measures demand that therapists find ways of integrating such tools into their day-to-day work with clients.

The rapid development of technology too has made its inroads into the provision of therapy. This has occurred not only in terms of record keeping, databases and tracking client demographic information, but also in the actual delivery of therapy, moving away from face-to-face contact and transporting therapy into a virtual world of email, synchronous chat, message boards and other social media platforms. Clients now, quite rightly, demand up-to-date information not just about the types of therapy on offer, but also the form and nature of the delivery of the therapy they will receive and how effective it might be for the particular difficulties they are encountering. They have become informed consumers, requesting specific therapies and particular interventions.

FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

There is so much for new trainees to discover that it is quite impossible for courses, however hard they try, to cover all that is needed. Indeed, having supervised research in counselling and psychotherapy for many years, one of the main recommendations researchers seem to make is the need for their particular area of study to be included in training. I suspect that if we included all these things the average counselling and psychotherapy training would last approximately 30 years. Or, rather, maybe we are simply always learning. The place of supervision is important here in helping new practitioners to make the link from theory to practice in both contextualising and understanding the lessons from direct work with clients. The responsibility for self-direction in personal and professional development is key too.

When I first began to think about this book, I reflected on what was already available and where the gaps were between existing resources. There are a number of excellent introductory texts that help draw on research and academic learning to inspire new therapists. There are also some great texts that explore the acquisition and development of skills. As a practitioner, I sought to write something that could accompany you from your earliest steps at the beginning of your training, into the practice placement, then on to the process of reflecting on how you begin direct work with clients. I aim for the book, as your competence and experience develop, to help link practice learning and theory and to explore the possibility of employment and, finally, qualified practice. That is, my intention in the first edition, and in this revised second edition, is to produce a book that will accompany you every step of the way – a book written by a practitioner for new practitioners. I have tried to include everything in here – including the kitchen sink! I have sought to include all those aspects of practice that we consider, think about and reflect on. Though in the end I haven't actually been able to include the sink, I hope that the book proves to be useful and thought-provoking and that it prompts further questions and discovery.

DEFINING COUNSELLING AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

There are always challenges in trying to define 'counselling' and 'psychotherapy' as it inevitably and immediately leads into contentious territory about similarities and differences. If one writes about 'counselling', the risk is that those psychotherapists who see their role as different from counselling will disengage. Likewise, writing about 'psychotherapy' runs the risk of leaving a proportion of counsellors out in the cold. To write about 'counselling and psychotherapy', however, runs the risk of presuming they are two, distinct activities, while to use 'psychological therapies' as a 'catch-all' phrase runs the risk of leaving everyone out in the cold.

These dilemmas present problems not only for textbook authors: imagine the implications for delivery of services, regulation and accreditation, training and, most importantly, the confusion potential clients might experience when considering what services to access.

Should they see a counsellor or a psychotherapist, and (they may ask) what's the difference between the two anyway?

Kanellakis and D'Aubyn (2010) undertook a study of the public's perception of the titles of counsellor and psychotherapist. Four hundred and fifty members of the UK public were interviewed by researchers and asked their thoughts about the terms 'counsellor', 'psychotherapist' and 'psychological therapist': 30% thought the terms 'counsellor' and 'psychotherapist' were almost identical, while 64% thought them significantly different. Only 24% thought the terms 'psychotherapist' and 'psychological therapist' were significantly different, while 66% thought them almost identical. In this study, the public's perception was that 'psychotherapist' was much closer to 'psychological therapist' than to 'counsellor'. Perhaps there is as much confusion in the public perception as there is within the professional field between the different terms.

DEFINITIONS

The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP, 2012) defines counselling and psychotherapy as:

> umbrella terms that cover a range of talking therapies. They are delivered by trained practitioners who work with people over a short or long term to help them bring about effective change or enhance their wellbeing.

The American Counseling Association (ACA, 2005, p. 4) says that counselling

> encourage[s] client growth and development in ways that foster the interest and welfare of clients and promote[s] formation of healthy relationships. Counselors actively attempt to understand the diverse cultural backgrounds of the clients they serve. Counselors also explore their own cultural identities and how these affect their values and beliefs about the counseling process.

Feltham (2012, p. 3) says of counselling and psychotherapy that they are:

> mainly, though not exclusively, listening-and-talking based methods of addressing psychological and psychosomatic problems and change, including deep and prolonged human suffering, situational dilemmas, crises and developmental needs, and aspirations towards the realisation of human potential. In contrast to bio-medical approaches, the psychological therapies operate largely without medication or other physical interventions and may be concerned not only with mental health but with spiritual, philosophical, social and other aspects of living. Professional forms of counselling and psychotherapy are based on formal training which encompasses attention to pertinent theory, clinical and/or micro-skills development, the personal development/theory of the trainee, and supervised practice.

According to the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP, 2012) psychotherapy

> aims to help clients gain insight into their difficulties or distress, establish a greater understanding of their motivation, and enable them to find more appropriate ways of coping or bring about changes in their thinking and behaviour. Psychotherapy involves exploring feelings, beliefs, thoughts and relevant events, sometimes from childhood and personal history, in a structured way with someone trained to help you do it safely. Depending on the nature of [the] problem, therapy can be short or long term. Sessions can be provided for adults, adolescents and children on a one-to-one basis, or for couples, families and within groups whose members share similar problems.

The British Psychological Society (BPS, 2005, pp. 1–2) states that counselling psychology

> draws upon and seeks to develop phenomenological models of practice and enquiry in addition to that of traditional scientific psychology. It continues to develop models of practice and research, which marry the scientific demand for rigorous empirical enquiry with a firm value base grounded in the primacy of the counselling or psychotherapeutic relationship. These models seek:
>
> 1. to engage with subjectivity and intersubjectivity, values and beliefs;
> 2. to know empathically and to respect first person accounts as valid in their own terms; to elucidate, interpret and negotiate between perceptions and world-views but not to assume the automatic superiority of any one way of experiencing, feeling, valuing and knowing;
> 3. to be practice led, with a research base grounded in professional practice values as well as professional artistry;
> 4. to recognise social contexts and discrimination and to work always in ways that empower rather than control and also demonstrate the high standards of anti-discriminatory practice appropriate to the pluralistic nature of society today.

In distinguishing the terms 'counselling' and 'psychotherapy' it is helpful to explore a number of themes in more detail. For example:

1. The nature of the activity: the extent to which it is seen as (a) medical or (b) social
2. The typical duration of the intervention – the extent to which it is likely to be short or long term
3. The depth of intervention
4. The type of training required.

Below, we explore each of these themes in turn.

THE NATURE OF THE ACTIVITY: MEDICAL OR SOCIAL?

The *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*, 2018) states that counselling is 'the provision of professional assistance and guidance in resolving personal or psychological problems', while psychotherapy is 'the treatment of mental disorder by psychological rather than medical means'. Even though they are the simplest, perhaps the *OED* definitions are also the most helpful in beginning to tease out some of the points of differentiation that some claim to exist between counselling and psychotherapy. The emphasis placed on counselling is that of offering assistance and guidance in an attempt to resolve problems. The emphasis in psychotherapy is on the treatment of mental disorder without using medical means. Here we see an implication that counselling assists and guides, while psychotherapy treats. Also, the use of the term 'medical' in the psychotherapy definition strikes at the heart of a philosophical differentiation, according to commentators who claim that psychotherapy is more allied to medicine, while counselling is more allied to a psychosocial model of help.

However, the suggestion that psychotherapy is more akin to a medical model, while counselling is more akin to a social model, does not resolve the problem of differentiation. For example, person-centred therapy has been a predominant model of choice for training for several years in the UK. Rejecting a medicalising or pathologising view of the human condition, this approach is based instead on a philosophical standpoint of equality, acceptance and empathy. In most modalities, the therapist does not take the 'expert' role and certainly does not explicitly intend to offer a 'treatment'. Yet it is possible to train either as a person-centred counsellor or a person-centred psychotherapist. Both retain their non-medical position yet use different titles. Some argue this anomaly strengthens the view that there is more commonality than difference between counselling and psychotherapy.

Counselling and Psychotherapy in Scotland (COSCA, 2011a), Scotland's counselling and psychotherapy professional body, additionally suggest that differentiation might be found in the traditions of each discipline, with psychotherapy developing with the emergence of psychoanalysis in the 1920s, while counselling developed somewhat later, in the 1950s.

DURATION OF INTERVENTION: SHORT OR LONG TERM

Another point of differentiation often made is that counselling typically offers shorter-term or brief interventions, while psychotherapy offers longer-term interventions. Psychotherapy has often been linked with longer-term approaches, and while this may be true historically, over recent years, and with funding restrictions hitting therapy services hard, many therapy providers now offer time-limited interventions, delivered by both counsellors and psychotherapists. Likewise, there are agencies who offer longer-term counselling and, in independent practice where practitioners are freely able to determine their own length of

contract, open-ended or longer-term work is offered by both counsellors and psychotherapists. The distinction between the length of contract offered as a means of differentiating between the two titles is less pertinent in today's financially demanding world or in the context of theoretical models that have evolved and developed over time.

DEPTH OF INTERVENTION

According to McLeod, some have argued that

> although there is a certain amount of overlap between the theories and methods of counsellors and psychotherapists, and the types of clients they see, there is nevertheless a fundamental difference between the two, with psychotherapy representing a deeper, more fundamental level of work over a longer period, usually with more disturbed clients. (2009, p. 10)

Psychoanalysis is probably the first approach that comes to mind when people think about psychotherapy. The stereotype of a couch, the therapist (very probably with a goatee beard and an Austrian accent) sitting out of sight encouraging free association and interpreting the results represents many people's image of 'in-depth' therapy. Certainly, in my own setting new clients often comment on the fact that I don't have a couch (or an Austrian accent) with a mixture of relief and disappointment. Of course, the premise of this approach is not just a stereotype: psychoanalytic therapy is alive and well – albeit out of the reach of many clients given its long-term nature (typically it lasts many years), frequency (typically several sessions per week) and cost.

The British Psychoanalytic Council define psychoanalysis thus,

> Psychoanalytic or psychodynamic psychotherapy draws on theories and practices of analytical psychology and psychoanalysis. It is a therapeutic process which helps patients understand and resolve their problems by increasing awareness of their inner world and its influence over relationships both past and present. (2018)

Beyond psychoanalysis, however, the depth and extent of work offered by psychotherapists becomes harder to differentiate from that of counsellors. Again, in my own setting (namely, higher education), I work in a team, some members of which are trained as psychotherapists, and others as counsellors. The nature of the work is the same: the complexity of work is not differentiated between the two titles, and the extent of work (i.e., the duration and frequency) is identical too. In supervising across a range of contexts over the years, including primary and secondary care settings, education, third-sector and independent practice, this seems generally true. However, there are settings where the desired qualification is in psychotherapy rather than counselling. These tend to be specialist

settings, such as therapeutic communities for people with personality disorders, or eating disorders. Interestingly, the commonality between such settings where psychotherapy is preferred is that they are often allied to a medical intervention, such as psychiatry. Related to this, some psychiatrists will undertake additional therapy training and will describe themselves as consultant psychiatrist psychotherapists. I have yet to come across a consultant psychiatrist counsellor (though they may exist).

TRAINING

Perhaps the clearest point of distinction between counsellor and psychotherapist has been the structure of training. Although in the UK therapy training is in a process of change following a debate on the possibility of statutory regulation, psychotherapy training is often structured differently to that of counsellor training. In summary, we may say here that psychotherapy training is often structured over four years, part-time, leading to a postgraduate diploma in psychotherapy (and registration with UKCP or BPC). It is not uncommon for psychotherapy training to require a 20–25-day psychiatric observation placement, and that the trainee be in personal therapy for the duration of their training. In contrast, counsellor training is typically structured over a three-year, part-time course, without a psychiatric placement (although there is often a specialist module on mental health), with the personal therapy requirement ranging from none, through to 40 hours or thereabouts. Exit awards during counsellor training tend to include a certificate in skills. The qualifying award for counsellor training was, for many years, a diploma (or postgraduate diploma). Both counsellor and psychotherapy training have, however, increasingly moved towards a Master's-level qualifying award over recent years, with more courses including a requirement that their students undertake research.

UKCP emphasise training as a key difference for them between counselling and psychotherapy. They state:

> Different people use the words counselling and psychotherapy in different ways, so there is no commonly agreed definition. There is a general understanding that a psychotherapist can work with a wider range of clients or patients and can offer more in-depth work where appropriate. UKCP believes the difference lies in the length and depth of training involved and in the quality of the relationship between the client and their therapist. UKCP-registered psychotherapists are trained to Master's level. UKCP registers psychotherapists and psychotherapeutic counsellors. Psychotherapeutic counsellors are counsellors who have received more in-depth training than that undertaken by most counsellors. UKCP's training standards for both qualifications seek to ensure that UKCP registrants are competent to practise to the highest standards. (2012)

OVERALL: WHAT DIFFERENCE?

It remains very difficult, if not impossible, to bridge the two sides of the 'different versus the same' debate. Spinelli (2006, p. 38) states: 'Some have suggested that the main distinction between psychotherapy and counselling is that while the former requires clients to recline on a couch, the latter only provides an armchair.' For each of the points outlined above, there will be several different perspectives. This has implications for clients, who have to make important decisions when seeking help.

For my own view, while I acknowledge differences in the structure and provision (and cost) of training, over the 30 years (plus) that I have been practising I have always worked with practitioners who, regardless of their title, have essentially undertaken the same work. I would define myself as a counsellor in virtue of my training, which was a 'counsellor' training. From years of practice is it my own view that it is very difficult to differentiate between the titles of 'counsellor' and 'psychotherapist' simply through the nature of what they do, i.e., the application of their skills in a setting. Rather, differentiation occurs in the nature of the training delivered and the standards of those trainings, such as non-graduate, undergraduate, postgraduate. Additionally, a number of competencies might be mapped across the two titles, rather than from what they do, but from what they are *trained* to do. Herein might sit a way forward; that said, I can imagine many people simply reading that final sentence and already disagreeing with me.

Returning to my earlier authorial dilemma, for the purposes of this text I will use a variety of terms. Essentially, I will refer to 'counsellors and psychotherapists' and 'counselling and psychotherapy' to acknowledge that, regardless of the actuality of the situation, people define themselves using these terms. I will also use terms like 'therapy', 'therapist' and 'practitioner' for example, simply to facilitate the flow of text – there is no other intent behind the use of these terms!

A THOUGHT ABOUT STATUTORY REGULATION

During fierce debate in early stages of the plan to introduce statutory regulation in the UK, the differentiation in training was brought into focus with a consultation document that placed psychotherapists as having a higher level of training than counsellors, citing a greater degree of research competence and emphasising the specialist treatment of mental disorder. This provoked much debate (which was never fully resolved) and the principle was rejected by some leading therapy organisations. At the time of writing, the possibility of statutory regulation is beginning to re-emerge with the Department of Health's publication of a consultation document, *Promoting Professionalism, Reforming Regulation* (Department of Health, 2017). However, a number of things are different and should the psychological therapies (beyond counselling psychology, which is already statutorily regulated by the Health and Care Professions Council) be drawn into statutory regulation, then work being undertaken in a collaborative partnership between BACP, UKCP and BPC could bode well in ensuring the fundamental philosophical principles of counselling and psychotherapy are held central.

However, with statutory regulation comes, inevitably it seems, a differentiation of titles. That is, to regulate something under law it is important to be able to clearly define what that activity is, otherwise it is impossible to say who does that activity, and who doesn't. For example, the regulation of counselling and psychotherapy would mean that the terms 'counsellor' and 'psychotherapist' would be protected, i.e., a person must be able to demonstrate qualification and competence in specific areas to use that title (otherwise anyone could call themselves a counsellor or psychotherapist, and it would be impossible to prevent them from doing so). See the example in Box 1.1 to illustrate this point.

Box 1.1

Protecting the title

Andrew has been practising as a counsellor for several years from his own home. He sees a range of clients and has, mostly, been successful and people have been happy with the support they have received. Andrew never completed a formal qualification in counselling; he undertook some counselling skills training but has always maintained that his work is based on the 'university of life'. He also cites positive testimony from ex-clients who have praised his practice. A new statutory register is introduced that protects the title 'counsellor', meaning that Andrew can no longer legally use that term unless he is on a statutory register. He cannot apply to be on the register as one requirement is the completion of a recognised training.

Andrew is very unhappy about this. He complains, stating that his work is ethical, is drawn from life experience, is effective and he works to the best of his ability. However, Andrew is told he can no longer use the title 'counsellor' and, should he continue to do so, he would be committing an offence. Andrew very reluctantly stops calling himself a counsellor. Instead, he calls himself a 'wellbeing practitioner' and continues with his work unchanged.

Pause for reflection

- What are your views about statutory regulation? Is it right that Andrew, who has been doing a 'good job' by most people's standards, should be told to stop what he is doing?
- What are your thoughts about Andrew changing himself to a Wellbeing Practitioner and continuing with his work unchanged? Is this good for his clients; the profession; the regulation of the profession? Why do you think this?

The case of Andrew illustrates the difficulties in regulating a profession and protecting a title, and perhaps even more so in the world of counselling and psychotherapy that, in general terms, is focused on a human exchange rather than just an activity. Andrew was able to call

himself a Wellbeing Practitioner because, in this instance, the title of 'counsellor' was insufficiently defined, allowing him to simply rename it. We can see from this example that to protect a title, there must be a clear definition of what that title is. In the context of counselling and psychotherapy, we need to differentiate between the two titles to achieve this outcome. This is something that the profession has attempted to do for decades, unsuccessfully, and that the collaboration between BACP, UKCP and BPC is now wrestling with.

Discussion questions

1. How would you define counselling?
2. How would you define psychotherapy?
3. What do you consider to be the key similarities and differences between counselling and psychotherapy?
4. In what ways do you feel current debates around counselling and psychotherapy (a) help inform the development of the profession and (b) hinder it?

WHAT ARE THE 'COUNSELLING PROFESSIONS'?

With the publication of BACP's new *Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions* in 2016, implemented from the 1 July 2016, a new phraseology was introduced. The previous Ethical Framework had, for many years, talked to counselling and psychotherapy and, in doing so, had mapped clearly on to the dominant discourse of definition. However, what the new Ethical Framework acknowledged was that the delivery of psychological therapies was no longer held within the exclusive domain of counselling and psychotherapy (if it ever had been exclusive), but rather across a number of different activities, titles and trainings. For example, in addition to counsellor and psychotherapist, there are *coaches*, *executive coaches*, *life coaches*, *wellbeing practitioners*, *psychological wellbeing practitioners* (PWPs, typically found in IAPT services), *mental health practitioners*, *mental health supporters*, *counselling psychotherapists* … and so on. The list is seemingly endless.

The commonality between these titles is the delivery of psychologically informed support in the endeavour of helping someone experiencing emotional or psychological distress. There are often core counselling skills being employed (see Chapter 9 for a fuller discussion of counselling skills) in different ways, as well as interventions informed by different theoretical models, but held within a similar philosophical intention. What was important was that increasing types of practice were being undertaken by people already 'signed up' to the Ethical Framework, but the existing Framework no longer met the changing shape of practice.

What was one to do? Either the name of the Framework could be changed to include all these different activities (and that would have made for a snappy, easy-to-remember title!), or rather a way found of encompassing a wider range of contemporary practices. Thus, the concept of 'counselling professions' was proposed in an attempt to provide a more umbrella title that encompassed a range of activities. Following consultation with the BACP membership, there was notable support for the adoption of the phrase 'counselling professions' and therefore, it was used in the main title of the new Framework. From BACP's perspective, the counselling professions are counselling, psychotherapy, coaching, mentoring, pastoral care and the judicious use of counselling skills.

This latter point is an interesting one, in referring back to the point made before about the use of counselling skills – or perhaps communication skills – often being a common thread running across the work of different groups. Counselling skills are also successfully employed by other allied professional groups, such as social workers, nurses, teachers, advocates, etc., in their own work. McLeod and McLeod (2011) provide an engaging account of the use of counselling skill across a range of professional groups.

As the Ethical Framework continues to evolve and develop through its subsequent revisions (at the time of writing, the Framework is in a stage of revision), the scope of practice, i.e., how each activity is differentiated from each other, potentially will provide exciting new opportunities for professional groups to develop more evidence-based and coherent training opportunities for skills development, and for those skills to be subsequently recognised. For example, as a qualified social worker my additional counselling skills training was never formally recognised as a discrete skill set within its own right; it was essentially professionally 'invisible'.

THE EMERGENCE OF COUNSELLING AND PSYCHOTHERAPY AS DISCIPLINES

When we begin therapy with a new client it is important that, at some stage of the therapeutic process, we find out a little bit more about who they are, their context and where they have come from. Some modalities emphasise the importance of this more than others. Some therapists take very specific steps in taking a client history, while others allow the information to emerge during the course of therapy. However, there would be fewer therapists who would maintain that history isn't important at all. The more we can understand about the background to something, the more we are able to see its current presentation in a more informed context.

For the same reason, it would be unhelpful to launch into the other sections of this book without taking a moment to consider how counselling and psychotherapy came into being. Certainly, in my own work as a therapist I have, over a relatively short period of time (25 years), seen major changes. The proliferation of counselling and psychotherapy as it is practised today is very different to when I first came into the profession. When I speak with

colleagues who have been working as therapists for longer than me, they report the same phenomenon. So, while it is perfectly possible to become a counsellor or psychotherapist without any understanding or insight into the history of our profession, it would be a bit like working with a client while having no knowledge of or interest in anything about them beyond their immediate presentation; this option, though possible, is limited.

Many people assume that Sigmund Freud was the 'founder' of modern-day psychotherapy. While certainly his influence has been profound, and many of our current working practices can be traced back to his work, psychotherapy as an activity certainly existed before Freud began writing. It may be impossible to truly locate the origins of talking therapy given that the human propensity to communicate and be in relationship goes back many, many centuries. The process of counselling and psychotherapy, albeit not in a form that we might understand today, can be traced back to early religious and community rituals. In many ways, we might argue that what we now call counselling and psychotherapy is merely a systematic form and type of communication with a specific purpose. One could, in addition, argue that all that has happened over the past 100 years, coinciding with the emergence and development of professions such as psychiatry and medicine, has been the application of scientific principles to the human art of discourse.

MEDICALISATION OF DISTRESS

The way in which distress has been viewed has changed over the centuries. Ancient Greek and Roman perspectives on mental illness generally looked at causation, and cure, as both coming from the gods. During the 5th and 6th centuries BC the link between madness and the gods was challenged, later partly informed by the work of Hippocrates. In the 4th century BC a tentative relationship between madness and physical imbalance began to be postulated. Hippocrates proposed that mental illness was related to a physical imbalance in the bodily humours, namely: blood, yellow bile, phlegm and black bile. They corresponded to the four supposed basic qualities of matter, namely heat, cold, moisture and dryness. The treatment of distress thus came to focus more on the rebalancing of the physical self. This took many forms, but included the management of diet, bathing and purges, and the use of vapours.

Aristotle proposed the idea that the mind and body were divided, but that bile mediated channels between the two. One of the earliest recorded instances of terms that have some resonance with those used today comes from Galen, a Roman physician (130–200 AD). He described several syndromes, including dysthymia, paranoia and hysteria, linked to anxiety and sexual tension. His premise, unlike that of Hippocrates, was that mental illness was more due to an imbalance between aspects of the soul as opposed to the body.

During the Middle Ages the church reasserted its influence on how mental illness was seen. However, this influence began to decline once again in the 15th and 16th centuries with the emergence of science, with Descartes (1596–1650) arguing that the soul and mind were divided, with the soul having a spiritual dimension while the mind had a mental one. However, he did believe there was interaction between the two. Perhaps during this time the

body was seen as primarily mechanical, materialistic and quantifiable, whereas the mind was seen as unlimited, nonmaterial, and situated in the realm of consciousness and thought.

The conception of the body as essentially mechanical began to gain further credibility in the 17th century with the increasing use of anatomical studies. In the 19th and 20th centuries there was acknowledgement of organic and environmental causes for mental illness. Psychiatry began to organise and categorise concepts of mental illness, thus heralding early examples of diagnostic structures in relation to mental illness (the term 'mental health' would have been a misnomer given theories were still predominantly driven by medical models of illness and insanity).

THE ORGANISATION OF IDEAS: THE DEVELOPMENT OF PSYCHOTHERAPY

With the categorisation of mental illness (the term itself evolved from 'insanity'), greater interest in treatments continued to develop. Here we can see the earliest emergence of psychotherapy as a systematic and organised form of response to disorder. Dendy, an English psychiatrist, in 1853 is credited with using the term 'psycho-therapeia' to describe a talking cure for psychological problems. Around the same time there was great interest in the use of hypnosis for both psychological and physiological problems. Hypnosis was seen to be able to calm and anaesthetise during medical procedures. McLeod (2009, p. 26) notes that 'hypnosis was helpful to patients (because) it gave access to an area of the mind that was not accessible during normal waking consciousness. In other words, the notion of the "unconscious" mind was part of the apparatus of 19th-century hypnotism.'

Freud, a psychiatrist working in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, began to move away from models of psychiatry and hypnosis predominant at the time and looked to develop a new approach to treatment. By developing psychoanalysis, Freud had a profound influence on the subsequent development of psychotherapy. Early analysis relied on the interpretation of dreams and the use of free association. Freud wrote about his experiences with patients extensively and these works are still read and have influence today (Freud, 2004, 2009, 2010). We should make reference, too, to some of Freud's collaborators who worked with him early on, but later split away to further develop their own ideas. Most notable of these were Carl Jung and also Alfred Adler, Sandor Ferenczi and Otto Rank. They continued to develop theories and ideas set within a psychodynamic tradition.

A SHIFT IN EMPHASIS: THE EMERGENCE OF THE 'PERSON'

The work of Carl Rogers from the 1940s and 1950s onwards marked a dramatic shift in the progression of the talking therapies. Until this point, psychotherapy had been developed primarily by psychiatrists and psychologists and, while moving in different directions, they

retained an important 'nod' towards medicine. Rogers began developing client-centred therapy, drawing more on the existence and use of human qualities than scientific principles. It was his assertion that, given the right conditions, each individual had the propensity to move towards health. These conditions included acceptance, empathy and warmth. There was a philosophical shift away from conceptualising the therapist as expert and towards therapy as a collaborative process between the therapist and client.

The early influences on Rogers came from religion, but as he began his training to become a minister he decided instead to study psychology. His interest first centred on work with children and, in 1939, he wrote *The Clinical Treatment of the Problem Child*. Then, in 1942, he wrote *Counseling and Psychotherapy*, where he first proposed the ideas of client-centred therapy.

The development of counselling and psychotherapy was not informed only by the work of individuals, but also by the emergence of the institution of therapy. Table 1.1 outlines how the professionalism of counselling and psychotherapy was inextricably linked with the development of therapy institutions, together with other key events. For example, the early 1900s, around the time of Freud's early influence, saw the establishment of several key psychoanalytic organisations, such as the International Psychoanalytical Association in 1910 and the Institute of Psycho-analysis in 1919. Likewise, the emergence of client-centred therapy and the writing of Rogers in the late 1940s and early 1950s coincided with the development of counselling organisations drawing on humanistic principles. While the writing of key theorists and practitioners is often associated with the development of counselling and psychotherapy, the emergence of the profession is also located in the development of its organisation and institution.

KEY HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Table 1.1, extracted from Feltham et al.'s *Handbook of Counselling and Psychotherapy* (2017), outlines the key historical developments in counselling and psychotherapy from 1900 to the present day.

In summary, while early development was dominated by psychodynamic and psychoanalytic therapy, the emergence of humanistic approaches from the 1940s began to dramatically change the nature and shape of counselling and psychotherapy. Up until 1938, organisations had predominantly centred on psychoanalysis. The National Marriage Guidance Council marked the first instance of a non-psychoanalytic therapy organisation and also the development of a relationship between counselling and the voluntary sector. If psychotherapy was born out of medicine, counselling was perhaps born out of the voluntary movement and education. From the 1950s, with the establishment of the Samaritans and then later Cruse, a bereavement charity, humanistic approaches became more prominent and the development of theory and practice grew apace. The British Association for Counselling (now the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy – BACP) was established in 1977. It is illustrative of the growth of counselling as a professional activity that BACP is now the second-largest counselling organisation in the world, with a membership of approximately 45,000.

Table 1.1 Key historical developments

Year	Birth/growth of institutions and professional organisations	Significant events	Appearance of schools (approximate dates)
1900		Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* published	Psychoanalysis (Freud)
1907	British Psychological Society (BPS)		
	Vienna Psychoanalytic Society		
1908		First (careers) counselling centre, Boston, USA (Frank Parsons)	
1910	International Psychoanalytical Association		
1913	National Vocational Guidance Association (USA)		Analytical psychology (Jung)
	London Psychoanalytic Society		
1919	Institute of Psycho-analysis		
1920	Tavistock Clinic		Behavioural psychology
1921			Psychodrama
1924	British Psychoanalytic Society		
1926	London Clinic of Psychoanalysis		
	Medico-Psychological Association (MPA; previously AMOAH I, originally 1841)		
1935	Alcoholics Anonymous		
1936	Society of Analytical Psychology		
1937		Death of Adler	
1938	National Marriage Guidance Council (now Relate)		
1939		Death of Freud	
1940			Client/person-centred approach

(Continued)

Year	Birth/growth of institutions and professional organisations	Significant events	Appearance of schools (approximate dates)
1948		British National Health Service T groups	
		First student counselling service (University College, Leicester)	
1950	International Association for Vocational and Educational Guidance (IAVEG)		Gestalt therapy
1951			Rogers' client-centred therapy
1952	Group Analytic Society	*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM)*, 1st edition published	
	American Association for Counseling and Development (AACD)		
	American Counseling Association (ACA; originally NVCA)		
1953	Samaritans		
1955			Rational emotive behaviour therapy (originally RT then RET)
			Personal construct therapy
1957			Transactional analysis
1958		Death of Melanie Klein	Behaviour therapy
1959	Cruse	Death of Jung	
	Scottish Pastoral Association		
1960		First fee-charging counsellor in private practice in the UK	
1961		J.D. Frank's *Persuasion and Healing* published	

Year	Birth/growth of institutions and professional organisations	Significant events	Appearance of schools (approximate dates)
1962			Cognitive therapy
1965		Halmos's *The Faith of the Counsellors* published	
1966		Counselling training at Universities of Reading and Keele	
1969	Westminster Pastoral Foundation		
	Association of Humanistic Psychology (USA 1962, UK 1969)		
1970	First Standing Conference for the Advancement of Counselling (annual)	Death of Perls and Berne	
	MPA becomes Royal College of Psychiatrists		
1971		*Foster Report* on Scientology	
1974		*BPS Code of Professional Conduct* (the ethical code) approved	
1975	National Association of Young People's Counselling and Advisory Services (later Youth Access)		Neuro-linguistic programming
1976		The Medical Section of the BPS is renamed the Section of Medical Psychology and Psychotherapy (later changed to the Psychotherapy Section in 1988)	
1977	British Association for Counselling (BAC)		
1978		*Sieghart Report* on statutory regulation of psychotherapists	
1980	Association of Humanistic Psychology Practitioners (AHPP)	Smith et al.'s *The Benefits of Psychotherapy* published	

(Continued)

Year	Birth/growth of institutions and professional organisations	Significant events	Appearance of schools (approximate dates)
1982		Rugby Psychotherapy Conference (set up by BAC); Counselling Psychology Section formed in the BPS	Acceptance and commitment therapy
1983	Society for the Exploration of Psychotherapy Integration (SEPI)	First BAC accreditation scheme	Solution-focused therapy
1987		Death of Carl Rogers	
1989	United Kingdom Standing Conference on Psychotherapy (UKSCP)	Death of R.D. Laing	Eye movement desensitisation and reprocessing
1990		Death of John Bowlby	Cognitive analytic therapy
1991	British Confederation of Psychotherapists		
1992	European Association for Counselling	BPS Charter of Counselling Psychologists; First UK Chair of Counselling (Windy Dryden)	
1993	United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP, originally UKSCP): advice, guidance, counselling and psychotherapy lead body		Dialectical behaviour therapy; Ecotherapy
1994	Independent Practitioners Network; UKCP Register of Psychotherapists	BPS Division of Counselling Psychology	
1995		BCP Register; NHS Psychotherapy Services in England Review	
1996	United Kingdom Register of Counsellors (UKRC) (individuals); World Council for Psychotherapy	NHS Psychotherapy Services in England, Department of Health (DoH) Strategic Policy Review	
1997		Death of Viktor Frankl	Emotion-focused therapy

Year	Birth/growth of institutions and professional organisations	Significant events	Appearance of schools (approximate dates)
1998	Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists in Primary Care (CPC) UKRC (organisations)	Data Protection Act	
1999	National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) developed National Counselling Society		
2000	BAC renamed British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) Universities Psychotherapy Association (UPA) adds 'Counselling' to its title, becoming UPCA	BACP's *Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy* published	
2001		Lord Alderdice's Psychotherapy Bill *Treatment Choice in Psychological Therapies and Counselling: Evidence-Based Clinical Practice Guidelines* (DoH) issued BACP's *Guidelines for Online Counselling and Psychotherapy* published	
2002	Health Professions Council (HPC) is identified as the regulatory body for all health professions, including counselling and psychotherapy ('talking therapies')	BPS creates Special Group in Coaching Psychology	Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy
2003		UKCP establishes its Psychotherapeutic Counselling Section BACP Service Accreditation Scheme Telephone counselling (contractual) is accepted by BACP for accreditation hours	

(Continued)

Year	Birth/growth of institutions and professional organisations	Significant events	Appearance of schools (approximate dates)
2004	College of Psychoanalysts British Psychoanalytic Council	Graduate mental health workers in primary care British Confederation of Psychotherapists (BCP) renamed British Psychoanalytic Council (BPC)	
2005	NICE renamed National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (still NICE)		
2006		Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) BPS *Code of Ethics and Conduct* revised	
2007		Death of Albert Ellis	
2008		BACP represented on HPC's Professional Liaison Group National Occupational Standards: Psychoanalytic/Dynamic Competencies Framework	Dynamic interpersonal therapy
2009		HPC Register for Practitioner Psychologists opened HPC *Standards of Proficiency* published for practitioner psychologists UKCP *Ethical Principles and Code of Professional Conduct* published	Compassion-focused therapy
2011		Statutory regulation plans abandoned with change of UK government	The Pluralistic Framework

Year	Birth/growth of institutions and professional organisations	Significant events	Appearance of schools (approximate dates)
2012	BACP/Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care HPC renamed Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)	Initiation of Accredited Voluntary Register for Counsellors and Psychotherapists	
2013	UKCP/Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care NICE renamed National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (still NICE)	Initiation of Accredited Voluntary Register for Psychotherapists DSM-5 published	
2014		Sanders and Hill Counselling for Depression: A Person-Centred and Experiential Approach to Practice published Death of David Smail	
2015	Formation of the Psychotherapy and Counselling Union	Death of Harold Searles Death of Sheila Ernst HCPC Standards of Proficiency revised and published World Confederation for Existential Therapy founding congress, London	
2016		BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions published HCPC Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics revised and published	

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CONTEMPORARY COUNSELLING AND PSYCHOTHERAPY PRACTICE

As we have seen, there has been much debate over the similarities and differences between counselling and psychotherapy. A number of issues have been highlighted and, despite the best efforts of theorists and practitioners, there remains little consensus on the matter. Without historical context, it is hard to understand why such debates fuel passion and divergence. However, when viewed through a historical lens this becomes easier to understand: while there have been many commonalities over the years, essentially the disciplines were born from two different traditions.

Perhaps the debate has provoked such passion because counselling and psychotherapy 'speak' of very different ways of viewing the world and human experience. Indeed, much of the discussion around the difference between counselling and psychotherapy centres on whether human distress is located within a medical frame. Whatever the philosophical differences, however, the application of counselling and psychotherapy (i.e., how it is delivered in practice to clients/patients) is harder to differentiate. As this chapter has argued, there is very little difference today between the work of many counsellors and psychotherapists, regardless of their working context, while their training experiences might still remain quite different.

It could be argued, therefore, that we are potentially witnessing a key historical shift: the merging of the two disciplines. Possibly, in time, the terms counselling and psychotherapy will cease to exist as distinct from each other and will be instead replaced with a more generic phrase such as 'psychological therapies' or, perhaps, 'the counselling professions'. However, currently and with the potential re-emergence of statutory regulation, we are likely to see a continued differentiation between the two, which may become clearer as time progresses. Nevertheless, an important influence on how counselling and psychotherapy further develop will be the application of research and the further emergence of an evidence base. As services close due to financial constraints, the imperative to demonstrate efficacy and successful outcome will perhaps be the dominant factor in determining which discipline(s) survive(s), and in what form.

Discussion questions

1. What is your understanding of the history of the setting in which you work?
2. How is the setting in which you work influenced by its history?
3. What do you consider to be the main factors currently influencing counselling and psychotherapy?
4. In your working context, how do you see the services provided developing in the future?

SUMMARY

This chapter has considered what we mean by the terms counselling and psychotherapy, looking at key defining features, as well as their historical development. The difficulties in differentiating

between the two terms and ways in which this has been attempted by various writers are explored. In that context, the emergence of the term 'counselling professions' is outlined, and its implications for practice. All this is located in the context of voluntary regulation, with the discussion about the potential for statutory regulation back on the agenda.

Further resources

Books

Feltham, C., Hanley, T. and Winter, L. (2017) *The SAGE Handbook of Counselling and Psychotherapy*, 4th edn. London: Sage.
McLeod, J. (2013) *An Introduction to Counselling*, 5th edn. London: Open University Press.

Websites

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy – BACP: www.bacp.co.uk (accessed 9 January 2018).
United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy – UKCP: www.psychotherapy.org.uk (accessed 9 January 2018).
British Psychoanalytic Council – BPC: www.bpc.org.uk (accessed 9 January 2018).
British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies – BABCP: www.babcp.com (accessed 9 January 2018).

Online resources

Go to https://study.sagepub.com/reeves2e to access journal articles, further reading and case studies, and to watch these videos …

▶   **What is Counselling?** to explore the different reasons why clients seek out counselling and how they experience the process
▶   **Counselling and the Medical Model** to understand how the 'medical model' is applied in treating mental and emotional distress, the problems this causes and the implications for counselling practice

… then tackle the video questions on the Online Resources site to help consolidate your learning.