

## Appendix A

### Public Perceptions of Counsellors: A Survey of, Knowledge and Attitudes to Counsellors on the Gold Coast

#### **Questionnaire** (in confidence)

##### **Introduction**

*Only persons over 18 years of age can complete this questionnaire.*

There are a number of health professionals available on the Gold Coast and surrounding areas for consultation regarding personal problems.

These professionals can usually be identified as belonging to one of four categories:

Counsellors, Psychologists, Psychiatrists and Social Workers.

This questionnaire is designed specifically to focus on the public attitudes to, and knowledge of Counsellors.

##### **Demographic Information**

The following information will be treated with utmost confidentiality. We do not need your name or address. However, please enter your postcode to assist with statistical data.

Post Code:

Age (*please tick*)     18-24                      25-34  35-54

Occupation:

Sex: (*please tick*)        Male                      Female

55 & over

Questionnaire Page/2

1. How would you describe what a counsellor does? Give a brief description of what the major activities of a counsellor are.

2. Do you know of any counsellors'?

Yes                      No        (*circle one*)

3. If yes, where do they work?        (*tick one*) Private Practice Medical

Practice Community Health Community Agency Hospital

Schools & Educational Institutions

4. Have you ever been to a counsellor for personal help? Yes        No        (*circle one*)

5. Would you consider going to a counsellor for a personal problem? Yes        No

(*circle one*)

6. When choosing a counsellor, would you prefer:  
Someone of the same sex Someone of the opposite sex

No preference

7. Do you think there is a need for more counsellors in the community? YesNo

*(circle one)*

8. List three major benefits of receiving counselling

a) b) c)

9. List three major drawbacks of receiving counselling

a) b) c)

10. On a scale of 1 (*equals of little value*) to 10 (*equals of high value*) where would you rate a counsellor as helping you with personal problems?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(Of little value)

(Moderate value)

(High value)

Questionnaire Page/4

11. On a scale of 1 (*being most uncomfortable*) to 10 (*being very comfortable*), how would you feel talking to a counsellor in a social setting?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(Most uncomfortable)

(Moderately comfortable)

(Very comfortable)

12. On a scale of 1 (*being most uncomfortable*) to 10 (*being very comfortable*), how would you feel consulting a counsellor about your own personal problems?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(Most uncomfortable)

(Moderately comfortable)

(Very comfortable)

13. What training do you think a counsellor should have?

Undergraduate University Degree Postgraduate University Degree TARE College

Correspondence course Certificate course

Life experience

14. What do you think are the types of problems counsellors should be trained to deal with?

Questionnaire Page/5

15. Which would you consider more beneficial to your needs? (*please mark all scales*)

a) Counsellor with formal recognised training and little personal life experience

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(Of little benefit)

(Moderate benefit)

(Extreme benefit)

b) Counsellor with informal training and personal life experience

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(Of little benefit)

(Moderate benefit)

(Extreme benefit)

c) Counsellor with formal training and personal life experience

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
 (Of little benefit) (Moderate benefit) (Extreme benefit)

d) Other (please specify)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
 (Of little benefit) (Moderate benefit) (Extreme benefit)

16. Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

a) All counsellors should be registered members of a government-approved association in order to practice as counsellors

Yes No (Circle one)

b) Counsellors should be tertiary-trained

Yes No (Circle one)

c) Counsellors are not as professional as psychologists, psychiatrists and social workers

Yes No (Circle one)

Questionnaire Page/6

17. Which of the following sources would you use to find a counsellor if you needed one? (tick as many as applicable)

<u>People</u>	<u>Organisations</u>	<u>Advertising</u>
Doctor	Hospital	Newspaper
Lawyer	<u>1-1</u> Community Services	<u>2</u> Television
Telephone Operator	Church	<u>2</u> Counselling Magazine
University Professor	University	<u>2</u> Telephone Directory
<u>1-1</u> Friend	<u>U</u> School	Medical Directory
Teacher	<u>1-1</u> Health Department	<u>2</u> Mass media
<u>1-1</u> Family Member	Local Council	<u>2</u> Radio
Police	Other (please specify)	Internet
Chemist		Other (please specify)



Phobias				
Sexual Abuse				
Grief & Loss				
Hypnotherapy				
Eating Disorder				
Anxiety				
Rape				
Learning Difficulty				
Marriage Problem				
Drug Problem				
Alcohol Problem				
Stress Reduction				
Vocational Assessment				
Panic Attack				
Mental Health Problem				
Sexual Dysfunction				
Financial Difficulties				
Child Behavioural Problem				

Questionnaire Page/10

24. Considering the types of problems that you ticked for question 23. What sort of TREATMENT do you think each one of these professionals would provide for those problems?

DO NOT WRITE THE PROBLEMS RATHER LIST THE TREATMENTS FOR THESE PROBLEMS.

Counsellor

Psychologist,

Psychiatrist

Social Worker

### **Extension of this Research**

This research will be extended by providing information packs regarding counselling. Participants will be required to read the information and complete a further survey. If you are prepared to assist with extended research, please write your name and telephone number below.

**Please note that there is no obligation to do so**

Name:

Telephone: Hm: - Wk:

Mobile:

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND EFFORT IN COMPLETING THIS SURVEY**

28<sup>th</sup> February 2000



Public Perceptions of Counsellors on the Gold Coast:

A Survey of Knowledge and Attitudes to Counsellors on the Gold Coast.

Project Number: R/T ROO 61

Dear Participant,

Our names are Jan Bond and Carol Agnew. We are currently doing research towards a postgraduate degree in counselling under the supervision of Dr Christopher Sharpley, Professor and Director of the Institute of Health Sciences at Bond University.

The aim of this research is to determine the public's perception and knowledge of counsellors on the Gold Coast. We hope to clarify the role of counsellors and establish whether further public education is required.

We are looking for a representative sample of the Gold Coast population. Participants will be asked to fill out questionnaires regarding their knowledge and experience of counsellors and other health professionals.

The questionnaires will take approximately thirty minutes to complete and can be done at the participant's convenience. The researchers will distribute and collect questionnaires. You are free to refuse or withdraw from this research.

No findings that could identify any individual participant will be published. Your anonymity will be protected by our procedure, in which the questionnaires are anonymous unless you choose to give your name. Only the combined results of all participants will be published. Our supervisor and ourselves are the only persons who will have access to this data, which will be stored for five years as prescribed by the university regulations.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary.

TELEPHONE: 07 5595 1111  
INTERNATIONAL: +61 7  
5595 1111 FACSIMILE: 07  
5595 1140  
<http://www.bond.edu.au/>

Page/2

Should you have any complaints concerning the manner in which this research is conducted, please do not hesitate to contact Bond University Human Research Ethics Committee at the following address:

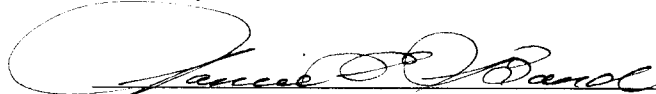
The Secretary

Bond University Ethics Committee Bond  
University  
Gold Coast, 4229.

Telephone (07) 5595 1058 Fax (07) 5595 1708

E-Mail [christan\\_macIcenzie\\_cr@bond.edu.au](mailto:christan_macIcenzie_cr@bond.edu.au)

Yours Sincerely

 Jan Bond





Professor Christopher Sharpley Research Supervisor  
(07) 5599 2504



## PILOT QUESTIONNAIRE

A pilot questionnaire was distributed to 10 subjects randomly selected from the general public. Eight questionnaires were returned. The pilot study was carried out to determine what changes were required to be made to the final questionnaire.

Respondents were asked to answer each of the following questions. These questions and answers are listed below. Those marked with an asterisk were altered for final questionnaire.

### Results

(Note: Open-ended questions are reported verbatim. Multiple responses were given to some answers).

- (1) How would you describe what a counsellor does? Give a brief description of what the major activities of a counsellor are. (answers reported verbatim)

Analyse problems

Sort problems into a pattern and advise client Help

people realise what problems they have. Be empathic

Provide ways/means of solving problems. Specific

counselling to help victims

Be communicative

Assist people in times of crisis.

Encourages contemplation of problems at a deeper level. Provides

an objective, private place for release of tension. Provides positive

feedback

Treats issues discussed confidentially

- (2) Do you **know of any counsellors**

<u>Answer</u>	<u>Responses</u>
---------------	------------------

Yes	7
-----	---

No 1

(3) If Yes, where do they work  
Work Place

Responses

Private Practice	6
Community Agency	1
Community Health	4
Hospital	2
Medical Practice	2
Schools & Educational Institutions	1

(4) Have you ever been to a counsellor for personal help Answer Responses Yes

No

(5) Would you **consider going to a counsellor for a personal** problem Answer Responses

Yes

No 0

(6) \*Counsellor gender (same or opposite sex)

Answer

Responses

Opposite Sex	2
Same Sex	2
"Either"	4

\* A further option of "No preference" was added.

(7) Do you think is a need for more counsellors in the community Responses

7 1

Answer Yes No

(8) Benefits of Counselling (list three major benefits) (answers reported verbatim)

Problem Solving Assistance in Lifestyle Problems in Perspective Allows people the right to be OK with the way they feel Facilitates Healing Education Self-Awareness Empowerment

Allow people to release tension and explore feelings in depth Provides alternative perspectives and approaches to problems Reassures that problems are normal Validates feelings

Not a family member . Brings problems out Non judgmental Being able to talk freely, without being restricted Safe place to communicate personal problems Emotional support Personal well-being Happiness

(9) Drawbacks of Counselling (list three major drawbacks) (answers reported verbatim)

Exposure of feelings Costly

Difficult to find one suitable

After hours appointments are hard to get Process can be lengthy

Embarrassing Depressing Sometimes the issue is exaggerated Perceived as a failure to cope Don't like to ask for advice Sometimes confusing

Inexperience, especially for older people not feeling Taking sides in couple counselling

Inability to treat some conditions without medication at ease

(10)\* Rating of value of counsellor in helping with personal problems. (1 of little value , 5 moderate value , 10 of high value)

<u>Responses</u>		<u>RgjU</u>
1	x	3
1	x	5
2	x	6
2	x	7
1	X	8
1	x	10

\* Numerals from 1- 10 were inserted for accurate results (e.g. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10).

(11) \* Degree of comfort with a counsellor in a social setting

(1= most uncomfortable, 5 = moderately comfortable, 10= very comfortable)

<u>Responses</u>		<u>RatiM</u>
1	x	1
1	x	3
3	x	5
1	x	7
2	x	10

\* Numerals from 1- 10 were inserted for accurate results (e. g. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10).

(12) \* Degree of comfort consulting a counsellor

(1= most uncomfortable, 5 = moderately comfortable, 10= very comfortable)

<u>Responses</u>		<u>Rating</u>
2	x	3
	x	
Z	x	8
2	x	10

\* Numerals from 1- 10 were inserted for accurate results (e.g. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10).

(13)\* What training do you think a counsellor should have

<u>Options</u>	<u>Responses</u>
Undergraduate Certificate	3
Post graduate	4
Life Experience	6

\* Two further categories were added: (1) T.A.F.E. College, (2) Correspondence Course

(14) **Types of problems counsellors should be trained to deal with (answers reported verbatim)**

<u>Options</u>	<u>Responses</u>
Marriage	1
Anxiety	1

Occupational	1
Self-esteem	1
Body Image	1
Grief	
Drug & Alcohol Abuse	4
Personality Conflicts	1
Depression	2
Domestic Violence	1
Stress Management	1
Family Counselling	
Teenager Issues	
Attention Disorders	1
Court Issues	
Acute Crisis Management	1
Attempted Suicide	
Rape	

(15)\* Which **would you consider more beneficial to your needs**

**(a) Formal training and little life experience**

**(1 = Little Benefit, 5 = Moderate Benefit, 10 = Extreme Benefit)**

<u>Responses</u>		<u>Rating</u>
2	x	1
1	x	3
1	x	4
3	x	5
1	x	6

\* Numerals from 1- 10 were inserted for accurate results (e.g. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10).\_(b)

Informal training & personal life experience

Responses \_\_\_\_\_ Rating

1     x     1

4     x     5

1     x     6

2     x     7

\* Numerals from 1- 10 were inserted for accurate results (e. g. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10).\_(c)

Formal training & personal life experience

Responses \_\_\_\_\_ Rating

1     x     9

7     x     10

\* Numerals to from 1- 10 were inserted for accurate results (e.g. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10).  
(16) **State whether you agree or disagree with the following statements**

(a) All counsellors should be registered members of a government approved association in order to practice as counsellors.

Answer

Yes No

Responses

x            7

x            1

(b) Counsellors should be tertiary-trained

Responses

Answer

		Yes x	6
No	x		2

(c) Counsellors are not as professional as psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers.

<u>Answer</u>	<u>Responses</u>
---------------	------------------

Yes	x	0
-----	---	---

No	x	8
----	---	---

**(17) Source to find counsellor**

<u>People</u>	<u>Responses</u>
---------------	------------------

Doctor	8
University Professors	1
Friend	5
Teacher	3
Family Member	5
Police	2
Chemist	1
Work Colleague	2

<u>Organisations</u>	<u>Responses</u>
----------------------	------------------

Hospital	6
Community Services	7
Church	2
University	3
Health Department	4
Local Council	2
School	1

<u>Advertising</u>	<u>Responses</u>
--------------------	------------------

Newspaper	1
Telephone Book	7
Community Service Magazine	2
Television	2
Medical Directories	3

**(18) Would you pay to see a counsellor**

Answer      Responses Yes      6 No  
 (22) Rate the degree to which you would feel the most able to communicate with the following health professionals in a therapeutic relationship.

Counsellor

Responses Rating 5

1	7
2	8
4	10

<u>Psychologist</u> <u>Responses</u>	<u>Rating</u>
1	5
1	6
1	8
1	9
4	10

<u>Psychiatrist</u> <u>Responses</u>	<u>Rating</u>
2	1
2	5
2	8
2	10

<u>Social Worker</u> <u>Responses</u>	<u>Rating</u>
1	1
1	5
1	6
2	7
1	9
2	10

(23) To whom would you refer a friend in need of help (tick as many as you wish)

Psychologist	7
Psychiatrist	3
Social Worker	4
Counsellor	8



(24) \* Describe major type of therapy each of the following health professionals provides

Counsellor (answers reported verbatim)

Acute crisis counselling Drug &  
alcohol counselling Life issues  
Counselling Supportive, constructive  
Practical solutions  
Assessing problems and developing plans Listening  
Depression Grief  
Stress

Marriage problems Minor abuse  
problems Occupational problems  
One to one counselling Family  
problems Relationship counselling  
Eating disorders  
School guidance counselling

Psychologist (answers reported verbatim)

Assessment and plan

Behaviour modification for depression and phobias Specific  
treatment to overcome fear and negativity Depression  
Anxiety Stress Sexual  
problems Rape

Spiritual, emotional, creative methods of reflecting and isolating behavioural  
problems

Exploring opportunities for personal growth

Looking at what personality characteristics cause people to remain in an abusive  
situation

Severe anxiety Personality  
disorders Child's problems

Analyses peoples personalities and help them find themselves

Psychiatrist (answers reported verbatim)

Major mental health/ illness treatment e.g. medication, therapy Counselling

Psychological techniques

Drug therapy for mental dysfunction Assessing  
mental health

Mental disorders Eating disorders

Compulsive disorders Psychosis

Violent or self-destructive behaviours Marriage  
problems

**Social Worker** (answers reported verbatim)

Provide referral for assault, domestic violence to appropriate facilities Coordinating  
community resources

Help people with emotional and financial problems Deals with  
people's ability to survive in society Youth problems  
Drug problems

Crisis management skills

Advice for life **decisions and situations**

\* **Hypnotherapist**

**Hypnotherapy** Behaviour modification Specific management for phobias, drug  
cessation and pain control Don't know X 2

Assessing subconscious tendencies Loss of memory

Grief and loss

\* Hypnotherapist was removed from the study.

**Social Worker** (answers reported verbatim)

Provide referral for assault, domestic violence to appropriate facilities Coordinating  
community resources

Help people with emotional and financial problems Deals with  
people's ability to survive in society Youth problems  
Drug problems

Crisis management skills

Advice for life **decisions and situations**

\* **Hypnotherapist**

**Hypnotherapy** Behaviour modification Specific management for phobias, drug cessation and pain control Don't know X 2

Assessing subconscious tendencies Loss of memory

Grief and loss

\* Hypnotherapist was removed from the study.