

**Achilles Atlas Justice
Philosophical Counsellor
Toronto ON
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Philosophical Counselling

Life is an interesting thing. It has its ups, downs, joys and sorrows. Most of us want to live a happy life. We want a good life. However, life has many unexpected events which are out of our control. Just because bad or unexpected things happen to us or the people and things we care for, does not mean we cannot have a good life.

People may need to break away from old patterns that cause problems and create new habits that promote solutions. If we reflect, some of us have been following what others expect us to do and we never got that chance to become the person we really are; the person inside of us waiting to grow. Others have been doing what they think is right, however, something is still missing. In either case, following others' expectations or our own, it can seem like chaos when we don't get where we want to be or what we want. It's important to realize that we have control to bring order to the chaos.

The Cosmos is where we live; a universe with order. Humanity has survived because we found a way to understand the consistency that actually exists in this universe. Our states of mind, the things and people we love, and the joy, fun and frustration, are all part of that universe. There is order behind it all. If there is order, we can follow some simple rules or guidelines to get what we want and what we need.

The difficulty is when we lack the tools to solve specific problems or knowing what the problem really is. Some of us know what we want but not how to get it, whereas others still feel misguided and crave to just know who they are and what they want. Whether it is a loved one who is lost, anxiety or depression, anger and sadness, not feeling fulfilled with one's career, problems with our intimate relationship, growing up as a teen or parenting children and teens, problems with family and friends, addictions, spiritual conflict and functioning and flourishing in school, with the right approach and training, one can find a path to the life they want. There is a way to deal with all of these things and feel good at the same time. It can be a great help, if there was someone who was able to make what was foggy clear.

There are times when we need someone we trust, someone who understands, and someone who will listen. We need people in our lives that can see the bigger picture when we are stuck in the details and our emotions. We don't need someone to label us as crazy for thinking a certain way or wanting to do things differently. There is a person who can help us, it is a counsellor.

Counsellors advise us, offer recommendations and suggest a course of action. We want the best, someone with a deeper understanding who can deal with our issue or problem so we are able to move on; we want someone who has wisdom. Philosophy is defined as the love of wisdom. So, a philosopher who is also a counsellor may be our best bet. What we really need is a Philosophical Counsellor.

What is Philosophical Counselling?

Philosophical Counselling is a means to help others achieve a durable sense of well-being in their lives. A Philosophical Counsellor has the capacity to help an individual change the course of their life in the direction they intend for it to progress by breaking down assumptions, beliefs, habits, attitudes and behaviours through discussion and observation. The counsellor is effectively giving the client autonomy over their life by helping the client gain control over elements that affect them and have an effect on them.

It is also important to equip oneself with knowledge, principles and tools to achieve the end of realistic, resilient happiness and well-being. The Philosophical Counsellor is prepared to find and teach the necessary skills and tools required for the client's well-being and a sense of balance with their identity.

Philosophical Counselling assumes that the client is engaged in their own self-therapeutic process for the counsellor does not offer psychotherapy.

The Philosophical Counselling Method

The rules of reason apply to both the counsellor and the client, making a fair exchange of ideas possible without appeal to authority. Teaching these reasoning rules are part of the method and responsibility of the counsellor.

My model of Philosophical Counselling utilizes the reasoning process of evaluating evidence and making sense of that evidence with a theory. The client and counsellor are then able to make progress in the client's endeavours relative to the client's current skill set, knowledge base and state of mind. As the client improves on these attributes, they will eventually no longer need the support of the counsellor effectively growing from the client-counsellor relationship. The goal of the method is to train the client to become independent and self-maintaining in terms of their own mental health awareness.

The counsellor will make educated recommendations on how the client can solve specific problems from a general framework. The scientific problem of induction means that not every attempt will work and the counsellor is not to be blamed for unfulfilled expectations. It is the duty of the client to understand that changing one's life takes training and practice. With training constructive habits, a developed knowledge set and a realistic perspective, the client can easily attain the goals they desire.

The counsellor may offer tools for the client to utilize, however the responsibility on how those tools are used falls on the client. The counsellor will respect the autonomy of the client in terms of the tools offered by insuring that the client is knowledgeable, competent and has the freedom to do otherwise. The counsellor wants to make sure that the client understands the principles and tools they are learning and how to apply them to their lives.

Client Counsellor Relationship

The client-counsellor relationship is like a professional relationship between two scientists. The scientists agree on some hypothesis then try to disprove it, bringing their theories in closer approximation to reality or the truth. This scientific model is analogous to how the client-counsellor relationship will function.

An imbalance in this relationship exists in the case that the counsellor has more experience in this type of discussion, more education on specific subjects, access to private information of the client, and the counselor is of sound mind and emotionally stable. This imbalance is what makes the relationship between the client and the counsellor professional and the counsellor must respect the autonomy and rights of the client. The professional status holds that confidentiality and social boundaries must be kept between the client and counsellor to alleviate the imbalance.

Due to the nature of the client-counsellor relationship, no sexual relationship will ever exist while the client is in distress for it is illegal. Other forms of social relationships, like friendships, can exist while the professional relationship of client-counsellor is present. The stringent boundaries on relationships between client and counsellor exist to protect the client and the counsellor from abuse. If the client wishes to have a social relationship like a friendship, or already has a pre-existing friendship, a written consent form must be signed. This consent form outlines the boundaries between the two types of relationships, social and professional and recognizes that no sexual relationship or dependency exists.

The confidentiality must not be compromised in the spectrum of a social relationship. The counsellor must keep in secret the information disclosed in the counselling sessions and the nature of the client-counsellor relationship. The client decides what is confidential and has the right to discuss the contents of the professional relationship with others. The counsellor must keep in confidence any and all information unless otherwise specified.

The counselling sessions come to an end usually by the will of the client or if the client has problems that arise which are out of the counsellor's scope to deal with. If issues are out of the scope of the counsellor, the counsellor will recommend the client to see an alternative healthcare practitioner who is qualified to help the client with the issues they are having. The other thing which will lead to termination of the counselling relationship is if the client becomes violent, uses threats, verbally or physically, or harasses the counsellor, their staff, or their family. As the counsellor, I retain the right to terminate the counselling relationship if these problems occur.

The client always has a right to refuse any recommendations the counsellor offers.

Confidentiality

The only time the counsellor will break confidentiality is if someone, yourself or another, is in imminent danger of harm, the intent to cause harm, or the existence of child abuse. Confidentiality applies to spoken, electronic or any other medium information is transmitted. Emails are not necessarily completely confidential because information is kept in the log of your internet service provider and could be read by system administrator(s). An administrator is very unlikely to read emails however I must make you aware of the risk even if it is low. All emails received will be kept safeguarded so that the information is protected from unwanted viewers.

The counsellor will respect the confidentiality of the client, unless consent to include another individual in the sessions is given in writing to the counsellor by the client. This can be used for group counselling or having someone join the discussion(s). All information disclosed by the client is strictly confidential.

If two or more people are being counselled during one session, what is said in that session is confidential to those during that session. If, in the future, group members choose to have independent sessions, only the group session is open for discussion to those specific clients. Confidentiality is limited to those who participate and thus a client cannot inquire about other clients' individual counselling sessions unless otherwise specified by both parties.

Records will be kept by the counsellor as a memory aid, to use for further research and as an integral part of the structured counselling process. All of these records are available to you and corrections can be made to the records if an error has occurred. If you are not interested in having records kept, this type of evidence based counselling may not be right for you. Keeping objective records is extremely important as they are used as data to build the theory the counsellor and client use to assist the client. If you go to another healthcare provider, you may request those records be sent to that person.

Are there Risks?

The client understands that dealing with sensitive issues may harbour negative emotions. The counsellor is prepared to deal with any issues/problems, within the scope of the counsellor's ability, using the Philosophical Counselling method. The client understands that the counselling sessions are voluntary and any decisions made on the client's part are their responsibility alone.

The client understands that the nature of counselling can bring about negative emotions. There is a risk of experiencing negative emotions during the sessions but, if properly dealt with, the client can break through the obstructions limiting their happiness and overall well-being. This risk, that the client will face negative emotions, does exist and the counsellor is not liable due to the emotional nature which illuminates itself during counselling. The counsellor's role is to help guide the client through the emotional turmoil such that the client regains control.

Client Responsibilities

The client has certain responsibilities to the counsellor and the agreement they share. The counsellor will hold scheduled discussions/sessions with the client. These sessions will predominantly take place over the phone unless otherwise specified. Fees will vary based on medium of the counselling session. For example, private in-person sessions are a higher rate than phone calls. The fees listed below are assumed for phone-call sessions. Having phone call sessions as the primary medium of counselling allows the counsellor and client to not have to be in the same geographical location as well save time and money on transportation.

The client must be on time for the scheduled session. The counsellor has the right to terminate the session if the client is not of sound mind. The client and counsellor must give the other 24hrs notice if a cancellation or rescheduling is needed. If the client is late, the session will still end at the same time. If the client does not cancel within the 24 hour timeframe, the client will be charged for the time the counsellor has set aside. The 24h window does not apply in emergency situations.

If the client is in need of an 'emergency' session, the counsellor has the discretion to allow the session to take place however the client will be charged double the hourly rate for the

unscheduled discussion. If there is an emergency that the counsellor cannot remedy, the client must contact 911, CAMH or Toronto Distress Center.

The sessions must be paid in advance for the scheduled time block via online banking e-transfer. If the client pays for sessions in advance or has a payment plan, the client will not have to wait for confirmation of payment. Confirmation of payment is also necessary in emergency situations. So, if the client anticipates they will utilize the emergency situation service, it may be wise to pay for one emergency situation in advance as a retainer. The client will be given an invoice which has a record of the used sessions and unused credit.

Counselling is not covered by insurance so the fee must be covered by the client. The fees are determined by the way the counselling takes place by phone, agreed location or office and/or client residence.

The counsellor is willing to address text messages or emails. However, if these forms of contact go beyond 15 minutes a week, the client will be charged for the time that is being used. During the counselling sessions, the client will be reminded of when the session is about to expire. If the client wishes to continue the session beyond the scheduled session, it will be prorated to the set hourly rate.

Feedback

Both positive and negative feedback is important for the counsellor to have a better sense of what works and what needs improvement. If there is something that you found very helpful, let the counsellor know. If you are unsatisfied with any part of the counselling process, you are encouraged to bring it to my attention right away. This feedback will allow me to improve and critically evaluate my own methods but it will also aid you as I can respond to your query in time.

Counselling Fees

Philosophical Counselling with Achilles is set at a rate of 250\$/h. If the client qualifies for compassionate counselling, there will be a fixed rate or sliding scale based on the client's income. If the client qualifies for compassionate counselling the client agrees to compensate the reduced rate by exchanging weekly marketing tasks. The agreed upon tasks will be included in the Achilles Justice Philosophical Counselling Client Consent Form. All rates will be agreed between both the counsellor and the client in advance and written in the Achilles Justice Philosophical Counselling Client Consent Form.

The client has the choice to prepay for emergency counselling sessions, as a retainer, if they need to communicate with the counsellor at a time of their convenience that is unscheduled. The emergency hourly rate is double the agreed upon rate.

If the counsellor has time available, each session can be extended and will use up time from the counselling package. In some instances, it may be more constructive to talk for 3 hours instead of the mandatory scheduled time of 1 hour to concretely solve an issue. This choice is left up to the client to use their banked hours and the counsellor to confirm that they are free to do fulfill the extended needs of the client.

Clients can choose to prepay for sessions will get a 1 hour session, valued at 250\$ at no charge, if they choose to prepay for up to 12 sessions or 3 months in advance.

Referrals

If you referred someone to the counsellor, you receive a 30 minute scheduled counselling session, valued at 125\$ at no charge. The counselling session will take place once the explication of services and confidentiality document signed. Please indicate the name of the referral in the Achilles Justice Philosophical Counselling Client Consent Form.

Agreement

I, the client, understand the above conditions which outline the relationship and contract for Philosophical Counselling by Achilles Atlas Justice. I agree to make payments in advance for sessions and be ready to engage in sessions on time. I understand that the counsellor, Achilles Atlas Justice, is not liable for decisions I make from the sessions and I hold responsibility for my actions. I understand that if I need help in an emergency I must contact 911.

I will indicate the agreed upon rate for the counselling retainer in the Achilles Justice Philosophical Counselling Client Consent Form. The fee will be paid in advance through e-transfer to connect@achillesjustice.com. I will be provided a password from Achilles after signing the Achilles Justice Philosophical Counselling Client Consent Form.

Counsellor: Achilles Atlas Justice