

# *Covenant Counseling*

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## What to Expect:

An initial session is spent developing the client/therapist relationship, defining the purpose for counseling and for beginning the diagnostic process. Treatment goals are then developed based upon the understanding that change can take place by addressing one or all of the following areas:

- 1) **Behavior**  
Looking at our lifestyle and practices
- 2) **Attitude**  
Our disposition of values, beliefs & assumptions about one's self and life that directs how we respond to our environment
- 3) **Thinking**  
This includes one's self-talk, or pre-reflective assumptions that the conscious mind uses as a filter to interpret experience, to reason and to draw conclusions.
- 4) **The dynamics of the emotional/physiological makeup of the personality**  
This would include such things as a chemical imbalance requiring medication such as with a Bipolar Disorder or nutritional deficiencies that effect our emotion.
- 5) **Emotional history and family background**  
Emotional experiences are recorded in the memory even if the event that produced the emotion is forgotten. This subconscious memory has a part in establishing the disposition of the personality and molding responses to situations.
- 6) **Genetics**  
Science continues to show that genetics effect who we are and possible predisposed psychological problems. Studies are also pointing to the fact that our genes may change by how we live within our own lifetime.
- 7) **The spiritual life**  
This includes one's relationship with God and the beliefs surrounding that relationship.

Treatment goals and therapeutic approaches are founded upon this seven dimensional model and proven techniques in psychological studies.

Of those clients with a spiritual interest and outlook, an important cornerstone for successful therapy is the spiritual life. Though we do not address a person's religious practice, we encourage the evaluation and growth of one's relationship to God. This is important because the Bible teaches that we are created to experience intimacy with God (i.e., to know Him and to

be known by Him in a personal way). Friendship and fellowship with people is important to our happiness, but friendship and fellowship with God in our spirit provides even more than what people can provide. It is in this spiritual intimacy with God that we sense His love, providential care and purpose for us, and experience hope, significance, peace and joy. This relationship fills the empty vacuum that causes much of the pain in our lives or drives us to unhealthy living and thinking. In addition, we view the Holy Spirit as the counselor in the session and the therapist as the facilitator of the discerning and healing process.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, we find that to understand God's grace and forgiveness, how Jesus Christ has broken down the barrier to a relationship with God, is important in dealing with emotions such as insecurity, guilt and fear that effects our happiness and the quality of our marriages and family relationships. We also draw upon the wisdom of scripture in our approach to the treatment of such areas as: dealing with anger, co-dependence, marriage and family issues, the raising of children, teen problems, and the solving of relational conflicts. Lastly, our goal is to encourage, affirm and give hope for one's future healing.

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<sup>1</sup> The Holy Spirit is called in Greek the paracletos, the helper, counselor, one called alongside to help, or an intercessor (See John 14:16 & Rom. 8:26).