

Welcome to the course! 😊

The concepts course is run over 10 sessions and will be on Tuesday evenings between 6pm and 9pm. As with all counselling courses, the members of the group are practicing working with other people, and we will inevitably get to know each other more than on, say, a maths course! From the very beginning, the course is run with the same boundaries and concerns as counselling itself. It isn't possible to learn listening skills without using role plays, which inevitably bring some of people's history to the surface. We will also be discussing the kind of problems which bring people into counselling, including issues like child abuse and mental health. *This is not a therapy group, it is important that you don't bring difficult personal experience into role plays.* If something upsets you during or after a session, please feel free to discuss it with Rebecca or talk to the counsellors on site.

Confidentiality: It is important that personal disclosures within a group stay there. If you are discussing an issue after a role play, make the issue general or anonymous. Don't discuss your fellow classmates or tutors outside of the group. The broad issues, of course, can be usefully discussed, but keep any identifying information confidential.

Being in the group: It is only courteous to be punctual or, if unavoidably delayed, come in quietly and don't interrupt. **Please turn off mobile phones during the sessions.** If you absolutely have to be available by phone for some reason, please explain it to the group. The tutors model good counselling practice i.e. the core conditions and we want you to do the same. Respect other people, work towards the whole group's learning and be yourself.

Learning Support: There is an assignment at the end of the course, which is a written statement of how much you have learned from the course. Some people have more problems than others with the written part of the course, obviously you tutor is here to help as much as possible. In addition, we have a learning support service that can help improve confidence and skills in literacy if needed. This is a free service for students who have an identified need.

Counselling: All students of the college can use the free, confidential counselling service. Enquire in confidence at reception for more details.

Learning journal: Most counselling courses recommend a learning journal as proof of development in all the curriculum areas: counselling, skills and personal development for this course. It is not only a way for you to record things you have found interesting but is also a place to record feelings and thoughts that have emerged. They will be read by the course tutor, so we recommend you write on sheets for an A4 folder, so you can remove personal observations or private thoughts. This will also be a valuable resource if you go on to do more counselling courses.

All in all, whether you are studying for a future career, building useful skills for your present job or other commitments, or simply out of interest we hope you enjoy the course and welcome feedback, whether critical or positive, at all times!

If you need to contact us, you can e-mail Rebecca on reb@helps4u.force9.co.uk. Useful information and course handouts will be available from week 2 on the website, www.helps4u.force9.co.uk. My home phone number is 281214, I have an answer phone and will get back to you as soon as I can.