

HOW IS COUNSELING VIEWED?

During your time at NYU, you may hear your classmates mention that they seek counseling services to address personal concerns. This is often a new concept for international students since the same structures may not be available in your home country's educational system.

Counseling is a culturally accepted practice in the United States sought by individuals of all backgrounds. Why is that? It is related, in part, to core values in the U.S. - ideas about independence, change, personal control, and self-help. What does this mean and how does it translate to your academic life at NYU?

Independence signifies that one's identity is more self-oriented than group-oriented, so the belief is getting help does not bring shame to the family or the community. Change holds out that there is always a better way to do things and not only can things be improved, but so can people. Personal control means that one's life is not controlled by destiny or fate, but that a person can take steps to improve his or her life. Finally, self-help emphasizes that a person can achieve great things, even if s/he was born in poor or humble circumstances, had an unstable family, or faced any number of other obstacles.



You will often hear on campus that "getting help is a sign of strength." That means that if you realize you have a problem or concern and try to do something to make it better, your actions bring respect, not shame. Trying to resolve an issue before it becomes serious and overwhelming is seen as a way to take care of yourself.

People don't just see counselors for serious problems. Sometimes, one or two meetings with a counselor can help you clear up a question, change a bad habit, provide some tips for how to reduce stress, or improve concentration for study.

Value differences can be one reason international students may be reluctant to seek counseling. Remember that seeking counseling does not have to go against your value system. Counseling is a vehicle to help you clarify the changes in your values as you negotiate life here in the U.S.

WHAT IS THE WELLNESS EXCHANGE?

Everyone has problems. Not everyone knows where to turn for help. Talking with a counselor can make you feel better.

Free, confidential counseling and support are available at NYU. Stop by one of our locations or call the Wellness Exchange private hotline (212-443-9999), available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The Wellness Exchange is your key to accessing the University's extensive health and mental health resources designed to address your needs. The Wellness Exchange private hotline will put you in touch with a professional who can help you address day-to-day challenges as well as other health-related concerns. The hotline is also available if you just need to talk or want to call about a friend.

Not ready to call the hotline? Send a private e-mail to a counselor at wellness.exchange@nyu.edu.




We're here to listen.

 Call us 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:
212-443-9999

 Meet with a counselor. For locations, visit:
www.nyu.edu/999/counseling

 Send us an email:
wellness.exchange@nyu.edu

 For more info, call 212-443-9999 or visit:
www.nyu.edu/999

The Wellness Exchange, part of the Division of Student Affairs, operates in partnership with ProtoCall Services.

**Free, confidential counseling
is available at NYU.**

Counseling and Behavioral Health Services

NYU Student Health Center
726 Broadway, 4th Floor, Suite 471
www.nyu.edu/health/counseling

Make an Appointment:

Call (212) 998-4780 to arrange a phone evaluation.
www.nyu.edu/health

Wellness Exchange Counseling Walk-in Hours:

(no appointment necessary)

If you would like to be seen immediately, you can attend Counseling walk-in hours. For times and locations, please view our website at www.nyu.edu/999/counseling.

Wellness Exchange Hotline:

To speak with a counselor over the phone 24 hours a day, please call (212) 443-9999.

After Hours and in case of an Emergency



Call the Wellness Exchange
24/7 hotline to be connected
to a counselor.

212-443-9999

We're here to listen.



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NYU Office for International Students and Scholars

The Role of *Counseling* in the United States

*A Guide for
International Students*



Counseling and Behavioral Health Services

NYU Student Health Center
726 Broadway, 4th Floor, Suite 471
(212) 998-4780
www.nyu.edu/health



NYU Office for International Students and Scholars

561 LaGuardia Place
(212) 998-4720
www.nyu.edu/oiss

WHY GO TO COUNSELING?

International students seek counseling for many of the same reasons that U.S. American students do, regarding issues such as relationships, identity, family, or career. What is different for international students are the additional pressures of language concerns, cultural adjustment, or forming relationships with persons who are culturally different.

Before we can answer why you may find counseling helpful, let us first understand the cultural challenges of seeking help. All students at some point in their college career experience a wide range of emotional reactions to changes, such as anxiety, fear, or depression. These are normal feelings that people experience just as part of being human. Sometimes these feelings can continue and interfere with learning and personal growth.

In the United States, seeking out psychological counseling is a common way to get help understanding and solving personal problems. In many cultures, seeking a counselor is generally not the first choice for students. In some families, a young person may consult with a friend or religious leader. While these are avenues of help, they do not address concerns in the same way a counselor does.



Counselors at Counseling and Behavioral Health (CBH) Services are trained to help students find solutions that are sensitive to cultural and religious values. CBH counselors have worked with international students for many years and know that NYU students come from very different cultural traditions. A counselor does not judge students, is patient, and is trained to be a sensitive, objective listener who works with students to help them find solutions.

WHAT KINDS OF PROBLEMS DO STUDENTS DISCUSS AT COUNSELING?

- *Cultural adjustment - stress, anxiety, changes in sleeping or eating patterns*
- *Academic problems - adjusting to a new system, not being able to understand the professor, not doing as well as expected, being unable to keep up with class assignments.*
- *U.S. Americans - how to meet them, how to understand them, how to get along with them*
- *Financial or time management issues*
- *Roommate concerns - how to express your rights, make rules, set boundaries*
- *Dating issues or concerns regarding sex or sexuality*
- *Feeling misunderstood if English is a second language*
- *Unexplained health problems*
- *Worries about what is happening with friends and family back home*
- *Concerns about life after NYU*
- *And many more reasons*

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU GO TO SEE A COUNSELOR?

Walk-ins: You can come to 726 Broadway, Suite 402 to see a counselor without an appointment (see www.nyu.edu/999/counseling for a listing of hours). You will show your NYU I.D. card, fill out some paperwork, and then speak to a counselor. Session times vary, but generally last approximately 30 minutes.

Appointments: If you prefer an appointment, call 212-998-4780 to arrange a 15-minute phone evaluation session. When you arrive for your appointment, a CBH administrative assistant will greet you. S/he will ask you for your NYU I.D. card, verify your appointment, and ask that you be seated in the waiting area. The administrative assistant will notify the counselor that you have arrived. Your counselor will come out to greet you. A session usually lasts 45 minutes.

When you come to your first appointment, arrive a few minutes early so you can complete an information form. The first session is generally an evaluation where the counselor and the student explore concerns. The counselor will determine the best counseling option - individual, group counseling, or a referral outside. All counseling services are confidential. This means two important things. First, there is no record of your counseling service visits on your academic records. Second, no one, not even your family, professors, or NYU administrators can have access to your CBH records without your permission.

COMMON QUESTIONS FROM INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS...

If I had a problem in my home country, I would talk to someone in my family or a friend. Why would I talk to a stranger?

Counseling & Behavioral Health (CBH) counselors are trained mental health professionals who understand human growth and the challenges that can get in the way. Counselors are very sensitive to culture-specific concerns, but at the same time there are universal concerns that all students experience. Counselors have an objective viewpoint, which means they will pay attention to all of the unique factors in your life and help you come to your own decisions within your value system.

If anyone from home found out I was going to a counselor, it would hurt my reputation. How do I know it will be kept secret?

Some cultures are less familiar with counseling and actually may have fears or prejudices against it. The goal of counseling is to help you find a solution to your problems and to help you be more in control of your life. You are protected by confidentiality, which does not allow anyone to know that you are seeking counseling without your consent. The only exceptions to confidentiality are in the case of a psychological emergency requiring hospitalization, an immediate threat to someone's life, or suspected child abuse.

I'd rather talk to other students who have the same kind of problem instead of a counselor, is that possible?

We at CBH encourage students to use all resources on campus. An alternative option to individual counseling is group counseling. CBH offers many groups where you have the opportunity to share and learn from other students in a safe, supportive environment. Often international students find connecting to a peer group one of the most challenging tasks. CBH counselors are also available to connect you to resources. We have groups on many concerns; food issues, relationships, sexual identity, and cultural differences.

Will I have immigration problems because I am seeing a counselor? Would my dean or department be notified?

No. Counseling is a resource on campus, just like the writing center or the health center. Counseling is a separate activity from your academic and immigration status. It is not reported to other offices.

COMMON QUESTIONS FROM INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS (CONT'D)...



What if I want to meet with someone who is from my home country or speaks my native language?

CBH works with a wide range of counseling agencies in the New York City area that provide low-fee counseling for many concerns. We will work with you to find a match for cultural or language needs.

If all international students experience cultural adjustment, why should I go to counseling if others don't?

Seeking counseling is a personal choice. Some students don't seek counseling because they may have an adequate support system of friends or family. Other students may not seek counseling because they can deal effectively with stress. Again, seeking counseling is not a weakness; it is simply using a resource available on campus to learn how to take care of yourself and your needs. Often students come to counseling in the midst of a crisis - i.e. failing grades, relationship stress. You don't have to wait until a crisis comes to learn about yourself. Knowing yourself and what you need can go a long way to making your experience at NYU a meaningful one.

Are there ways to get help beyond meeting with a counselor?

Certainly, many international students have found the cultural adjustment workshops co-sponsored by the OISS and CBH to be helpful. These workshops are held at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters. CBH also provides workshops and support groups on many concerns. For more information on these programs, contact the OISS or CBH. We would like to have you join us.