

## Frequently Asked Questions about Psychotherapy

### **“What is the difference between a Psychologist and a Psychiatrist?”**

A Psychiatrist is a doctor. That means they look at you, diagnose any illness, and prescribe the best medical treatment for the illness, so the problems that bother you don't bother you as much any more.

A Psychologist is a scientist. That means they look at you, try to understand who you are and how you work, and work together with you to make changes to the way you live your life, so the problems that bother you don't bother you as much any more.

### **“What happens in the first session with a psychologist?”**

The first session lasts 80 minutes, and involves the following things:

- We meet each other.
- We get to know each other a bit better.
- We find out information about each other.
- We make a decision together about whether you can work with each other.
- If we both think we can work together, we then decide what sort of problems we are going to work on.
- We then make a plan for action, and book in a regular time to meet to work on the problems we've chosen.

### **“Do I have to lie on a couch?”**

No, you don't. You and the psychologist sit on comfortable chairs, facing each other.

### **“Will I have to do anything in-between sessions?”**

It's up to you. Sometimes, we may decide together that you will do some “homework” between sessions, in order to keep things moving along. Homework is not compulsory.

### **“Do I have to talk about my childhood or my past?”**

You don't have to talk about anything you don't want to. Sometimes it can be useful to talk about the past, because it helps us understand what's going on in the present: why things are the way they are now. However, the most important thing to remember is: this therapy is for you. That means that you have control over what happens, and you have the final say about what we do, and what we don't do.