



BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF WORKING ONLINE

COVID 19 has changed the way counselling is delivered and has opened up enormous opportunities for both counsellors and clients.

Benefits

The advent of fast internet connection and video conferencing software such as Vsee or Zoom allows clients to:

- Access therapy at a time, place and pace that suit their home and work commitments.
- Choose a therapist who lives outside their geographical area or has a specific set of skills
- Express their feelings by writing it down (text counselling) – for those who find this more comfortable
- Have the flexibility to choose the technology they feel is best for them: telephone, email, live chat or webcam
- Cut down on travel times to and from a therapist's office
- For those who live far away from therapists' offices or counselling services, gain the support they need
- For those who have mobility issues, access support

Challenges

Using technology and working online has its challenges especially for clients who:

- Do not have access to technology such as a computer or even a phone
- Are not able to operate technology
- Have limited or slow internet connectivity
- Find themselves living in an unsafe environment or in a place where they lack privacy – they will find it difficult to talk openly about their issues
- Believe that only face-to-face counselling will help them

The shift from face-to-face to online counselling allows therapists to become more flexible in how they meet clients' needs. In *'The New Normal'*, most therapists and agencies will work in a 'blended economy' offering both face-to-face and online appointments.

Clients will have a wider choice of therapists and appointments which fit their circumstances.

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