



# TRAINING WITH A DIFFICULT PAST (CAN IT HOLD YOU BACK?)

As a lecturer of counselling (*now retired*), every year around May or June time, I would receive emails and phone calls from prospective students asking me, *'I have had some difficulties in my past. Will it stop me from becoming a counsellor?'*

There is a perception that to be a counsellor, you need to be 'fixed' or 'normal'. Most of us are a work in progress, and 'normal' is a highly subjective term.

Most people who come to training are the archetypal wounded healers, who want to use their journey of healing to help others, so it is not unusual to find students who have a difficult past.

A good question to ask yourself is, *'How far along the road am I in the healing process?'* and *'What may trigger a relapse?'*

Counselling training has, at its core, a significant element of personal development and reflection. It is not unusual for students to have the odd 'wobble' along the training road.

Training should contribute to students' well-being, not diminish it. With this in mind, tutors need to consider how they experience students in early levels of training and speak with them if they have any concerns.

If you are reading this and are concerned that the training may impact on your well-being, speak with your tutor and consider what support you may need.