

Psychodynamic Counselling

The Theory

One of the most important contributions to the psychodynamic approach is the focus on childhood experience and the way this experience can influence adult life. Freudian theory (Sigmund Freud being the main influence of the approach) states that instinct drives us and childhood experiences shape our personality.

The Therapy

A psychodynamic counsellor may work predominantly in the 'projective' relationship. This means that they will work with how you relate to them and what arises between you (this is called 'transference'). For example, a client could transfer their relationship with a family member or an ex-partner onto the counsellor and this can be explored.

Psychodynamic counselling will also focus on your unconscious motivations and behaviours, which may help you to understand and ultimately resolve past issues. This may include exploration of your childhood and past relationships, defence mechanisms and more abstract techniques like dream analysis.

A psychodynamic counsellor may be more directive and your sessions may have more strict boundaries in comparison to other approaches of counselling.