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My Approach

Having emotional difficulties is not a sign of weakness. It affects people of all ages and is not as simple as “pulling yourself together”. In fact hearing that can be very hurtful and can reinforce feelings of worthlessness and make recovery harder.

Although **anxiety** is a feeling that everyone will experience from time to time and we all experience it when faced with situations we find difficult or threatening the fear or anxiety can go on for too long and be so strong that it can stop us from doing the things we want and can make our lives miserable.

Depression is increasingly common and periods of depression can be triggered by exam or work stress, family upsets, concerns around identity or sexual orientation. Hormonal changes around adolescence, pregnancy or menopause can also contribute to depression. Sometimes depression gets so severe that the person may lose interest and pleasure in things they would normally enjoy and overwhelming feeling of sadness, worthlessness or hopelessness may make concentration, decision- making or remembering things extremely difficult.

Sometimes people are shocked and upset by the changing and even violent emotions and feelings that come up when they are **bereaved**. Grief can knock you off balance emotionally, physically and mentally. Many bereaved people say that initially they feel a sense of numbness and disbelief but as the shock settles and the reality of what has happened begins to sink in powerful and disturbing feelings may surface. You may think you are “going mad” because feelings seem so uncontrollable and concentrating or organizing things becomes impossible. The loss may seem so overwhelming that you cannot imagine existing without the person.

Sexual problems or **relationship issues** affect pretty much everyone at some stage in life. For some the issues resolve but for others it can be very valuable to get some help. There may have been family difficulties in the past that affect present relationships or problems may have developed out of the blue. Because this is a very personal subject and many of us have been brought up to believe that sex should come naturally and we should be able to sort our personal lives out for ourselves it may seem particularly hard to ask for help about sexual or relationship problems.

Beginning to make sense of overwhelming feelings be they anxieties, fears, preoccupations associated with the past or the present gives a sense of life becoming more manageable again. People come to therapy in turmoil and often in emotional and even physical pain. Positive change in life is possible born out of the **therapeutic relationship** between client and therapist, a relationship built on understanding, trust and in the strictest of confidences.

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