



# SHARING OUR STORIES

Reducing the Stigma of Seeking Mental Health Services

When others share their stories of struggle and we respond with openness and support, we help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health.



When we share our own story, it can bring healing not only to ourselves, but can also encourage others to seek help.

## REDUCING THE STIGMA BEGINS WITH AWARENESS



**May is Mental Health Awareness Month.**

Nick Finnegan Counseling Center hopes to spread the importance of helping people get the mental health care they need and reduce the stigma of reaching out for help. We hope that you will wear this ribbon in support and share this information with someone you know.

## A SAFE PLACE TO SHARE

**Learning someone's story is a great privilege. Respect their act of vulnerability by offering compassion and understanding, and remember these things:**

-  **Be curious and have an open mind.** Use open-ended questions to help create space for the other person to share.
-  **Avoid making assumptions** about what they may be struggling with.
-  If the other person wants to share, **find somewhere to talk that feels comfortable**, and where you won't be easily distracted.
-  **Just listen.** Don't feel like you have to have all the answers. Most people find comfort in just being able to get their feelings out.
-  **Keep it confidential;** this is their story to share.
-  **Don't be afraid to** ask someone if they've had suicidal thoughts or to call 911 if you are concerned for their safety.
-  If you're listening and not sure what to do or if a person is emotionally struggling for more than 2-3 weeks, **refer them to a professional.**

*Life's changes and transitions can bring increased stress and uncertainty. We all need to feel a sense of community and support to be healthy.*

If you are ever unsure if counseling is a good fit for you or a loved one, we can help. Give our office a call at 713-402-5046.



**2714 JOANEL | HOUSTON, TX 77027**



# SHARING OUR STORIES

Reducing the Stigma of Seeking Mental Health Services

Everyone has to start somewhere. A friend, co-worker or mentor may be a good place to start. Professional counseling can be a very helpful tool for personal wellness and a positive investment in yourself and your future.

## FINDING A COUNSELOR



A counselor may be the best place to start if you don't have a trustworthy person to talk to, or if you have experienced trauma, addiction, depression, anxiety or are having thoughts of suicide. A counselor can also be a great resource when processing life transitions and general personal growth.



When you meet with a counselor, know that it is important to be honest, but you do not need to feel pressured to share your story all at once. A compassionate counselor will understand if you need time to develop trust with them.



Don't be discouraged if the first counselor you meet with isn't the right fit. Be open to asking for other referrals or finding a different counselor you might connect with better.

*Sharing our emotional struggles is a personal and vulnerable act;  
it's not information meant for just anyone.*

NFCC's counselors provide services for clients navigating:

parent/child relationships  
anxiety • depression • addiction  
stress management • work/life balance  
school/behavior issues • ADHD  
trauma • PTSD • autism • grief  
pre-marital & couples counseling  
and more...

Nick Finnegan Counseling Center makes counseling accessible and affordable, to everyone. Although it costs NFCC \$175 per session, **our clients pay no more than \$95**. We also accept **insurance** and offer a **sliding scale** for those who need it.

FINNEGANCOUNSELING.ORG