



To answer this I am going to use an analogy that you wouldn't automatically associate with counselling, buying a new car. A new car is an investment. Probably one of the biggest and most expensive you will make after buying a house. If you are going to spend that much on a single purchase, you want to be sure it is the right one for you and the same applies to choosing a Counsellor.



Where should I look, a dealership or privately. Is it fit for purpose? I need a car to transport two teenagers to school, to do the weekly shopping and to get away for a well deserved break every now and then, but I still don't want to break the bank every time I add fuel.

Does it feel right? I hate light colours but white ones are cheaper than British racing green so will I feel as comfortable in a white one? Can I afford it? Although the 3 year finance option may look more affordable, will I end up paying more than what it's worth?

What if I don't like it? What money back guarantees are on offer?

So, now I know that I need a family sized car with a decent boot, cruise control and a satnav in dark blue. I want to pay for it over 2 years and not 3 and I want a 30 day money back guarantee, how is this going to help me to choose a Counsellor?



Where should I look? You have a choice of your GP although waiting lists can be long or going privately. The best places

to look if you are going privately is on one of the main directories, NCS, BACP, Counselling directory, Psychology Today etc. they only advertise fully qualified counsellors who have reached certain levels of competency. Fit for purpose? Most counsellors specialise in certain fields such as anxiety and stress, bereavement, addiction or relationships. When searching, be specific about what you are looking for.

Is it the right colour? Although counsellors don't come in a choice of paintwork finishes with go faster stripes, how someone makes you feel in the first few moments of communication is usually a good indicator that you are on the right track. Don't be afraid to ask questions.

Can I afford it? Yes, counselling may be a big investment that you really need to think about before committing to, but it is worth remembering that it is potentially a long term investment for a relatively short term financial outlay

What if I don't like it? Although counsellors do not come with a 30 day money back guarantee, you won't be tied into a contract that prevents you from going elsewhere. If you are not completely comfortable with the counsellor, you won't benefit from the counselling so don't be afraid to look elsewhere.