



# Put yourself in the driver's seat

## When life gets a little out of control

There may be times when you feel like your life is out of control due to a lot of change that's happening all at once. Well, you're not alone. When we become overwhelmed, it can be difficult to make decisions — and making good decisions is nearly impossible. You may not feel like you're in control of anything, but this is your chance to steer yourself in the right direction. This is when it's time for you to ask for help.

### Consider a counselor

Professionally licensed counselors give helpful advice and tips for solving problems. They can help with all different areas including spiritual, relationships, work, education and mental or physical health needs. Seeing a counselor means finding a caring ear and a wise voice.

### There are many ways to find the right counselor for you

Counselors work through independent practices, community agencies, health care organizations, employee support programs and treatment centers.<sup>1</sup> You should be just as careful choosing the right counselor as finding the right medical doctor. So it's important to ask some questions:

- Are you licensed?
- What is your area of expertise or focus?
- How much training have you had dealing with my type of worries?
- What is your approach or process when working with clients?
- How many sessions do most clients with my type of concerns need?
- What type of health care coverage do you take and what are your insurance and billing rules?

### Don't be afraid to open up and share your private thoughts

During your first visit, share information about your reasons for finding help. Listen to the counselor's initial thoughts on how to go about dealing with your concerns. Then use it as a chance to decide if the fit is right. If you're not happy, don't be shy about looking somewhere else. After all, you're in the driver's seat.<sup>2</sup>

#### Additional counseling resources:

National Institute of Mental Health, *How to Find Help*: [nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/getting-help-locate-services/index.shtml](http://nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/getting-help-locate-services/index.shtml).  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention FAQs: [cdc.gov/mentalhealth/faqs.htm#2](http://cdc.gov/mentalhealth/faqs.htm#2).

#### Certain factual or statistical information was pulled from the following sources:

1 American Mental Health Counselors Association: [amhca.org](http://amhca.org).  
2 WebMD, *Guide to Psychiatry and Counseling* (2010): [webmd.com](http://webmd.com).

