

# Counseling Case


## Edit and Issue

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## Dear employees,

We offer psychological counseling via in-person meeting, telephone and email. Please feel free to call us at our toll-free number [0120-783-744](tel:0120-783-744) for an appointment. The number can be reached by mobile phones. It is our hope that our counseling service could in some way, however small, contribute to your well-being and productivity.

## Schedule a counseling appointment

 **0 1 2 0 - 7 8 3 - 7 4 4**

Office hours: (excluding holidays)

Monday through Friday 10:00~20:00

Saturday 10:00~18:00

 E-mail :  
[sodan@humanfrontier.co.jp](mailto:sodan@humanfrontier.co.jp)

※We will reply to you within two business days after receiving your message.

※In case you would like to know more about our counseling service before you make an initial contact, we present a typical case example below in the hope that it'd give you a glimpse into our consultation room. The following case is fictional based roughly on several real cases. The client's identity is intentionally disguised.

## Case 1



## I lack self-confidence (1) Ms. C

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**Client: C, in her 30s, working in the management department**

**Background:** Ms. C is a career-oriented woman who works in the management department of a medium-sized company. She has changed jobs a number of times and has advanced her career in her area of expertise. In her current workplace, she was suddenly added to a new project team. Because it was a new type of work, there was no one around her to whom she could ask questions, including her supervisor. If there was something she didn't understand, she researched it herself to carry out her work. Amid a heavy workload every day, she became depressed about things not going well with her boyfriend, to whom she was introduced by a friend, and she applied for counseling.

(**Cl**: Client, **Co**: Counselor)

<Initial Phase of Face-to-face Counseling>

**Cl:**

With regard to the reasons things weren't going well with her boyfriend, she continued to express self-blaming thoughts such as "This part of me was wrong" and "I shouldn't have said that." She also did not have confidence in her appearance and said that she was not good at things that were considered "feminine," such as cooking and cleaning. She expressed that she has had these kinds of thoughts since childhood.

**Co's Intervention:**

First, I empathetically listened to her struggles regarding her difficulties with her boyfriend. I listened without judgment to her negative feelings about herself and her distress caused by self-blaming. As she vented her feelings to me, she seemed to suddenly come to her senses, saying, "Come to think of it, he also had this side to him," realizing that he was in part to blame for things not going well.

In the counseling that followed, it appeared that Ms. C's feelings of not having confidence in herself did not change. While she excelled at her job and was highly regarded by her supervisor, she didn't seem willing to acknowledge it herself.

On the other hand, with a motivation for self-improvement, Ms. C always brought a notebook with her to counseling sessions to take notes on her observations. She started a habit of jotting down five good things that happened each day and reported them to me at every session. I supported her attitude of "writing down whatever came to mind without putting pressure on herself to write something no matter what." I continued to provide feedback on what she was able to do every time and what was good.

#### Cl:

During one session, Ms. C disclosed that when she felt down or lonely, she used AI to comfort herself. She would input a large amount of information about herself into AI and ask it, "I am in such-and-such situation and feel such-and-such. What do you think?" and it would respond. She showed me the AI response screen. Certainly, to put it positively, the AI's responses were never judgmental about Ms. C and consisted of neutral wording.

#### Co's Intervention:

While reading the AI's responses, I replied, "It might be helpful to use it temporarily when you are going through a tough time. However, the AI is not actually making any judgments and will not give responses that disagree with you. It could be all right to use it as long as you understand that." Ms. C seemed to understand this well. I was reassured that she was using AI while maintaining a healthy distance from it.

As we continued with counseling, I mentioned that she had worked hard up to now in her area of expertise and that she cherished her friends. Ms. C denied it initially, saying that she had friends who were much better at their jobs than she was and that she only had a few friends, and there were people who had so many more. However, she gradually started to express positive views such as "I agree that I am highly regarded in the workplace. My supervisor also pays close attention to me," and "I don't have a lot of friends, but I have friends I can talk to about anything." With a help of using a worksheet to learn about one's own cognitive tendencies as well, Ms. C also recognized anew what she had the tendency to "think all or nothing" and "compare herself to others." I started to hear positive self-assessments from Ms. C herself, such as "I can really put in effort when I focus on one thing."

As we approached our final counseling session, when I said, "You have many people in your life, such as supervisors, colleagues, and friends," she replied, "I agree. I have come to learn that I do," and "I think I can handle things on my own." This concluded our counseling.

**Client: B, in his 50s, working in the service industry**

**Background:** Mr. B works in a leadership position in the service industry involving customer interaction. The job requires flexible response because unforeseen issues occur on a daily basis, and handling these issues takes up all of Mr. B's energy. He says that he actually wants to organize routine tasks in his own way, but that he is unable to find the time. He listed many things that he hadn't been able to do and things that he wanted to do in a certain way but couldn't. On the other hand, his evaluation from his superior is "good." He is worried that he isn't a good fit for a job that requires customer interaction and people skills, and applied for counseling, wanting someone to listen to his concerns. (Cl: Client, Co: Counselor)

**Co's Intervention:**

I listened carefully to his feelings of anxiety and struggles. Upon saying to Mr. B that "Your bars are always set so high," Mr. B responded that he was living with the constant fear of what other people thought of him, that things could not continue the way that they were, and that he was worried that he would be abandoned by everyone if things remained the same. When I responded, "From what you shared, I get the impression that you are putting in a great deal of effort," Mr. B teared up.

He shared an episode that came as a shock to him, where a customer told him, "The way you listen lacks sincerity." When I asked how that made him feel and what he did after that, Mr. B expressed that he felt that he had his guard up around others and that he started to feel that maybe he could let his guard down a little.

As I listened to him carefully, I asked him, "Your job seems very busy. What do you do to relieve your stress?" He responded that he liked to go to concerts of his favorite artist and do fan activities. Up until then, he said that he felt guilty for doing things he enjoyed.

When I asked him, "What made you think that it was okay to enjoy doing things you enjoy?" he responded that "AI told me so over and over." Mr. B too had been receiving advice from AI when he was struggling.

However, because AI never disagrees with someone, when he kept responding to its advice saying, "I wasn't able to do this," or "That method didn't suit me," he unintentionally ended up going around in circles. That made him consider that he needed an actual person to listen to him, and he applied for a session with a real counselor.

I started off by recognizing the work of the AI to change Mr. B's feelings (make him feel less guilty) and stated that while I was impressed by it, I told Mr. B that accepting the AI's advice was none other than the work of Mr. B himself. I also told him that I was really glad that he decided and acted to reach out to someone in real life for counseling. As we continued our exchanges, Mr. B's expression gradually softened, and when our session ended and he left, he had a look of relief on his face.

With AI being utilized in many areas of society, it has now started to emerge in the field of counseling as well. There is a growing public discussion about whether psychological counselors might be replaced by AI. As a counselor myself, such conversations remind me of the importance of continually improving my own expertise so that this does not become the case. In both these cases, the clients relied on AI because, despite their high capabilities, they struggled with self-confidence and were very concerned about how others saw them. It made me think that it is not only young people, but also those with more social or professional experience, perhaps especially such people, who turn to AI because they do not have to risk their evaluation by others. I believe it is essential to understand how AI functions and to use it while recognizing that many interpersonal situations do not unfold the way we hope in real life. As AI continues to gain knowledge, AI counseling will also evolve. As counselors, we must keep reflecting on what we can offer precisely because we are real human counselors. With that in mind, I hope to continue growing up as a counselor so that I can remain helpful to those who seek support.

## How to Use Our Service

### Type 1 Email counseling

Please email us the following items ① and ② and primary issues by email. You can also use our website.

### Type 2 Face to face counseling

Please make an appointment by either phone or email.

### Type 3 Telephone counseling

When all counselors are occupied, a counselor will contact you later at the earliest possible convenience.

### Please provide us with following information for making an appointment.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| ① Name (anonymity is acceptable)                 | ⑤ Desired type of session  |
| ② Company name or registration number            | <input type="checkbox"/> Face to face (Tokyo/Osaka counseling office or any agreed location) |
| ③ Brief description of the matter for counseling | <input type="checkbox"/> By Microsoft Teams  |
| ④ Desired date and time of session               | ※The type of counseling you can choose depends on your contract.                             |

**TEL: 0120-783-744**

Monday ~ Friday 10:00 am to 8:00 pm

Saturday 10:00 am to 6:00 pm \* Excluding holidays

**Mail: [sodan@humanfrontier.co.jp](mailto:sodan@humanfrontier.co.jp)**

\* If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.



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