



Co-create a relationship that feels fulfilling

## The Love Scout

# What is relationship counselling?

## Your best investment in love and life

If you've ever tried assembling flat-pack furniture with your partner, you know that relationships don't come with an instruction manual. That's where relationship counselling comes in - a safe, supportive space to make sense of the mess, reassemble trust, and maybe even laugh along the way.

So, what exactly is relationship counselling? Think of it as guided maintenance for your most important relationship. A professional counselor provides tools and insights to help couples navigate challenges, resolve conflict, deepen their connection, and tackle those tough issues that often get swept under the rug. Whether it's communication breakdowns, intimacy concerns, or big life transitions, counselling can be a game-changer.

But what about the elephant in the room: "Why should we pay someone to do what we can sort out ourselves?" If that's true, then you're all good. However, most of us bring emotional baggage, patterns,

and assumptions into our relationships. A counsellor helps unpack these with curiosity and compassion, offering fresh perspectives that partners often can't see in the heat of conflict. This is the emotional payoff: a stronger connection, greater understanding, and renewed partnership. Imagine walking into a tough conversation and emerging feeling closer rather than further apart. That's the magic of counselling.

Now for the financial side. While the upfront cost might make some couples hesitate, consider this: the average wedding in Australia costs upwards of \$30,000. Couples readily spend on florists, photographers, and gourmet cupcakes, yet balk at investing in the skills and insights to sustain their relationship for decades. Counselling isn't a cost—it's an investment. An investment that can save you years of resentment, emotional distance, or, let's face it, a costly separation. In Australia, the accumulated costs of divorce, including

filing, mediation, legal representation, and court, can reach between \$50,000 and \$100,000 per party.

Of course, there's a stigma. Some people think seeking help signals failure or weakness. In reality, it's quite the opposite - it's functional, responsible and displays emotional maturity and intelligence. Modern couples are ditching the outdated belief that love should be effortless and instead embracing the idea that great relationships require effort, attention, and sometimes, outside expertise.

So, what can you expect? Counselling sessions are tailored to your unique dynamics. You'll learn how to communicate effectively, resolve conflict constructively, and even rediscover the spark that brought you together. Along the way, you'll confront unhelpful narratives (yes, even the "we never fight, so we're fine" myth) and replace them with healthier, more empowering ones.

In short, relationship counselling isn't about "fixing" your partner or ticking boxes. It's about co-creating a relationship that feels fulfilling, intentional, and resilient. It's about being in harmony and contentment with your significant other. Whether you're in a rocky patch or simply want to future-proof your love, it's worth every cent.

Because let's face it: love is the ultimate flat-pack furniture project. And sometimes, you need a manual.

Words: **Scout Smith-O'Leary**  
Scout is a Relationship Therapist providing counselling to couples & individuals. Based in Manly. Telehealth available. Visit [thelovescout.com](http://thelovescout.com) or call **0410 030 463** to book a session.

## Lifeline Northern Beaches

# Connecting our local community: Meet the Lifeline Northern Beaches Volunteers



Volunteer crisis supporter Will answers one of Lifeline's many crisis calls

At Lifeline Northern Beaches, volunteers are an essential part of our organisation. Their time, dedication, and commitment make it possible for us to provide crisis support and suicide prevention services to our community.

Among the more than 640 remarkable individuals who volunteer with us is Will, a Crisis Line Supporter, whose story highlights the important role our volunteers play in our community.

## Meet Will, Volunteer Crisis Line Supporter at Lifeline Northern Beaches

"I first came across Lifeline Northern Beaches through their "Accidental Counsellor" course which I attended with my running club. Curiosity led me to their Crisis Supporter training. I'd been searching for a cause to volunteer for, and this felt like the right fit. The training was thorough and

supportive, and now, at stage 3, I am taking calls and connecting with people in need.

"My connection to Lifeline is quite personal. At just 18, I lost my first friend from school to suicide. Over the years, I've lost five more friends. It's something I've always been confused about, often wondering how someone's life could spiral to that point.

"The Crisis Support training at Lifeline Northern Beaches opened my eyes. It taught me how easily life can unravel - whether finances, health, family...things can fall apart so fast. There are many paths to crisis, and when isolation takes hold, suicide can feel like the only way out. It's heartbreaking, but it's made me determined to help others before they reach that tipping point.

"I'll never forget the first time I picked up the phone, I was so nervous. You're talking to someone in a delicate state,

and it's a huge responsibility. But then I reminded myself: I'm just a human helping another human.

"What I've learned is that you can help someone by simply being present - sitting with them in their discomfort, pain, or sorrow. Active listening, without judgment or prejudice, makes a world of difference. It's incredible hearing the shift in someone's voice as they move from distress to calm.

**Sometimes, all someone needs is to feel heard, and that's what we're here for."**

## Join the Lifeline Northern Beaches Volunteer Team in 2025

Volunteers like Will are the heart of Lifeline Northern Beaches, and we're always looking for more people to join our community. Whether it's supporting our retail stores, lending a hand at book fairs or events, or becoming a trained Crisis Line Supporter, there are many ways to get involved.

Volunteering at Lifeline Northern Beaches is about more than just giving your time - it's about fostering community connection, having fun with a supportive team, and knowing you're making a real difference.

If you're ready to make an impact and support local suicide prevention and crisis support services, we'd love to hear from you. Contact us at [admin@lifeline.org.au](mailto:admin@lifeline.org.au)