

Mental Health and Agriculture

Part Three – WHAT TO (NOT) EXPECT FROM A COUNSELLING APPOINTMENT

We have come to the last portion of our Mental Health in Agriculture series for this year. One topic that came up in both of the previous segments of this series is the option of accessing counselling. In 2016, research found that despite 45% of producers experiencing high stress, 58% experiencing anxiety, and 35% experiencing depression, **40% of producers interviewed were reluctant to access professional help for their mental health**. One barrier for individuals may be the myths about counselling, therefore, let's bust some myths so you know what to expect from counselling at FCSS:

Myth: Everyone will know that you're in counselling

Fact: FCSS Counsellors are registered with professional registration bodies so are bound by strict ethical requirements of complete confidentiality.

Myth: Counselling is expensive, and the wait lists are months long

Fact: FCSS offers **free** counselling services. There is not typically a wait list to get into counselling at FCSS, but this varies depending on the community. But, if you are flexible, you can often get in for counselling the same week that you request it!

Myth: A Counsellor is just going to immediately make you share all of your deepest, most uncomfortable, secrets and want to talk about your childhood

Fact: As an active participant in your own care, you are asked to collaborate with your Counsellor to set goals so that you are working on what is most important to you and at your own pace.

Myth: Counselling is a huge time commitment including driving to the city

Fact: FCSS offers counselling in-person in all 16 of our municipalities, and if you are unable to physically attend, counselling can also be provided remotely (online or phone) for greater convenience.

Myth: The Counsellor is just going to tell me everything I'm doing wrong or judge my problems

Fact: FCSS Counselling is strengths-based and client-centered, meaning that you are treated as the expert on your own life and your own story – because you are! While Counsellors may have evidence-based information to share with you if you would like this, they will most often work with you to identify resources and abilities that are already at your disposal that can be applied to problems that have come up for you.

"To our valued producers working hard out there – take care of you as you're the most valuable and irreplaceable piece of equipment on the farm!"

Visit www.fcss.ca for more information.

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