

St. John's Cathedral Counselling Service

*Professional Member of the
American School Counselor Association
British Association of Counseling and Psychotherapy*



Empowering the Human Spirit Towards Greater Awareness for Growth and Well-being

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St. John's Cathedral Counselling Service

Our History

The 1970's witnessed Hong Kong's government and medical community increase its focus in mental health with institutional, hospital and non-government organization (NGO's) services. Concurrently in 1977 **St. John's Cathedral** enacted upon a vision to provide a community mental health service with the birth of **St. John's Counselling Service (SJCS)**. Eventually, with one counsellor on the beautiful grounds of St. John's Cathedral, **St. John's Counselling Service** was formally launched to provide basic counselling in areas of family and relationship matters regardless of age, race, gender, nationality, resident status, religion, faith and/or income.

Subsequently, as mental health was slowly losing its negative stigma in the 1980's, there was a shift of seeing psychiatry and psychology from solely treating mental health disorders to now being a key resource in promoting physical and emotional well-being. Consequently, *prevention programs* and *treatment services* became the working model for mental health as we know it today around the world, in Hong Kong and at **St. John's Counselling Service**.

Hence, as mental health services continued to change, so did **St. John's Counselling Service**. The 1990's saw **St. John's Counselling Service** experience two key events that continue to influence us today; i) *increasing demand* for our counselling from our diverse communities, and ii) *growing interest* in mental health careers by university students and working adults. We responded to these trends by relocating to a larger facility in Central with additional counsellors and support staff, developing public training programs in counselling, and becoming the most preferred training centre for clinical internships with local and overseas university psychology degree programs.

Keeping pace with the ongoing advancements in mental health, **St. John's Counselling Service** in 2007 embraced *Positive Psychology* as the foundation for our mission to provide an effective, affordable, professional, safe, and caring environment for counselling services. Today we employ over 32 counsellors who are PhD, master and bachelor degree awarded psychologists, clinical social workers and counsellors providing counselling for children, teens and adults. We address counselling in many areas of life: pre-marital and relationship counselling, substance abuse, mood and anxiety disorders, art and play therapy, co-parenting for divorced couples, eating disorders, anger management, ADHD, HIV, sexuality, academic and psychological testing-assessment, life coaching, stress management and other life challenges and opportunities.

Additionally we provide on-site school counselling at many international and local schools, employee assistance programs (EAP) for employers, individual - couple - family counselling, psychological testing, career assessments, and a crisis response team for natural disasters and human tragedy. We also provide internship programs for bachelor, master and doctoral degree psychology students, substance abuse rehab services with our partners in Thailand and the U.S., and training courses in counselling for teachers, working adults, students, human resource managers, nurses, healthcare practitioners, and mental health professionals.

Our Mission and Vision

SJCS mission is "to empower the human spirit towards greater awareness in making choices for growth and well-being." Our mission is derived from **Positive Psychology (PPT) and Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT)** clinical experiences and evidence-based research whereby two goals are sought after in our counselling services: (physical health) doing things that are good for you and (mental health) feeling good about one's self. We pursue these two goals with a psycho-educational approach to assess and better understand the *unpleasantness* our clients are experiencing as well as their *character strengths* they possess to grow. Once we have a better understanding of the unpleasantness and character strengths of our clients (what we call the *puzzle*), we then proceed with the techniques, tools and resources of PPT and CBT (what we call *problem solving*) whereby our clients can then begin practicing *optimistic thinking*, engaging in *healthy behaviors*, and ultimately experiencing *pleasant feelings*. In short, we help our clients deal with life's challenges realistically, to better understand the consequences of their choices, and how to achieve and sustain well-being.

SJCS vision is "to become recognized and valued in the community-at-large as a preferred resource for personal growth and counselling with individuals, families, schools and organizations in need." Hong Kong as Asia's World City because of its global role in trade and commerce has increasingly over the years recognized the value counselling can provide for its multi-cultural residents to strike a healthy balance between work and life. Today at **SJCS** we employ *Quality of Work-Life* programs (QWL) for working adults and organizations to strengthen Hong Kong's families and local communities **resilience** so our city can continue to be a pleasant place to live and work in. As a result of our renewed vision, we now provide well-being programs for teachers, healthcare professionals, academics, schools, secondary college students, counsellors and interested adults so that Hong Kong's happiness and well-being index continues to grow in a *positive* direction.

Our Duty to Care

St. John's Counselling Service Duty to Care model focuses on providing an affordable, safe, highly professional and easy access mental health care system that co-ordinates with various Hong Kong medical practitioners in providing services for workplace stress, eating disorders, grief, depression, substance abuse, anxiety and sleep disorders, anger management, career counselling, obsessive-compulsiveness (OCD), ADHD and other mental health concerns. We also provide referral services to drug rehab services, family medicine, psychiatry, pediatrics and OB-GYN practitioners as well as nutritionists, speech and occupational therapists.

Adhering to the standards of care by the American School Counselors Association, American Psychological Association and the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy, **St. John's Counselling Service** practices continuous quality assurance (QA) reviews of the counselling services being provided to our clients so we continue to meet and/or exceed best practice standards in healthcare models we subscribe to.



St. John's Cathedral Counselling Service

Our Services

1. Academic Counselling (Children, Teens & Adults):

On-site

As a long-standing professional member of the *American School Counselor Association* (ASCA), *St. John's Counselling Service* ensures that our on-site school counsellors are professionally qualified and prepared to meet the character building, personal - social development, harm prevention, career planning and improving academic achievement themes facing today's students. Our school counsellor team is comprised of bachelor and master degree level professionals with qualifications in school-based art therapy, play and sand therapy, school nursing, psychological testing, general 1:1 counselling, group counselling, co-parenting, family counselling and substance abuse testing - treatment.

"All that is valuable in human society depends upon the opportunity for development accorded the individual."

Albert Einstein



Off-campus

St. John's Counselling Service also provides counselling services for children, teens and adult students at our Central - Hong Kong centre during daytime, after school hours and weekends. Our off-campus counsellors are highly academically qualified, well trained and experienced in dealing with social skills, sibling rivalry, bullying, mood and anxiety disorders, self-harm, eating disorders, ADHD, Internet addiction, grief and divorce counseling, low self-esteem, sexuality, substance abuse and other developmental - academic challenges students face.

Our off-campus counsellors use a variety of counselling techniques to include art therapy, play and sand therapy, Skype - Internet counselling, small group sessions, co-parenting, family counselling, positive psychology (PPT) and CBT. Each counselling session focuses on teaching our clients how to improve their problem solving and communication skills, better understand how emotions influence behaviors and ways to reframe their harmful thoughts into positive self-talk. We also provide co-parenting and positive parenting programs to sustain a child's growth in counselling.

Medium of Counselling:

English, French, Chinese, Spanish, German, Japanese, Korean



2. Client Counselling (Children, Teens & Adults):

St. John's Counselling Service has a team of over 32 counsellors from the UK, Australia, France, Germany, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, India, Central America, U.S., Canada, Hong Kong, and Singapore that provides a growth-focused counselling model using CBT, Positive Psychology (PPT) and Imago relationship counselling techniques. As a professional member of several professional internationally recognized associations, our counselling is grounded in evidence-based, professional, action-oriented and caring principles that ensure our clients experience a safe and empowering environment. In short, one of the key reasons for our continued success since 1977 is the focus and attention we place on the counselling relationship between client and counsellor.

Our services include pre-marital counselling (for all religious and non-religious couples), counselling for depression, anxiety, PTSD, substance abuse, grief, post partum depression, career and executive coaching, sexuality, stress and anger management, marital - relationship counselling, parenting, family planning, sexual abuse, ADHD, HIV, and other life challenges.

Counselling is by appointment only, each session is 50 minutes long, and all matters discussed in counselling are private and confidential. It is not uncommon for our clients to receive worksheets, "homework" and other readings to further support their growth and change.

Counselling is open to all Hong Kong residents and visitors regardless of race, gender, religion or faith, marital status, income and sexual identity. Our centre is open seven days a week in a safe, modern, warm and comfortable setting located in the centre of Hong Kong.

Medium of Counselling:

English, Mandarin, Spanish, French, German, Korean, Japanese, Cantonese

3. Industrial-Organization Counselling:

St. John's Counselling Service Industrial-Organization counselling services team is led by our Executive Director who has over 30 years of working with NGO's, SME's and world-class organizations in areas of human capital development, talent succession planning, stress management, team building, balance scorecard, TQM, change management, strategic management and work-life balance. Our service includes workshops and employee training, facilitating team meetings, crisis intervention, and employee-assistance programs in areas of substance abuse, workplace trauma, mental health services and relocation counselling.

Medium of Counselling:

English, Mandarin, Spanish, German, Cantonese, Korean, Japanese



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Our Counselling Value

1. Our Fee Structure:

As one of the oldest charities in Hong Kong, our counselling fees are one of the most affordable in the region, based on a sliding fee scale that considers several factors when setting the affordable fee. We also work closely with local and international insurance providers for reimbursements.

In counselling, there is no quick fix. Understanding the presenting issues (accurately) and then resolving those issues (effectively) takes time. Hence, our sliding fee scale is structured so that the fee is not only affordable, but our sliding fee scale also ensures that the counselling goals can be realistically set and achieved at each client's pace for optimal learning and sustaining change.

We also provide special pre-paid counselling packages that are discounted for those who desire a hassle free, expedient come and go appointment process.

2. Our Community Outreach:

St. John's Cathedral Counselling Service is an active member in the community with our highly recognized pro-bono presentations at workshops, seminars, open forums and guest presentations at such events as Parent-Teacher Associations. Our topics have included Internet addiction, substance abuse, teen sexuality, effective parenting, positive psychology, child protection - child abuse, preparing children for divorce, work-life balance, relationship skills, planning for retirement, stress management, managing depression, eating disorders, and numerous other topics.

St. John's Cathedral Counselling Service also provides mental health referral and crisis response services to global employee assistance programs (EAP's) and international medical service providers such as Bumrungrad Hospital (Thailand), ComPsych and International SOS.

3. Our Research and Development Activities:

St. John's Cathedral Counselling Service is committed to continuously seeking new ways to improve upon the counselling programs and services for our clients. We review evidence-based research that comes forth from noted medical centres, universities and mental health organizations from around the world to ensure we remain up-to-date with the art and science of counselling. Our *Parenting the Developing Brain* for parents and families and our *Positive Psychology Therapy (PPT) for Depression* are two examples of how we constantly improve upon our services for our clients from best practices that arise from healthcare research globally and in Hong Kong.

4. Our Academic Activities:

St. John's Counselling Service's recognition for providing professional and culturally sensitive counselling in the community has been recognized by various international and Hong Kong universities as the preferred internship site for students studying counselling and psychology. We provide internship placements for *Monash University*, *Australia College of Applied Psychology*, and *University of New England* from Australia, *Alliant University* (U.S.), *Hong Kong University*, *Hong Kong Polytechnic University*, *Hong Kong Baptist University* and others. Interns study under the guidance of **St. John's Counselling Service's** Executive Director and receive training and supervision by way of Positive Psychology and CBT principles and practices in helping Hong Kong residents achieve and sustain well-being.



The University of Hong Kong

5. Our Affiliations:

As an Organizational Member of **BACP (British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy)** we are bound by its Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy and the Ethical Guidelines for Researching Counselling and Psychotherapy to ensure our counselling care standards met and exceed those of BACP. **St. John's Counselling Service** is also a professional member with the **American School Counselor Association (ASCA)**, **American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE)**, **National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers (NAATP)** and the **National Council for Social Studies (NCSS)** that further strengthen our values and behaviors as a safe, caring, and professional counselling centre.

Overall our memberships with internationally recognized professional associations provides us direct access to up-to-date research, comprehensive healthcare resources and the most effective counselling techniques for our clients. As Henry James once said, "Three things in human life are important: The first is to be kind. The second is to be kind. And the third is to be kind." We trust you will find **St. John's Counselling Service** a kind, safe, affordable and caring place to pursue your health and happiness.

