

Conjoint Counselling is Incompatible with Domestic and Family Violence

It is not possible to use conjoint counselling (counselling undertaken by two or more individuals in the same session) whilst domestic or family violence is being used in the relationship. Domestic and family violence can take many forms including physical abuse, verbal abuse, social control, financial abuse, damage to property, psychological manipulation, neglect, and more.

Who is to say that domestic or family violence is present?

Any person who feels unsafe in the presence of another person in a relationship has the right to say how they feel and name their experience as being abusive.

Individual counselling may be used to help recipients of abuse

1. Recognise that the abuse is never their fault.
2. Access emotional support.
3. Access resources and make arrangements to secure their safety and the safety of vulnerable others who may depend upon them.

Individual counselling may be used to help users of abuse

1. Recognise and accept sole responsibility for their abuse.
2. Do whatever is needed to ensure that further abuse cannot occur.
3. Develop an understanding of their patterns of abuse and the effects that their abuse has had upon others.
4. Develop ways of thinking and behaving which do not lead to further abuse.
5. Develop and offer a well-formed apology for the effects of their past abuse, without the expectation that the apology will be accepted, or that forgiveness will follow. A well-formed apology will specify what abuse has occurred, acknowledge personal responsibility for the abuse and the effects it has had upon those abused.

When can conjoint relationship counselling commence?

Conjoint relationship counselling can commence when the person who has been abused believes that they are no longer at risk of abuse, and that they have the ready means of withdrawal and protection from further abuse, should it reoccur.