

# CHOICES

*Vancouver Island Counselling*  
vancouverislandcounselling.com

## Growth & Reflection

Spring is a time for growth, and similarly, addressing the elephant in the room can be seen as a form of personal or collective growth. Acknowledging the problem may open the door to solutions, just as spring opens the door to new beginnings in nature.



**February/March 2025 Edition**

### **Exploring the Importance of Consistency in Therapy and the Challenges of Missed Appointments**

Mental health is an essential part of our overall well-being, and therapy or counseling can be a vital resource for navigating life's challenges. Whether dealing with anxiety, depression, stress, relationship issues, or simply seeking personal growth, counseling appointments are a key tool in the healing and self-discovery process. However, it's not uncommon for individuals to miss or cancel these appointments. Understanding the impact of missing or cancelling sessions and how to manage these situations is informative for both clients and therapists.



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#### **Vancouver Island Counselling**

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At Vancouver Island Counselling, we appreciate all reasons that people cancel. No Showing an appointment often indicates a level of stress/forgetting, or avoiding the value of self reflection, we are naming this to bring awareness to this occurrence and highlight that people appreciate the opportunity to come to counselling.



## Common Reasons People Miss or Cancel Counselling Appointments

1. **Life Circumstances** Life is unpredictable, and sometimes unexpected events or emergencies arise, making it difficult to attend a session. Illness, family emergencies, or sudden changes in work schedules can disrupt even the best-laid plans.
2. **Emotional Avoidance** Therapy can sometimes bring up difficult emotions. If a person feels overwhelmed by the process or is struggling with anxiety or depression, they may avoid attending sessions to evade the emotions or conversations that therapy will bring to the surface.
3. **Miscommunication or Forgetfulness** In some cases, clients miss counselling sessions simply because of miscommunication or forgetting the scheduled time. This can happen due to busy schedules, a lack of reminders, or simple oversight.
4. **Perceived Lack of Progress** Clients may feel that therapy is not helping or that they haven't made significant progress, which can lead them to cancel future sessions. This perception can often be based on unrealistic expectations or short-term frustrations that may not reflect the true trajectory of the therapeutic process.

## How to Manage Missed or Canceled Counselling Appointments

1. **Communicate with Your Therapist** If you find that you need to cancel or reschedule an appointment, be sure to inform your therapist as early as possible. Many therapists have a policy that requires cancellation at least 24 to 48 hours in advance to enhance ability to fill the appointment time, and providing this notice is a sign of respect for their time. Being open and honest about why you need to cancel can also help your therapist understand your situation and offer support or flexibility when needed.
2. **Reschedule Quickly** If you miss an appointment, don't wait too long to reschedule. Therapy is an ongoing process, and staying consistent with appointments will help maintain progress. Many therapists understand that life happens and will work with you to find a new time that works.
3. **Reflect on the Reasons for Missing the Appointment** Take time to reflect on why you missed the session. If emotional avoidance is part of the reason, it may be helpful to discuss this with your therapist. Understanding why you missed the appointment will help you work through any underlying issues and keep moving forward in your therapy journey.



4. **Use Reminders and Planning Tools** Set reminders on your phone or use a planner. This can help minimize the chances of forgetting an appointment. At Vancouver Island Counselling we don't send reminder texts or emails. This is because we want our clients to take initiative in this process to put their appointments in their calendar and commit to their counselling.



5. **Acknowledge the Importance of Therapy** Recognize the value of therapy in your life and make it a priority. If emotional reasons are making it hard to attend, acknowledge that facing these feelings might be a part of the healing process, and working through them is often the very thing that brings long-term benefits.
6. **Be Kind to Yourself** Life can get in the way of even the best intentions, so if you miss an appointment, don't beat yourself up. Be gentle with yourself and remember that therapy is a journey, not a race. If you need help, reach out and continue moving forward with the support of your therapist.



Missing or cancelling a counseling appointment doesn't mean you've failed. Life happens, and sometimes it's difficult to make it to a session. However, it's important to recognize the impact this can have on your therapy and work proactively to manage these situations. Clear communication with your therapist, rescheduling promptly, and reflecting on the reasons for missing appointments will help ensure that therapy remains a valuable and productive part of your life. With patience, commitment, and understanding, you can overcome the challenges that may arise in the therapeutic process.

If you need to cancel your counselling appointment for any reason, please call or email our office staff to let them know. They will promptly pass your message along to your counsellor and can help reschedule your appointment to a time that works better for you.

**Call us at:**

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- Port Alberni – 250-723-7001
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