

Fees

For individuals £50 - £120 for 60 mins
Please see my "New Clients" webpage for
my notes on fees.

Generally, working weekly, especially to start
with is best.

How long will it take?

I work short term, medium term and long
term. Everyone's situation, their needs and
what they want from therapy, is very different,
and can also change. So, this is a hard question
to answer. Through discussing your wishes
and expectations in an initial session it is
possible to make a rough estimate.

Contact:

Please feel free to phone me if you would
like any further information.

If I'm not available, please leave a message
and I will get back to you.

07785 183213

Alternatively e-mail me at -
jim@jim-robinson.co.uk

Or visit my website for more information
www.jim-robinson.co.uk

Need Help?

I see people with a wide variety of issues.
They may be general, like personal
development, loss of self-esteem or meaning,
or for specific difficulties such as

Depression / Anxiety
Stress / Anger
Problems with relationships
Past abuse
Trauma / PTSD
Grief / Bereavement / Illness
Sexuality
Addictions and Compulsions around -

Food

- Over-eating / weight control
- Eating disorders

Substances

- Alcohol / Drugs
- Smoking

Behaviours

- OCD
- Anger
- Self-Harm
- Sex / Porn

I have seen many couples over the years
for Marriage / Couples counselling.

Therapy crosses the boundary between
Science (relief of symptoms) and Art
(exploration of meaning).

Addiction

Jim Robinson

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**Counsellor &
Psychotherapist**

Gestalt / Humanistic / Holistic approach

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Self-destructive Addiction - We all have many "addictions"; problems only arise when they have a self-destructive aspect to them. They come in all shapes and sizes from the slightly annoying to the full blown, anything goes, search for oblivion of severe substance misuse. Besides the use of substances which we take to change our state and escape from ourselves, there are also all the various problem behaviours like gambling, over-work, eating problems, porn / sex, the internet, self-harm, etc., which have essentially the same purpose, i.e. that of avoidance.

With self-destructive addiction it is obvious that there is a process going on that we don't understand, that we can't control and, especially to start with, that we are in denial about. So, the first step is always about acknowledging that a problem exists. This often comes after some crisis, from which we can see how the problem is causing more suffering and pain than the addiction was designed to avoid. But it can also come as a dawning realisation that the way we are living is not what we want for ourselves and that there must be some way out of our vicious circle.

What is going on that drives us towards self-destruction? What are the inner forces that are so strong that our capacity to resist them is so feeble? We carry on repeating what we know, in another part of ourselves, is madness?

Why am I here? - Any slide into addiction comes about from a gradual letting go of the self. Whether its alcohol, drugs, gambling or any other addiction, we let it happen. But why? One thing I am clear about is that we were not born this way, the forces involved come from our past and are the result of our conditioning.

This impulse to self-destruction comes from the part of us that believes that we are "bad", not good enough, not worth caring about, or

from the avoidance of fear. This in turn came from how we were treated. Sometimes it's easy to see the history behind this, sometimes the past is harder to interpret with the injuries coming from a more subtle accumulation of negative forces. The point is though, that there must have been "trauma" of some form, to make us deeply internalise the view of ourselves as being bad, wrong, worthless, so fearful, etc.

Trauma happens when we are overwhelmed by difficult experiences. The self's survival strategy is to bury the pain, to desensitise ourselves and close down. This happens through splitting the connections between our heart, head and body, which means that we stop knowing what we feel, we give up thinking things through and we ignore our bodies.

We then get so used to living this way that we think it 'normal'. We resist looking too deeply at ourselves, denying the possibility of change, because at some level we intuit that this would involve facing the hurt and pain we buried and continue to avoid. In my experience there is nearly always some lack of love, some punishment / abandonment / neglect at the bottom of addiction.

So, what to do? - If we really want to change, the wish needs to have permeated deep down inside us, we need to really have had enough of living the way we are. Then maybe we are prepared for the work of facing what we've been long avoiding. If this is where you are then the next step is to find support to deepen your self-awareness and self-understanding.

How do we become more aware? - With support we can see more about what we are feeling, thinking and how our bodies are tense. With support to attend to our here and now experience in a new and deeper way, we can start to see how our thoughts are influenced by our feelings, our feelings by our

thoughts and how our bodies hold all our tensions. Fear and anxiety are always instantaneously there in the body as tension.

As we start to re-connect our heart, head and body, it enables us to see a little more about what is going on and as this new awareness is digested and integrated, we become a little stronger, which supports more insight and understanding about our insecurity. This new "data" enables us to make sense of the patterns of our experience and see the logic behind our behaviour. As we start to understand our "story", we start to understand the hurt, anger, shame, distress etc., that we've been living with, maybe for most of our lives. It's by attending to this wounded 'victim place' ever more deeply that we can repair ourselves, and increasingly forgive and care for ourselves.

This awareness, understanding and self-forgiveness supports the other essential strand of our development, that of facing the reality of ourselves and of taking responsibility for ourselves and our choices. This is not about blame, which is not real or valuable and is just a projective process of making myself or the other "bad". Blame does nothing to help, whereas taking responsibility for ourselves, however little we manage at any time, is always creative.

We can't 'do' Change - Change is a paradoxical process, we can't change by willing it, especially when there are lots of internal conflict. Life doesn't work that way, it is life that governs these processes, not us. We notice afterwards that we are different and gradually the need for our addiction can naturally diminish. ...

To finish reading this piece please see the "Addiction" page on my website
jim-robinson.co.uk/addiction