

# Top Five Reasons People Do Not Seek Counseling

There will always be times in our lives when we are in need of help from others. Often, in these cases, we are hesitant to reach out and ask for help as we should. We put off the phone call or prolong the waiting, convincing ourselves we will be fine. In this article, we will be reviewing the most frequent reasons why people do not seek counseling help. Our hope is this article can help people reach out for assistance and get the help they need.

1. **Shame.** The number one reason people do not seek help is shame. Shame is an emotion that leads us to feel unworthy, flawed, and deserving rejection. Our adversary, Satan, uses shame to isolate people and keep them from reaching out. Fear of rejection often keeps people from opening up to others and fulfilling the teaching found in *James 5:16*, “*Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.*” God knows how powerful it is for us to share our struggles with another trusted person, whether it is dealing with a temptation or sin or an emotional struggle or relationship. Satan and shame want people to struggle in isolation, internal turmoil, and hiding. Remember Jesus never shamed a downtrodden person. Rather, He had compassion for those dealing with afflictions and those who came to Him humbly confessing their need.
2. **Financial Concerns.** Financial concern is the second most common reason people do not seek help. Counseling is generally a fee-based service and it can be expensive. In addition, many people seeking counseling are also coping with financial stress. Healthcare insurance can sometimes help with covering the cost of counseling. Other times, it is necessary to seek assistance from a family member, parent, or the church. ACCFS uses a sliding-fee scale based on annual income and no one is refused service based on inability to pay. ACCFS can adjust the fee schedule to find an amount that is workable so the person seeking help has some personal investment in the counseling but also is not overburdened with finances. Investing in one’s relationships, mental health, and skills for dealing with life is a high priority. Many times, by delaying getting services early on, the problems get larger and more entrenched thereby leading to more expense in the end.
3. **Myths About Mental Health and Counseling.** Myths such as “only crazy people go to counseling” or “only people who are spiritually weak struggle” or “your problems have to be very severe in order to need counseling” or “I should be able to fix this on my own” only serve to make people fearful of seeking help and to delay someone from reaching out. The reality is most everyone could benefit from counseling at some time(s) in their lives. Many people come to counseling believing they are the only person who is struggling with the issue they are facing. They are amazed to find out the counselor has worked with dozens (if not hundreds) of people dealing with the very same issues.
4. **Outdated information.** As with areas such as technology and medicine, information and understanding of mental health is growing at a rapid pace. Some conditions that were once considered untreatable, even just a few years ago, are now considered treatable. Options available for seeking treatment are also growing. ACCFS clinicians regularly talk to people who were told something by a counselor or physician 20+ years ago about their condition that was true at the time and the client continues to believe it today. While what the client was told at the time may have been true, the intervening years have produced innovations that have opened new possibilities.

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5. **Waiting Too Long.** As with many things, receiving help for a problem earlier when the problem is minor is much preferable to waiting longer when the problem has become more severe and entrenched. However, for many people, they delay seeking treatment wishing things would just get better with time. Whether the struggle is depression, pornography entrapment, or a marital issue, the best option is to seek help earlier. ACCFS highly recommends taking a proactive approach when dealing with mental health and relational issues. Sometimes just a phone call with the counselor to get a recommendation of a book to read or some suggestions of how to cope with a particular issue can make a big difference. For those circumstances when people have waited much too long, Satan often discourages them with things like “things have been this way for so long, why try?”

If you or a loved one has questions about getting help or how to encourage someone to get help, please call ACCFS and schedule a free, 30-minute phone call with an ACCFS counselor. We will gladly listen to your question and help you develop a plan for taking the next steps. Our desire remains to continually love and serve our church family by fulfilling our vision of *Helping the Hurting, Nurturing Hope, and Encouraging Growth*.