**Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)**

OCD is sometimes called the "doubting disease," as sufferers often feel plagued by doubts and uncertainties. There are different types of OCD—some common examples include Checking OCD, Contamination OCD, Rumination OCD, and Religious OCD—but the good news is that all types share common features, and therapy can help begin to address the condition.

OCD is often misunderstood and can be difficult to recognize. People who have never experienced it may associate OCD only with behaviors popularized in TV shows, such as extreme organization or strict routines. While these can be traits for some, OCD can also present in ways that don’t fit these familiar clichés. It’s worth discussing your experiences with a therapist to get clarity.

People with OCD tend to have intrusive thoughts that feel highly significant. Simply having the thought can provoke distress—“Why did I think that? What does it say about me?” To manage the anxiety these thoughts produce, a person with OCD may perform compulsions, or rituals, intended to neutralize the perceived danger. Paradoxically, these compulsions can reinforce the sense of threat, creating a cycle that is hard to break.

OCD can be very debilitating, but help is available. Therapy can guide you toward breaking this cycle and regaining control over your thoughts and life.

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to Issues**

**-- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)**

OCD is a mental health condition that involves persistent, unwanted thoughts (obsessions) and repetitive behaviors or mental rituals (compulsions) performed to reduce the anxiety caused by these thoughts. Many people with OCD recognize that their thoughts and behaviors are excessive, but feel unable to control them.

**Common features of OCD**

* **Obsessions:** intrusive and distressing thoughts, images, or urges that are difficult to ignore. These often involve fears of harm, contamination, or moral concerns.
* **Compulsions:** repetitive behaviors or mental acts performed to reduce anxiety or prevent feared outcomes. These can include checking, washing, counting, or repeating actions.

OCD can interfere significantly with daily life, making simple tasks feel overwhelming and consuming a great deal of time and energy.

**Why therapy helps**   
Effective treatment for OCD usually involves therapy, particularly Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) with Exposure and Response Prevention (ERP). Therapy focuses on:

* Understanding your obsessions and compulsions
* Learning to tolerate the anxiety without performing compulsions
* Developing strategies to reduce the impact of OCD on daily life

OCD can feel isolating, but recovery is possible. Working with a trained therapist can help you regain control, reduce symptoms, and improve your quality of life.

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to Issues**

**Phobias**

Phobias are intense, often overwhelming fears of specific objects, situations, or activities. They go beyond ordinary fear, causing anxiety that can significantly interfere with daily life. Common examples include fears of spiders, heights, flying, or social situations, but phobias can develop around almost anything.

Phobias often develop when a neutral situation or object becomes associated with a sense of danger, sometimes after a distressing experience. Over time, the fear can grow and persist even when the situation is safe. It’s not a matter of “just getting over it”—phobias are genuine psychological responses and can be very disruptive.

People with phobias may go to great lengths to avoid the feared object or situation, which can limit social, professional, or recreational activities. Physically, phobias can trigger symptoms such as rapid heartbeat, sweating, dizziness, shortness of breath, or even panic attacks. Emotionally, sufferers may feel intense anxiety, dread, or a sense of losing control.

Therapy is highly effective in treating phobias. Approaches such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), exposure therapy, or relaxation techniques help reduce anxiety, change unhelpful thought patterns, and gradually confront feared situations in a safe way. With the right support, phobias can be managed or even overcome, helping you regain confidence and freedom in your daily life.

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to Issues**

**Hoarding**

Hoarding is a complex condition where people have difficulty discarding possessions, even items that may seem useless or of little value to others. It goes beyond simple collecting or being untidy—hoarding can seriously affect living spaces, relationships, and overall wellbeing.

People who struggle with hoarding often form strong emotional attachments to their belongings and may feel intense anxiety or distress at the thought of throwing things away. Decisions about possessions can become overwhelming, leading to clutter that can make everyday activities challenging, unsafe, or stressful.

Hoarding is often linked to anxiety, perfectionism, or past experiences, but it is not a sign of laziness or lack of care. Many people with hoarding difficulties are highly conscientious and can feel shame or guilt about their situation.

Therapy can help. Approaches such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) for hoarding focus on understanding the underlying thoughts and feelings, developing skills to sort and organize possessions, and gradually reducing clutter in manageable steps. With support, it is possible to regain control over your living environment and improve your quality of life.

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to Issues**

**Addictions – Psychotherapy**

Addictions can develop in many areas of life. Common examples include alcohol, drugs, nicotine, gambling, social media and technology, sex, self-harm, food, and exercise. Addiction is characterised by a compulsive engagement in rewarding behaviors or substances, even when they lead to negative consequences.

Working with addiction is a highly individual process, as many different factors contribute to it. Therapy may focus on developing new ways of thinking to help manage impulses and reduce the urge to engage in the addictive behavior. It can also provide a safe space to explore difficult emotions and life situations that reinforce the habit, and to build practical strategies for coping.

Group therapy or structured support programmes, such as NA or AA, can also be very helpful. These programmes offer guidance, routine, and peer support, which many people find essential when starting a new life free from active addiction.

Addiction can take an enormous emotional and financial toll on both individuals and their families. Seeking help is vital, and if you are struggling with an addiction, reaching out to someone is the first and most important step.

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to Issues**

**-- Addictions**

Addiction is a condition where a person becomes dependent on a substance, activity, or behavior, despite negative consequences. Common addictions include alcohol, drugs, gambling, gaming, shopping, and even certain patterns of work or eating. Addiction can affect anyone, regardless of age, background, or circumstances.

Addiction often develops as a way to cope with stress, emotional pain, or difficult life situations. Over time, the substance or behavior can take on a central role in a person’s life, impacting relationships, work, and physical or mental health. People struggling with addiction may feel trapped, ashamed, or unable to stop, even when they want to.

The good news is that help is available. Therapy can support recovery by:

* Exploring the underlying causes of the addiction.
* Developing strategies to manage cravings and triggers.
* Building healthier coping mechanisms for stress and emotional challenges.
* Restoring a sense of control, purpose, and wellbeing.

Addiction often requires a combination of support, including therapy, peer groups, and sometimes medical interventions. Recovery is possible, and it’s important to remember that seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to Issues**

**-- Addictions – Psychotherapy**

Addictions can develop in many areas of life. Common examples include alcohol, drugs, nicotine, gambling, social media and technology, sex, self-harm, food, and exercise. Addiction is characterised by a compulsive engagement in rewarding behaviours or substances, even when they lead to negative consequences.

Working with addiction is a highly individual process, as many different factors contribute to it. Therapy can help by:

* Developing new ways of thinking to manage impulses and reduce urges.
* Exploring difficult emotions or life situations that reinforce the habit.
* Building practical strategies for coping and preventing relapse.

Structured support programmes, such as NA or AA, and group therapy can also be very helpful. These programmes provide routine, guidance, and peer support, which many people find essential when starting a life free from active addiction.

Addiction can take a significant emotional, physical, and financial toll on both individuals and their families. Seeking help is vital. If you are struggling with an addiction, reaching out to someone is the first and most important step.

Recovery is possible. With therapy, support, and a commitment to change, it is possible to regain control and build a healthier, more fulfilling life.

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to Issues**

**Bereavement & Loss**

*"Give sorrow words; the grief that does not speak whispers the o'er-fraught heart and bids it break."* – William Shakespeare

The one certainty in life is that we will all face loss. Knowing this does not make the shock and pain of bereavement any easier, nor does it lessen the profound impact a loss can have on our lives. Grief is a deeply personal experience, and everyone experiences it in their own way.

It is difficult to write about bereavement and therapy without mentioning the idea of ‘processing grief.’ You may hear well-meaning friends say that you need to process your feelings. While the phrase can feel mechanical, it points to something important. Therapy can help you begin to make sense of your emotions. Grief often brings a complex mix of feelings: denial, anger, rage, sadness, bargaining, relief, a sense of injustice, deep pain, or even numbness—a hollow place where you feel you ought to feel something.

Therapy provides the space and time to bring these emotions together in a way that fosters clarity. It can help you honour your loved one while also practising self-care during one of life’s most challenging experiences. Therapy allows you to embrace complex emotions as you adjust to your new reality, and to maintain a sense of connection with your loved one in meaningful ways. Grief is difficult to face, and it is important to remember there is no ‘right’ way to feel—only how you feel in each moment. Practical support can also be offered if needed.

Although this page focuses on bereavement, strong feelings of loss can arise from many different circumstances, including the ending of significant relationships or other major life changes.

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to Issues**

**Making Major Life Decisions**

**Decision-Making & Life Choices**

*"In any moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing. The worst thing you can do is nothing."* – Theodore Roosevelt

Making major life decisions can be both exciting and overwhelming. Decisions about career, relationships, relocation, or personal goals often carry significant consequences and can provoke stress, doubt, or anxiety. Feeling uncertain or conflicted is a normal part of the process.

**Understanding the Challenges**

Decision-making can be difficult for many reasons:

* Overthinking or analyzing every possible outcome
* Fear of making the “wrong” choice
* Pressure from family, peers, or society
* Conflicting values or desires
* Past experiences of failure or regret

These factors can create a sense of paralysis or chronic indecision, leaving you feeling stuck or anxious about the future.

**The Impact in Daily Life**

When we struggle with decisions, it can affect multiple areas of life:

* Career stagnation or dissatisfaction
* Strained personal relationships
* Increased stress and worry
* Reduced self-confidence in judgment

Learning how to navigate decisions effectively can help you feel more in control, reduce anxiety, and approach life’s choices with clarity.

**How Therapy Can Help**

Therapy provides a supportive space to explore your options and the emotions connected to them. Work in therapy may include:

* Clarifying your values, priorities, and goals
* Identifying internal and external influences on your decisions
* Developing strategies to manage uncertainty and fear of failure
* Practising decision-making skills in a safe, reflective environment
* Building confidence in your ability to make informed choices

Through this process, you can approach decisions with greater clarity, confidence, and self-trust, ultimately helping you create a life aligned with your values and aspirations.

**If making major decisions feels overwhelming, support is available.**

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to issues.**

--MAKING MAJOR LIFE DECISIONS

Life is full of moments that call for big decisions—changing careers, moving home, ending or beginning relationships, or committing to long-term plans. These decisions can feel overwhelming, and it’s normal to experience uncertainty, anxiety, or self-doubt.

Making a major life decision is rarely just about logic or facts. Our emotions, values, and past experiences all play a role. Therapy provides a space to explore these influences, clarify what matters most to you, and weigh your options in a balanced way. Together, we can examine fears, expectations, and potential outcomes, helping you move from a place of confusion to one of clarity and confidence.

Therapy can also support you in understanding patterns in your decision-making, addressing indecision, and reducing anxiety that might prevent you from taking action. The goal is not to tell you what choice to make, but to empower you to make decisions that align with your values, needs, and long-term wellbeing.

Major decisions can feel daunting, but with support, reflection, and practical strategies, it’s possible to navigate them with more confidence and self-trust.

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to Issues**

**Career Coaching**

Your career can play a central role in your sense of purpose, identity, and wellbeing. Yet, navigating career choices—whether changing jobs, aiming for promotion, switching fields, or managing workplace challenges—can feel stressful and uncertain.

Career coaching in a therapeutic context provides a space to explore your strengths, values, and long-term goals. Together, we can clarify what you want from your career, identify obstacles that may be holding you back, and develop practical strategies to achieve your objectives. This process often involves reflecting on past experiences, understanding your motivations, and building confidence in your decision-making.

Career coaching is not just about planning next steps—it’s also about supporting your emotional wellbeing as you make changes. Anxiety, self-doubt, or fear of failure are common, and therapy can help you manage these feelings while taking proactive steps toward a fulfilling career.

Whether you are seeking direction, growth, or transition, career coaching can help you move forward with clarity, confidence, and purpose.

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to Issues**

**Executive Leadership Challenges**

Leadership at any level can be highly rewarding, but it also comes with significant pressures and responsibilities. Executives and senior leaders often face complex decisions, high expectations, and the constant need to balance strategic objectives with the wellbeing of their teams. These challenges can take a toll on both professional performance and personal wellbeing.

Working with an executive coach or therapist can provide a confidential space to reflect on these pressures, gain perspective, and explore strategies for effective leadership. This may involve enhancing decision-making, managing stress, improving communication, or navigating complex interpersonal dynamics. We can also focus on maintaining emotional resilience, sustaining motivation, and avoiding burnout—common challenges for high-level leaders.

Therapeutic coaching for executives isn’t just about problem-solving; it’s about helping you lead with clarity, confidence, and authenticity while preserving your own wellbeing. By strengthening self-awareness and emotional intelligence, you can create a more balanced, sustainable approach to leadership and decision-making.

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to Issues**

-- **Executive Leadership**

Executive coaching is a highly effective way for leaders to develop their skills and realise their full potential.

Coaching sessions are goal-focused conversations that offer both challenge and support. They can help you overcome obstacles, build on your strengths, navigate workplace politics, and address any challenges you face in your career. This includes cultivating a leadership mindset as well as developing specific skills, such as public speaking or strategic decision-making.

While executive coaching is popular and widely discussed through books, courses, and programmes, working with a psychotherapist who integrates coaching approaches allows exploration at a deeper level. Often, it is internal conflicts and deeper personal dynamics that hold us back from reaching our goals. I work with individuals directly, including many C-level executives, and I also collaborate with HR departments to provide tailored services for organisations.

**Benefits of Executive Coaching:**

**For Individuals**

* Preparation for role or career changes
* Interview preparation
* Methods for managing stress, change, conflict, or crisis
* Enhancing personal impact and performance
* Identifying solutions to specific work-related challenges
* Increasing openness to personal learning and development

**For Organisations**

* Greater commitment and buy-in from directors and senior managers
* Retaining talent and keeping staff engaged
* Encouraging a more creative approach to business planning
* Improved management of teams
* Building positive relationships across people and departments
* Supporting the adoption of a new organisational culture

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to Issues**

**Relationship Issues**

Relationships, whether personal or professional, are central to our lives. They can bring immense joy, support, and growth—but they can also be a source of stress, conflict, or confusion. Difficulties in relationships are common, and seeking guidance is a positive step toward understanding and improvement.

**Personal Relationships**   
In personal relationships, challenges can arise in many forms: communication breakdowns, unresolved conflict, changes in life circumstances, intimacy concerns, or difficulties with trust. Therapy can provide a safe space to explore these issues, understand patterns in your relationships, and develop strategies to improve connection and communication. We may also explore how past experiences influence your current relationships and work to create healthier dynamics moving forward.

**Professional Relationships**   
Workplace relationships bring their own complexities, including navigating office politics, managing conflict with colleagues, building effective teams, and improving leadership and interpersonal skills. Therapy and coaching can help you approach these situations with clarity, confidence, and emotional intelligence. We focus on practical strategies for communication, negotiation, and conflict resolution, while also addressing the underlying attitudes or beliefs that may affect your professional interactions.

**Benefits of Working on Relationship Issues**

* Improved communication and listening skills
* Healthier personal and professional boundaries
* Greater self-awareness and understanding of others
* Conflict resolution strategies for both personal and workplace situations
* Increased emotional resilience and coping skills

Relationship challenges are a normal part of life, and working with a therapist can help you strengthen connections, reduce stress, and build more fulfilling and sustainable relationships.

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to Issues**

**Bullying**

*"Remember always that you not only have the right to be an individual, you have an obligation to be one."* – Eleanor Roosevelt

Bullying can affect people of all ages—it is not limited to children or teenagers. It can occur at school, at work, at home, and older adults can be particularly vulnerable. In recent years, the rise of technology has led to an increase in cyberbullying, with the constant ability to post and view content creating a serious, pervasive issue.

Bullying can take many forms depending on the context. It may involve verbal threats, intimidation, physical assault, threats to livelihood or wellbeing, or defamation and ridicule—especially common in cyberbullying. A helpful definition of bullying is repeated behaviour intended to harm someone, leaving them feeling isolated or unhappy. The key factor is intent, which distinguishes bullying from casual teasing or banter.

The effects of bullying can be profound. It can undermine confidence, diminish self-esteem, and create emotional distress. Sometimes people may not even realize they are being bullied, instead seeking help for symptoms that stem from bullying, such as social anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, self-harm, or suicidal thoughts.

If you feel you are being bullied, support is available, and you are not alone. Several agencies listed on my Resources page can provide assistance.

**Can therapy help?**

Therapy provides a safe, supportive environment to talk about what is happening without judgement. It offers a space to explore your experiences, understand your options, and develop practical strategies to regain confidence and improve wellbeing.

Therapy may involve:

* Exploring your inner experiences and patterns of interaction with others
* Developing practical strategies to boost confidence
* Reducing negative thinking patterns that keep you feeling stuck
* Accessing practical support when needed

**I think someone I know is being bullied, but they won’t talk about it. How can I tell?**

People who are being bullied often keep it secret to protect friends or family from worry. Some signs to watch for include:

* Withdrawing from social activities or showing general tiredness
* Changes in mood or attitude toward life
* Increased irritability or shorter temper
* Taking more time off school or work due to illness
* Frequent headaches, nausea, or other stress-related symptoms

Here is a very useful site with advice on how to approach someone you suspect is being bullied.

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to issues.**

**--Bullying**

Bullying can occur in many areas of life, from the workplace and schools to online spaces and personal relationships. It can take many forms—verbal, physical, psychological, or digital—and often leaves long-lasting effects on self-esteem, confidence, and emotional wellbeing.

**Understanding the Impact**   
Being bullied can lead to a range of emotional and physical responses, including anxiety, depression, irritability, sleep disturbances, and a diminished sense of self-worth. Even after bullying has stopped, the effects can linger, affecting relationships, work performance, and daily life.

**Therapeutic Support**   
Therapy provides a safe space to process experiences of bullying, explore the impact on your self-esteem and confidence, and develop strategies to cope and rebuild. We work on practical approaches for setting boundaries, asserting yourself, and responding effectively in challenging situations. Over time, therapy can help you regain a sense of empowerment and resilience that bullying may have undermined.

**For Workplace Bullying**   
In professional settings, bullying can involve harassment, intimidation, or unfair treatment. Therapy and coaching can help you navigate these dynamics, manage stress, and identify strategies for resolution or protection, while also supporting your emotional wellbeing.

**Benefits of Support for Bullying**

* Regaining confidence and self-esteem
* Developing assertiveness and coping strategies
* Understanding the psychological impact and processing trauma
* Building resilience for future challenges
* Learning strategies to manage or avoid further bullying

If you are experiencing bullying or are affected by past experiences, it’s important to seek help. You don’t have to face it alone.

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to Issues**

**Domestic Abuse / Violence**

*"The greatest mistake we make is living in constant fear that we will make one."* – John C. Maxwell

Domestic abuse can take many forms, including physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, and financial abuse. It can happen in any type of relationship—between partners, family members, or others—and affects people of all ages, genders, and backgrounds. Abuse is not always visible, and its effects can be both immediate and long-lasting.

**Understanding Abuse**

Domestic abuse is about power and control. It may involve intimidation, coercion, threats, manipulation, or isolation from friends and family. Even subtle forms of emotional or psychological abuse can have a significant impact, leaving the victim feeling anxious, depressed, or unable to trust their own perceptions.

It is important to remember that abuse is never the fault of the person being harmed. Everyone deserves safety, respect, and dignity in their relationships.

**The Impact of Abuse**

Domestic abuse can affect physical health, emotional wellbeing, and social relationships. Victims may experience:

* Anxiety, depression, or post-traumatic stress
* Low self-esteem or feelings of worthlessness
* Physical injuries or chronic health issues
* Social withdrawal and isolation
* Difficulty making decisions or trusting others

Children and young people exposed to abuse may also experience emotional or behavioral difficulties.

**Getting Help**

If you are experiencing domestic abuse, it is important to seek support. Therapy can provide a safe and confidential space to explore your experiences, regain a sense of control, and develop strategies for safety and recovery.

Support may include:

* Developing practical safety plans
* Learning coping strategies for stress and trauma
* Exploring patterns in relationships and building healthy boundaries
* Accessing external resources, such as local support services or helplines

If you are in immediate danger, contact your local emergency services right away. There are also numerous agencies and helplines listed on my Resources page that can provide confidential support and guidance.

**You are not alone. Support is available, and help is possible.**

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to issues.**

**Boarding School Syndrome**

*"We are all shaped by the environments in which we grow up, sometimes in ways we do not fully understand until much later."*

Boarding School Syndrome refers to the long-term emotional and psychological effects experienced by people who grew up in boarding schools, often feeling a lack of consistent parental care or emotional nurturing during formative years. While boarding schools provide education and structure, some individuals may carry unresolved feelings of abandonment, neglect, or emotional distance into adulthood.

**Understanding Boarding School Syndrome**

People affected may experience a range of challenges, including:

* Difficulty forming close, trusting relationships
* Emotional detachment or challenges expressing feelings
* A strong sense of independence or self-reliance that can feel isolating
* Anxiety, low self-esteem, or perfectionism
* Difficulty handling conflict or receiving support from others

The experience is often compounded when early emotional needs were overlooked or when the boarding environment emphasized discipline and achievement over emotional wellbeing.

**The Impact in Adulthood**

Boarding School Syndrome can influence relationships, career, and personal identity. Adults may notice patterns such as:

* Struggling with intimacy or vulnerability in relationships
* Emotional suppression or difficulty recognizing one’s own needs
* Overworking or striving for achievement as a way to cope with inner feelings
* Feeling a persistent sense of “something missing” despite external success

Recognizing these patterns is an important step toward healing and developing healthier coping strategies.

**How Therapy Can Help**

Therapy provides a safe, supportive space to explore the emotional impact of early boarding experiences. Work in therapy may include:

* Identifying and processing unresolved childhood feelings
* Exploring patterns in relationships and emotional responses
* Developing healthier strategies for trust, intimacy, and self-care
* Reconnecting with one’s own emotional needs and sense of identity

Therapy can help transform long-standing patterns and empower individuals to build fulfilling personal and professional relationships.

**If you grew up in a boarding school and feel these experiences still affect your life, support is available.**

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to issues.**

**Confidence & Self-Esteem**

*"No one can make you feel inferior without your consent."* – Eleanor Roosevelt

Confidence and self-esteem are closely linked, yet distinct. Confidence is about believing in your abilities to take on challenges and achieve goals, while self-esteem reflects your sense of self-worth and value as a person. Both are essential for personal wellbeing, healthy relationships, and professional success.

**Understanding Low Confidence and Self-Esteem**

People with low self-esteem or confidence may experience:

* Doubting their abilities or decisions
* Fear of failure or rejection
* Difficulty asserting themselves or setting boundaries
* Negative self-talk or harsh self-criticism
* Avoidance of challenges or new opportunities

Low confidence can develop from a range of experiences, such as childhood upbringing, social pressures, bullying, or repeated setbacks. Over time, unhelpful beliefs about oneself can become deeply ingrained, affecting both personal and professional life.

**The Impact in Daily Life**

Low self-esteem can limit opportunities and affect relationships, career progress, and emotional wellbeing. People may feel stuck, anxious, or overly self-conscious. Conversely, healthy self-esteem and confidence enable individuals to:

* Take risks and pursue goals with resilience
* Communicate clearly and assertively
* Navigate setbacks without losing self-worth
* Build stronger, more fulfilling relationships

**How Therapy Can Help**

Therapy provides a supportive space to explore the roots of low confidence and self-esteem and develop practical strategies to improve them. Work in therapy may include:

* Identifying and challenging unhelpful self-beliefs
* Learning techniques to manage self-criticism and negative thoughts
* Building assertiveness and effective communication skills
* Developing self-compassion and a stronger sense of self-worth
* Practising goal-setting and celebrating achievements to reinforce confidence

Over time, therapy can help you build a more positive relationship with yourself, empowering you to approach life with greater confidence and resilience.

**If low confidence or self-esteem is holding you back, support is available.**

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to issues.**

**-- Confidence & Self-Esteem**

***Causes of Low Confidence***

Many factors can influence the level of confidence and self-esteem we experience. These include genetic or biological factors, life experiences, and current situations that may be triggering low confidence. Therapy often involves exploring all of these influences to gain a clear understanding of what is really affecting your self-esteem.

***Improving Self-Confidence***

In therapy, we use a variety of approaches to help improve confidence levels. This often includes:

* Identifying and addressing negative, self-defeating thoughts, and reshaping them into realistic, positive beliefs that support confidence.
* Exploring the root causes of unhelpful belief patterns that operate ‘under the surface’ and, once understood, making meaningful, lasting changes.
* Building on your existing strengths—which are often more numerous than you realise.
* Practising practical skills such as confident body language, authentic communication, and compassionate, assertive interactions.

Whether you are an executive seeking extra confidence for professional challenges, or someone wanting to overcome persistent low self-esteem in everyday life, therapy can help you develop greater self-assurance and a stronger sense of self-worth.

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to issues.**

**Performance Anxiety**

Performance anxiety can affect anyone, whether in professional, academic, or personal contexts. It often involves feelings of intense worry, fear of failure, or self-doubt before or during situations where you are being evaluated or observed.

***Understanding Performance Anxiety***

Performance anxiety is usually linked to a combination of factors, including past experiences, personality traits, and the pressure you place on yourself to succeed. Physical symptoms—such as a racing heart, sweating, shaking, or difficulty concentrating—can amplify the sense of worry, making it harder to perform at your best.

***How Therapy Can Help***

Therapy provides a safe space to explore and understand the causes of your anxiety. Approaches may include:

* Identifying and challenging negative self-talk and unrealistic expectations.
* Developing practical strategies to manage anxiety in high-pressure situations.
* Practising relaxation and grounding techniques to reduce physical symptoms.
* Building confidence through preparation, rehearsal, and mindset shifts.

Whether you experience anxiety in public speaking, exams, sports, or other performance situations, therapy can help you manage your nerves and perform with greater ease and confidence.

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to Issues.**

**Public Speaking Difficulties**

Many people find public speaking challenging, whether it’s presenting at work, speaking at events, or leading meetings. Feeling nervous before speaking in front of others is very common, but for some, it can become a persistent source of stress or even anxiety that impacts performance.

***Understanding Public Speaking Anxiety***

Difficulties with public speaking often stem from a combination of fear of judgment, perfectionism, past experiences, and self-doubt. Physical symptoms—such as sweating, trembling, a racing heart, or a shaky voice—can amplify anxiety and make speaking feel even harder. Over time, avoidance of speaking situations can reinforce the fear.

***How Therapy Can Help***

Therapy provides a supportive environment to explore and address the root causes of public speaking anxiety. Approaches may include:

* Challenging self-critical thoughts and unrealistic expectations.
* Learning techniques to manage anxiety and calm the body before and during speaking.
* Practising confident posture, voice projection, and presentation skills.
* Gradual exposure to speaking situations to build comfort and confidence.

With tailored strategies and practice, it is possible to reduce fear, perform more effectively, and even enjoy the opportunity to communicate in front of others.

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to Issues.**

**Social Anxiety & Social Situations**

Social anxiety can affect anyone and may show up in a variety of everyday situations—meeting new people, attending social events, speaking in groups, or even casual interactions at work or in public. For some, these situations trigger intense worry, self-consciousness, or fear of judgment.

***Understanding Social Anxiety***

Social anxiety often comes from a combination of learned experiences, personality traits, and patterns of thinking. Common experiences include:

* Overanalyzing past interactions and worrying about future ones.
* Fear of embarrassing oneself or being negatively evaluated.
* Physical symptoms such as sweating, shaking, blushing, or a racing heart.
* Avoidance of social situations, which can reinforce anxiety over time.

It’s important to remember that social anxiety is not a personal weakness—many highly capable and successful people experience it.

***How Therapy Can Help***

Therapy provides a safe, supportive space to explore and address social anxiety. Approaches may include:

* Identifying and challenging unhelpful thought patterns that fuel fear of judgment.
* Learning practical skills for managing anxiety in social situations.
* Gradual exposure to feared situations, helping you build confidence step by step.
* Exploring underlying experiences or beliefs that contribute to social anxiety.

With guidance and practice, it is possible to engage more comfortably and confidently in social situations, improving both personal and professional relationships.

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to Issues.**

**Sports Psychology**

Sports psychology focuses on the mental and emotional aspects of athletic performance, helping athletes of all levels achieve their potential while maintaining balance and wellbeing.

***Why Mental Training Matters***

Athletic performance is influenced not only by physical skill and fitness but also by mindset, focus, and emotional regulation. Pressure, fear of failure, self-doubt, and performance anxiety can affect even the most talented athletes. Sports psychology addresses these mental challenges to improve consistency, confidence, and enjoyment of the sport.

***How Therapy and Coaching Can Help***

Support in sports psychology may include:

* Developing concentration, focus, and mental resilience under pressure.
* Managing performance anxiety, stress, and pre-competition nerves.
* Building confidence and a positive mindset to enhance performance.
* Improving motivation, goal-setting, and commitment.
* Coping with injury, recovery, and setbacks.
* Maintaining a healthy balance between sport, personal life, and mental wellbeing.

Therapy provides a space to explore the psychological factors influencing performance, while coaching techniques can translate insights into practical strategies on and off the field.

Whether you are a professional athlete, amateur competitor, or someone seeking to improve mental fitness for sport, sports psychology can support your growth and help you perform at your best.

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

**Back to Issues.**

**Seeking Deeper Enjoyment and Fulfillment in Life**

Many people reach a point where life feels routine, busy, or even empty, despite external achievements or comforts. Seeking deeper enjoyment and fulfillment is about reconnecting with what truly matters to you and cultivating a sense of meaning, purpose, and joy in your everyday life.

***Understanding Fulfillment***

Fulfillment often comes from aligning your actions, relationships, and values with your true self. It may involve exploring questions such as:

* What brings me genuine happiness and satisfaction?
* Am I living in a way that reflects my values and passions?
* What barriers or habits are preventing me from feeling truly alive?

These reflections can reveal areas where change or growth may lead to a richer, more satisfying life.

***How Therapy Can Help***

Therapy can support you in:

* Clarifying your personal values and what gives your life meaning.
* Identifying unhelpful patterns or obstacles that limit your sense of fulfillment.
* Exploring ways to cultivate joy, creativity, and connection in everyday life.
* Setting goals that reflect what truly matters to you, not what others expect.
* Developing practical strategies to integrate more balance, pleasure, and purpose into your routines.

Working with a therapist provides a safe, supportive space to explore these questions, gain clarity, and take steps toward a life that feels more authentic, rewarding, and joyful.

Whether you’re seeking greater happiness, personal growth, or a renewed sense of purpose, support in this area can help you reconnect with the life you want to live.

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

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**Motivation & Goal Achievement**

Achieving goals—whether personal, professional, or athletic—requires more than just desire; it depends on focus, persistence, and a clear understanding of what drives you. Motivation is the engine that keeps us moving forward, even when challenges arise.

***Understanding Motivation***

Motivation can be influenced by internal factors, such as personal values, ambitions, and self-belief, as well as external factors, like support systems, recognition, or accountability. When motivation wanes, it can be frustrating and confusing, but understanding the underlying causes can help reignite your drive.

***How Therapy and Coaching Can Help***

Working with a therapist or coach can help you:

* Clarify your goals and break them into manageable, actionable steps.
* Identify and overcome internal barriers, such as self-doubt, procrastination, or fear of failure.
* Build strategies to maintain focus and sustain motivation over time.
* Develop practical habits and routines that support consistent progress.
* Explore your values and passions to ensure your goals are personally meaningful.

Therapy and coaching provide guidance, accountability, and encouragement, helping you stay committed and resilient as you work toward what matters most to you.

Whether your goals are career-related, personal development, or lifestyle-focused, support in motivation and goal achievement can help you turn aspirations into reality.

**Contact NorthPlace today.**

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