



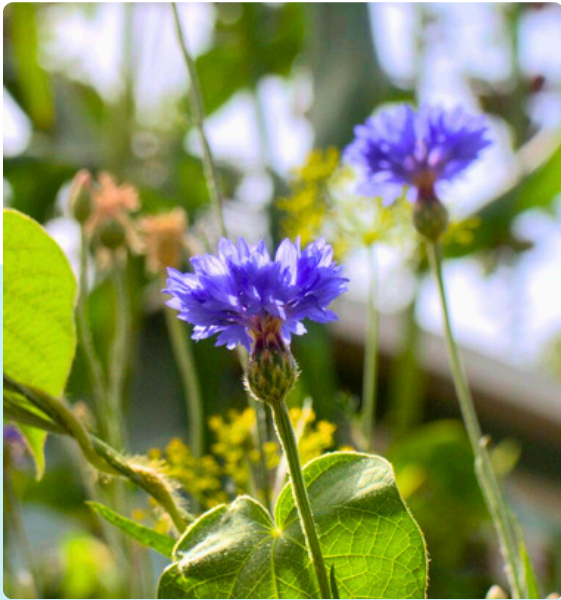
# **MINDFULMOMENTS**

**WYIM Newsletter**

November 2025

**A Journey to Gratitude  
and Stronger Connections**





# What to Expect

This month, we invite you to step off the treadmill of "perfect" and journey into the powerful world of gratitude and authentic connection. We'll explore how setting clear boundaries can actually deepen your relationships, and we'll take you behind the curtain of the counselling room to show how we listen for the "unsaid" to help you discover quiet moments of strength. Finally, learn our "Weaving a New Story" technique—a simple exercise to shift your focus from stress to resilience. Let's set down the shield of perfectionism and embrace a more peaceful story.

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## OUR BLOG

**The Power of 'Enough':** Finding Peace Through Gratitude for Where You Are



# The Listening Room:

## The Quiet Power of Gratitude: A Counsellor's Reflection

In our busy lives, the word gratitude often pops up, usually sounding like a cheerful command: "Be grateful!" But as a counsellor, I've seen that the journey to truly embracing gratitude is far more subtle and profound than simply saying "thank you." It's a nuanced path, especially when we're struggling.

### The Story of Eleanor

Eleanor came to counselling feeling overwhelmed, a constant low-grade dread despite having a comfortable life. When the subject of gratitude came up, she resisted: "How can I be grateful when I feel like this? It feels like an insult to my actual feelings." This led to the first crucial nuance: **Gratitude isn't about denial.** It's not a filter to hide sadness; it's a lens through which to see reality.

- It's not saying, "I'm grateful for my job, so my anxiety about my workload doesn't matter."
- It's not saying, "I'm grateful for my family, so my sadness should disappear."

Instead, we worked on viewing gratitude as a lens through which to see her reality, not a filter to hide it.



For Eleanor, the breakthrough came when we moved away from the pressure of being grateful for the "big things" and focused on the tiny anchors that offered moments of stability each day. She started small, noticing and acknowledging specific, tangible experiences: The simple warmth of her first cup of tea, a brief comfort against the morning chill. The five minutes of quiet after the rush, just watching the kettle steam before starting work.

The fact that she had found the courage to show up for her counselling session, even when staying home felt easier.

This practice wasn't about manufacturing a cheerful feeling; it was about the honest acknowledgement of a truth: "Right now, in this moment, this is okay, and I am receiving something good." We often called this process 'noticing the light between the clouds'—a gentle shift in focus that allows the brain to register safety and positivity, even amidst ongoing challenges.

### How Counselling Can Help:

**Offering a Safe Space:** The room allows for both deep sadness and budding gratitude. By not judging the difficult emotions, we make room for the positive ones to be felt authentically.

**Challenging Beliefs:** We explored why gratitude felt hard. Eleanor's constant striving made her feel she hadn't earned anything good. Counselling helped her challenge this, affirming she was worthy of warmth.

**Encouraging Consistency:** Gratitude is a daily practice, like a simple Gratitude Compass—identifying three specific things each day. This wires the brain to spot the good, shifting focus away from deficit.



# How Setting Boundaries Creates Space for True Connection

The word "boundary" can sometimes sound cold or restrictive. We often associate setting boundaries with rejection, arguing, or shutting people out. However, as a counsellor, I often see the opposite to be true: healthy boundaries are the foundation of genuine, deep connection. They don't push people away; they create the necessary space for meaningful, honest relationships to flourish.

Many of us were raised to believe that saying 'no' is selfish, or that love means always putting others' needs first. This belief system leads to what I call the "Obligation Trap." When we consistently say 'yes' out of obligation, fear of conflict, or a desire to be liked, two damaging things happen. First, resentment builds. We feel drained and increasingly angry at the person we are trying to please, which silently poisons the relationship. Second, the connection becomes shallow. The interaction is based on an assumed expectation (your giving) rather than true mutual desire. The person connecting with the 'people-pleaser' is connecting with a role, not the authentic person. A lack of boundaries doesn't foster closeness; it breeds resentment and inauthenticity.

A boundary is simply a statement of your needs and limits. It clarifies what you are, and are not, responsible for in a relationship. These limits can be about time and energy ("I can only spend one hour on this project"), emotional capacity ("I need to step away from this conversation now, as the shouting is too much for me"), or even physical space ("I need my own space in the mornings before we talk about the day ahead"). The crucial shift is seeing these limits as acts of self-respect, not acts of war.

When you set a boundary, you protect your energy and time. This saved energy is then available to give genuinely. Think of it like this: when you are exhausted and reluctantly agree to meet a friend, the connection will be poor because you are distracted and irritable. When you say 'no' to the reluctant meetup, rest, and then later offer a confident, "Authentic Yes," the interaction is entirely different. You are present, engaged, and genuinely happy to be



there. True connection happens in that moment of authenticity. The other person feels respected because they are engaging with someone who is willingly present, not reluctantly performing.

Setting boundaries is often scary because it can trigger deep-seated fears of abandonment or conflict. This is where counselling provides invaluable support. We can explore why saying 'no' feels dangerous—does it link back to childhood experiences or challenge your self-worth?

We then help you practice the language of calm, clear self-expression. By creating boundaries, you define the edges of you. This clear self-definition allows for connections that are respectful, sustainable, and deeply authentic.



## Latest Blog

# The Power of 'Enough': Finding Peace Through Gratitude for Where You Are

Here at With You In Mind Counselling in Rustington, we spend a lot of time talking about change. Whether you're looking to overcome anxiety, strengthen a relationship, or simply feel more at peace, the goal is always forward movement.

Yet, there is a powerful truth that often gets overlooked in our rush to "fix" ourselves: The most sustainable, meaningful change begins with a deep sense of acceptance and gratitude for where you are right now.

This is the power of 'enough'. It's not about giving up on your .....[READ MORE](#)

# Opening the Door to Counselling

When people imagine counselling, they often picture a continuous, serious conversation. While talking is vital, a counsellor's most powerful tools often lie not in the questions they ask, but in the silence they hold and the words they don't say. Demystifying this process reveals how counselling goes far beyond simple chat; it's about listening for what's unsaid.

## The Art of Listening for the "Unsaid"

In everyday life, we're fantastic at filling silence. A gap in conversation feels awkward, so we rush to fill it. In the counselling room, we resist that urge. A counsellor's job is to listen not just to your story, but to the hesitations, the shifts in tone, and the subjects you avoid. These are clues to the "unsaid"—the emotions, fears, or truths that haven't yet found a voice. For example, a client might talk at length about their relationship, but consistently change the subject when their childhood is mentioned. The counsellor notices this consistent avoidance. The "unsaid" here isn't a secret; it's a protected, perhaps painful, area of experience the client isn't yet ready to face. By noticing this pattern and gently reflecting it back, the counsellor helps the client become aware of the barriers they've unconsciously built.

## The Strategic Power of the Pause

Silence—the pause—is a deliberate and powerful technique in counselling. It is not empty space; it is space for self-reflection and insight. When a client

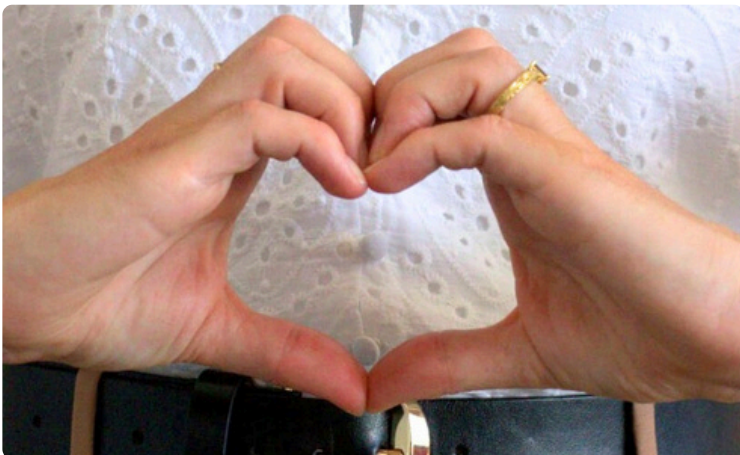
shares something difficult, a counsellor may not immediately jump in with a question or a response. Instead, they pause. This pause serves several critical functions. It creates room for feeling, allowing the client to truly feel the weight of their own words. It encourages depth, signalling to the client, "What you just said is important. Don't rush past it," prompting them to elaborate or uncover a related emotion they might otherwise suppress. Crucially, it fosters ownership: the silence puts the focus back on the client, encouraging self-discovery, which is always more impactful than being told what to think. The counsellor holds this space steady, creating an environment where the client can safely explore their own inner landscape without pressure.



## The Counsellor as a Mirror

The counsellor also acts as a "mirror." In our daily rush, we often overlook our own strengths, small victories, and moments of genuine connection. The counsellor, through focused attention, gently reflects these back to you.

This reflective process brings moments of gratitude or resilience that might otherwise be missed, allowing you to truly appreciate your own positive capacity. When these moments are foregrounded, you may feel surprise, realising you had previously dismissed a genuine positive experience because it didn't fit your current narrative of struggle. By using the unsaid, honouring the pause, and acting as a mirror, the counsellor helps you move from simply talking about your life to experiencing it with greater self-awareness and self-compassion.





# Our Recommendation

## Ditching the Do-It-All Myth: A Humorous Read for Real-Life Acceptance

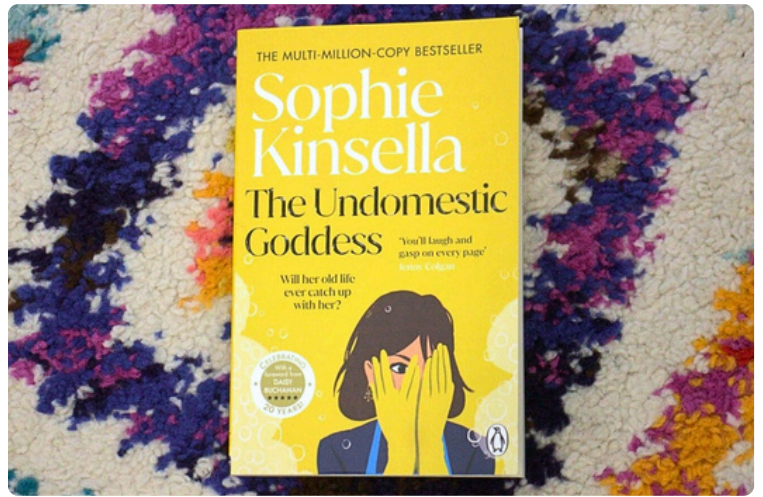
Are you feeling the squeeze of modern life, juggling a perfect career, an immaculate home, and an endless social calendar? You might be carrying a "twenty-ton shield" of perfectionism, thinking it protects you, when in reality, it's just exhausting you. This month, we recommend a laugh-out-loud novel that shines a light on the pressures we put on ourselves: **Sophie Kinsella's *The Undomestic Goddess***.

At With You in Mind, we often help clients explore the gap between the life they think they should be leading and the life they are actually enjoying. This is where *The Undomestic Goddess* offers a surprisingly insightful, yet light-hearted, perspective.

The book introduces Samantha Sweeting, a high-flying, utterly meticulous corporate lawyer whose carefully constructed "perfect" life implodes after a catastrophic career mistake. In her panic, she ends up accidentally taking a job as a live-in housekeeper in a quaint countryside village. The humour comes from the fact that Samantha, who can argue a multi-million-pound merger, cannot boil an egg or work a washing machine.



Resilience is not a grand, heroic gesture, but a series of small, relentless actions. It is the ability to share a moment of quiet peace with a loved one, and to find comfort in the kindness of strangers. It's about discovering that your strength isn't defined by what you



### Key Insights for the Everyday Reader:

**The Freedom of Failure:** This is a powerful, albeit fictional, reminder that sometimes, the biggest breakthroughs come when our carefully constructed lives fall apart. It shows that failure isn't a final destination; it can be a detour to a simpler, more authentic existence.

**Challenging the 'Perfect' Image:** The book brilliantly exposes the myth of the 'do-it-all' woman (or man). Her journey teaches us that chasing a manufactured idea of perfection—be it career success or a spotless home—often comes at the cost of well-being and true connection.

### Finding Joy in Presence and Simplicity:

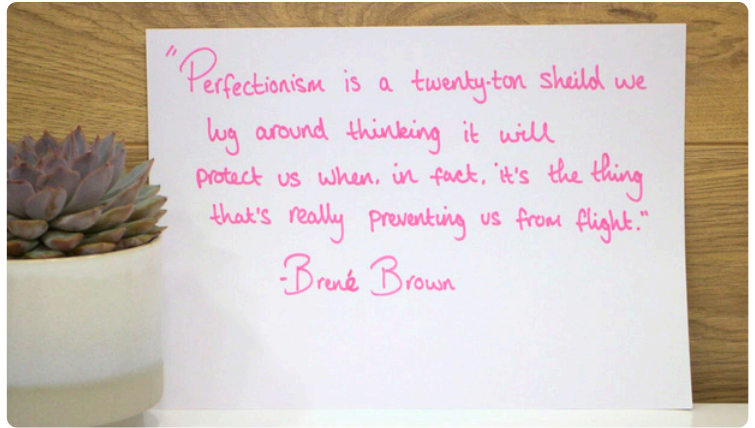
Samantha begins to find joy in basic, everyday tasks and genuine, unforced relationships. This mirrors a key concept in counselling: the importance of being present. By slowing down and focusing on the immediate moment, she discovers that happiness stems from authentic engagement, not relentless achievement.

**Creating Space for True Connection:** Her story reinforces the idea that setting boundaries (by saying no to relentless demands) and dropping the need to be perfect creates the necessary space for true, reciprocal relationships to flourish.

# Thought-full

“Perfectionism is a twenty-ton shield that we lug around thinking it will protect us when, in fact, it’s the thing that’s really preventing us from flight.” – Brené Brown

Perfectionism is a central issue in counselling. It is understood as a heavy, defensive barrier that people carry, mistakenly believing it protects them from failure. Yet, the core therapeutic insight is that this shield actually obstructs personal growth and freedom. In therapy, clients learn to recognise that their relentless pursuit of flawlessness, instead of offering protection, is precisely what weighs them down, limits their potential, and prevents them from leading an authentic life.



## Helpful Tool

### Try the 'Weaving a New Story' Tool

When stressed, our brains focus narrowly, filtering out the positive. This exercise helps you widen that lens, reminding you that even tough experiences hold moments of resilience, joy, and connection.

How It Works:

**Your Old Story:** Briefly write down a recent stressful experience, focusing on the problems and feelings of overwhelm.

**Find the Hidden Threads:** Look back at that experience and search for small, positive moments you missed:

**Gratitude:** Something small you were thankful for (e.g., a warm cup of tea).

**Connection:** A brief moment you felt connected to someone (e.g., a kind look).

**Strength:** One thing you did that showed resilience (e.g., taking a deep breath).

**Weave a New Story:** Combine these threads into a new, balanced version. This story acknowledges the difficulty but includes the moments of gratitude, connection, and strength.

**The Result:** You create a narrative of resilience instead of just stress, learning to highlight the moments that empower you.



# Urgent Help

If you are experiencing an immediate mental health crisis, feel unsafe, or require urgent help, please contact the following services for immediate assistance:

- **999** for emergency services.
- **NHS 111**: for urgent advice
- **The Samaritans**: Call 116 123 for free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- **Shout 85258**: Text "SHOUT" to 85258 to connect with a trained volunteer for free, confidential crisis support via text, anytime.
- **Your GP**: Contact your GP during surgery hours for an urgent appointment or advice.

Your safety and well-being are the absolute priority. Please do not hesitate to reach out to these services if you need immediate help.

## Contact Us

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