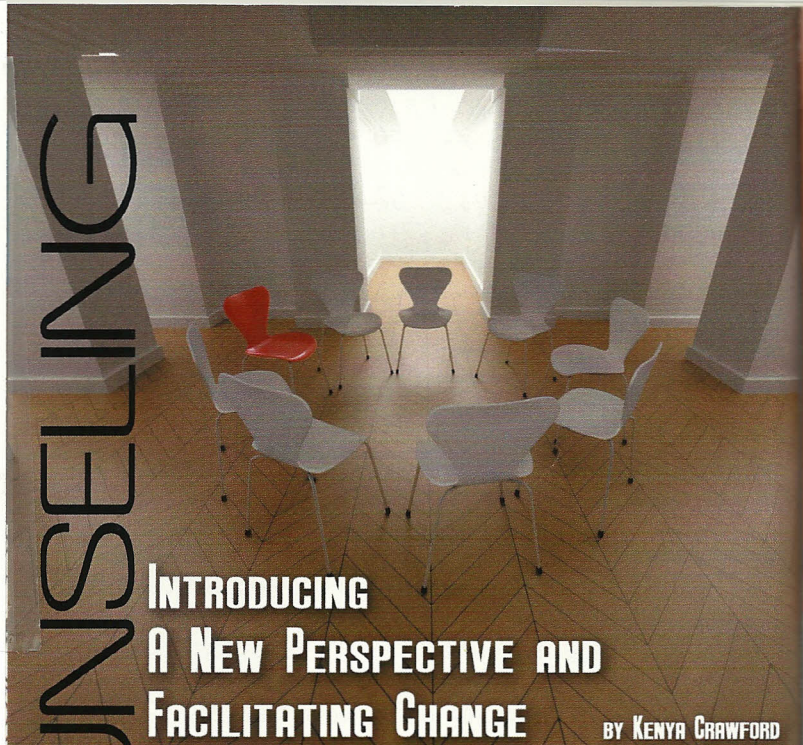


COUNSELING



INTRODUCING A NEW PERSPECTIVE AND FACILITATING CHANGE

BY KENYA CRAWFORD

When most people hear the word “counseling”, they immediately think of long sessions in which they are asked by a psychologist to give an entire autobiography of their lives and to discuss every situation or problem that may concern them. This may be true in some regard; however, there is a specific purpose or goal to be accomplished in counseling. First of all, it must be understood that there are different types of counseling, and understanding one’s needs is necessary in determining the type of counseling services needed. For example, there is legal counseling, credit counseling, marital counseling, pastoral counseling, career counseling, guidance counseling, or mental health counseling and this is just to name a few. Regardless of the type of counseling service needed, the purpose is to bring about a change for the better.

The purpose of counseling is to introduce new perspectives and help individuals learn how to make better decisions and develop new ways of thinking and behaving. Counseling focuses on the goals of the person seeking services. Counseling helps an individual to explore his/her current level of functioning and the changes that must be made to achieve the desired goals. It involves decision-making and change, but only through exploration, goal setting, and action. Any time we are thinking and behaving in ways that are destructive to ourselves and others around us, counseling is necessary. Proverbs 11:14 states, “Where there is no counsel, the people fall, but in the multitude of counselors is safety.” There will always be times when we need guidance to help move us in the right direction, and there may be times when we need more intensive counseling to correct negative thinking and behavioral patterns.

At times, we may even deal with issues that have plagued our families from one generation to the