

TABLE 3.2 Distinguishing features of suitable clients

<b>Suitable clients for psychodynamic counselling and therapy</b>	<b>More suitable for experienced psychodynamic counsellors and therapists</b>	<b>Unlikely to be suitable for psychodynamic counselling and psychotherapy*</b>
recent onset of problems (or of a new problem)	long-standing problems	seen many helpers for only short time, maybe over many years (and/or currently seeing another helper)
possible reasons for problem fairly clear	clear difficulties but no clear reasons for them	very narrowly defined problems (monosymptomatic)
verbalises thoughts and feelings	verbalises, but tends to intellectualise feelings; may be rather passive, but is responsive	cannot express thoughts or feelings verbally, or take initiative in talking; passive and unresponsive
relates, either well or even badly, to at least one other person	unable to form close relationships	no wish to form a working relationship with counsellor or therapist
trusts counsellor; can allow some dependence; tolerates once-weekly sessions	over-dependent; alternatively an inability to trust; may occasionally or for a long time need to be seen more than once weekly	unable to allow any dependency on others; only wants occasional sessions
able to see own contribution to difficulties wish to understand self	narcissistic character, over-concern about self wish for deeper insight than possible in a short-term contract	only blames others wish to be rid of symptoms by 'magic'
does not act out	some acting out but with insight into reasons for it	severe acting out of problems – no insight into reasons for it
desire for change with presenting issues that are ego-dystonic	desire for change, even though some issues may be ego-syntonic	no desire for change
normally well-functioning central ego	weak central ego, but able to use therapist to support ego strength	dependent on high dosage of drugs, even if medically prescribed
can tolerate disturbing feelings and thoughts; central self feels in sufficient control	bizarre and disturbing thoughts and behaviour, but able to recognise this and can manage life day by day	bizarre and disturbing thoughts and behaviour, which make normal functioning difficult

\* Unless accompanied by other therapeutic methods, or conducted by therapists who are very experienced at handling and working with these presenting behaviours