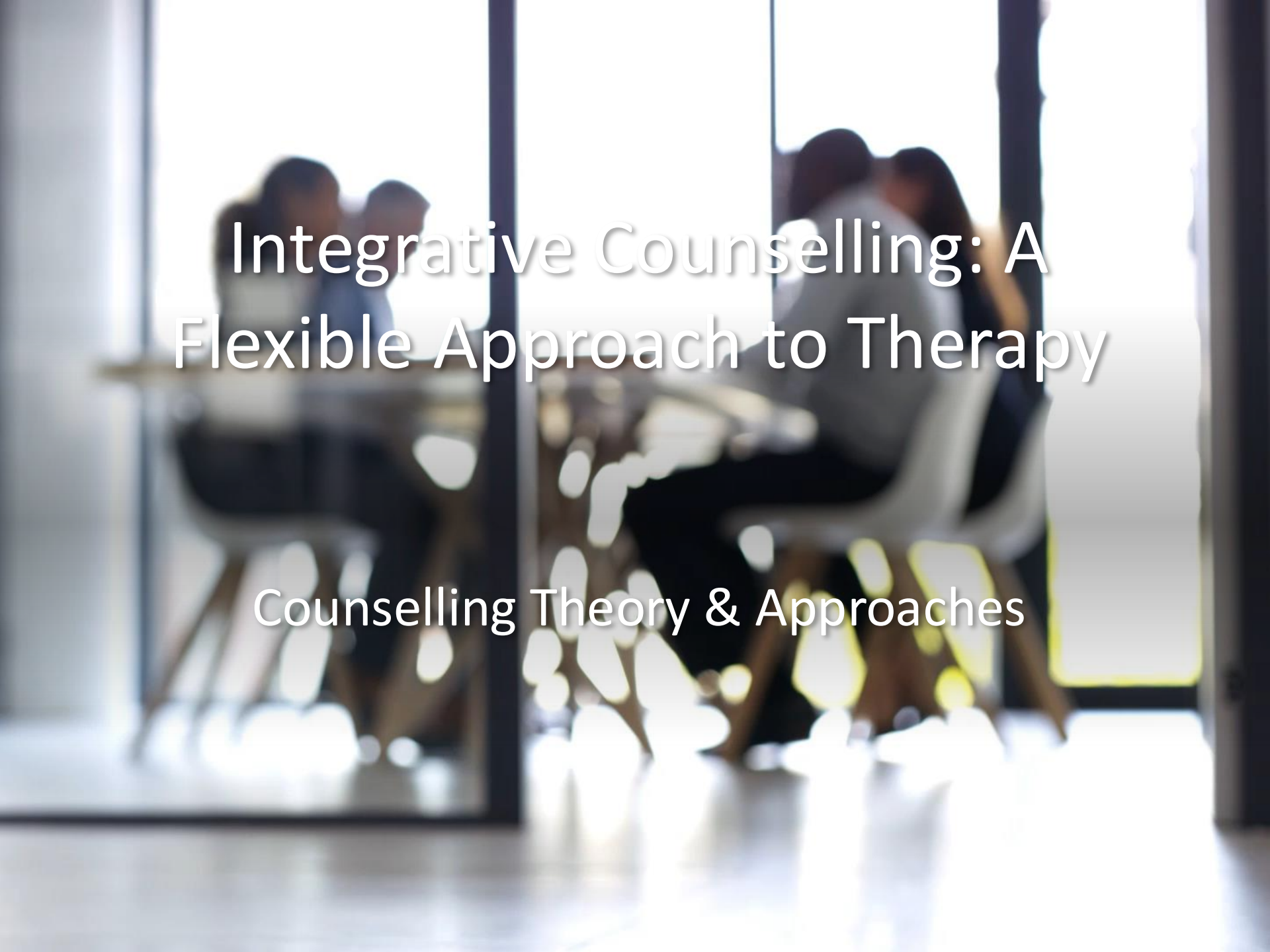


The background of the slide is a blurred photograph of a modern office or meeting space. Several people are seated at long tables, engaged in discussion. The lighting is bright, coming from large windows, creating a professional and collaborative atmosphere. The text is overlaid on this background.

Integrative Counselling: A Flexible Approach to Therapy

Counselling Theory & Approaches

What is Integrative Counselling?

A counselling approach that combines elements from different theories.

Aims to tailor therapy to the individual client's needs.

Emphasises flexibility and responsiveness.

Why Use an Integrative Approach?

No single model fits all clients.

Clients present with diverse experiences, needs, and goals.

Research supports integration for improved outcomes.

Commonly Integrated Theories

- Humanistic (e.g., Person-Centred, Gestalt)
- Psychodynamic (e.g., Object Relations, Attachment)
- Cognitive Behavioural (CBT, REBT)
- Others: Existential, Transpersonal, Narrative



Key Principles of Integration

Holism: Seeing the client as a whole person.

Flexibility: Adapting interventions across sessions.

Responsiveness: Being attuned to the client's preferences, context, and process.

Case
Example:
Working
Integratively

Client with anxiety and
relationship issues:

Start with person-centred
rapport-building

Use CBT to challenge
anxious thoughts

Explore attachment patterns
from a psychodynamic lens

Challenges of Integrative Practice

- Risk of incoherence or theoretical conflict
- Requires deep knowledge of multiple models
- Needs ongoing self-reflection and supervision

Benefits of Integrative Counselling

Greater adaptability

Client-centred

Increased effectiveness

Encourages therapeutic creativity

Pluralism vs Integration

- Integration: Blends theories into a cohesive whole.
- Pluralism: Values different models without forcing integration.
- Client's voice is central in selecting therapeutic methods.

Integrative Counselling in Practice

- Treatment planning
- Use of clinical judgement
- Building a strong therapeutic alliance

Critiques of Integrative Counselling

- Risk of theoretical incoherence or confusion.
- Can lead to 'toolbox' therapy without depth.
- May overlook the importance of therapist's own orientation.
- Needs strong training and supervision to do well.

Limitations of Integrative Approaches

- Not all models are easily compatible.
- Time-consuming to master multiple approaches.
- Clients may be confused if approach shifts too often.
- Ethical concerns if methods are poorly integrated.

Introducing Pluralism in Counselling

- Pluralism respects multiple ways of understanding and practising therapy.
- **Emphasises collaboration with clients on what methods work best.**
- Coined by Mick Cooper and Windy Dryden.



Summary & Questions

Recap key points:

- What is integrative counselling?
- Why it's used
- Benefits and challenges
- Understanding pluralism
- Pluralism

Questions & discussion



A Cultural Lens: Counselling Models

- Many counselling theories originate in Euro-American contexts.
- May not align with collective, spiritual, or community-based worldviews.
- Risk of pathologising culturally normative behaviours.
- Important to critically reflect on cultural assumptions in theory and practice.

Inclusivity, Equality & Power Dynamics in Therapy

- Therapists must be aware of systemic inequalities (e.g., racism, sexism, ableism).
- Power imbalances can silence or disempower clients.
- Building a collaborative, respectful alliance is essential.
- Inclusive practice involves cultural humility, reflexivity, and empathic listening.