



[It's a job centre, but not as we know it...](#)

The unemployed are now being offered counselling when what they really need is a decent job!

Rant by [Jane Turner](#) May 2011

When you're looking for a job and you want a job (to bastardize a line from Morrissey) what you really don't want or need is therapy, especially from a Government agency, or what is optimistically known as Jobcentre Plus.

Not the sort of place I'd ever drop into for a friendly pep-talk and certainly not the place to go if you really are looking for a job, as the few vacancies "on offer" are limited in every possible way.

I was already in no doubt that "therapy culture" was widespread in the UK anyway, as I'd worked in schools for years and witnessed how poor behaviour has been re-categorised as a special need and how low achievement excused by a range of mental disorders. But when I

became unemployed in April this year (due to savage and unjustified council cuts – but that's another story) for the first time in my long working life I found myself in front of a "client support adviser".

In my naivety, all I had intended to do was to "sign on" and receive my entitlement to national insurance credits while doing everything possible to find paid work, but they had different ideas. Putting into place, the newly developed coalition Government strategy and espousing the language of "therapy culture" they offered to "accompany me on my journey" and "join me again later" - at the 11th week to be precise - if I was not successful on my "journey back into work" and to "help me cope" with my circumstances.

This was a language with which I had become familiar in schools and in society more generally, where almost everybody these days it seems has some sort of diagnosis for their behaviour, is receiving counselling for something-or-other or is suffering from a range of loosely-categorised conditions. But even I was a little taken aback at how in an ugly office in a run-down corner of town, new life had been breathed into the administrative procedure of taking a signature off the unemployed and how totally immersed the staff were in the language of the therapist. Unemployment it seems is now a problem of individual psychology and I'm at the root of my own problem!

