

The Role of an Advocate

What is Soul Care at Doxa?

Soul Care is a philosophy of ministry at Doxa that pairs long-term discipleship and care in Small Group with short-term intensive discipleship through Biblical Counseling. We believe that the lasting change God wants to bring about in the life of every believer, regardless of their past or present circumstances, happens in the context of community. This includes the weekly gathering of the church body on Sundays for worship and teaching, then narrows further into a specific group of people you commit to in a small group, and can narrow even further to Biblical Counseling for short-term help through issues such as sin, suffering, and relational conflict.

Who can receive Biblical Counseling at Doxa?

Biblical Counseling is a complement to Small Groups. Therefore, anyone looking to receive counsel needs to be plugged in to a small group. Rare exceptions are made, but when it is, the explicit expectation will be that by the end of the counseling, the person or couple will be in a small group.

What is an Advocate?

An Advocate is a person who volunteers to come alongside the counselee during the counseling process for prayer, involvement in counseling sessions, and lasting partnership to see change take place in the counselee's life.

Who qualifies to be an Advocate?

Ideally, the Advocate will be someone within your small group. If for some reason that is not possible, it needs to be a trusted friend who attends Doxa. This person needs to be a growing disciple themselves and willing to invest time and energy into helping you. They do not need any training in biblical counseling.

I'm the Counselee. How do I find an Advocate?

The first step would be to consider someone you respect and trust in your small group or who you know at Doxa. The second step is to ask them to be your Advocate. The likely third step would be to send them this resource so they can read about the role and decide if they are able and interested to partner with you as an Advocate.

What does an Advocate do in Biblical Counseling?

The most important work the Advocate does is the work of support, prayer, listening, encouraging, and finally, assisting in helping lasting change take place. This final piece varies with each counseling case. At the least, it will involve helping the Counselor keep the Counselee accountable for homework assignments in between counseling sessions. It will secondarily involve commitment beyond the conclusion of the counseling to encourage the person to continue walking with the Lord and following through on their commitments to changes in their thinking, acting, speaking and growing as a disciple.

How can an Advocate prepare for their role in the counseling sessions?

First and foremost, prepare by praying. Pray for everyone involved in the counseling and for effectiveness in the meetings. Pray for heart transformation and for God to be glorified. Additionally, prepare by involving yourself in the homework assigned to the counselee when you

can. This may mean reading the same passages the Counselee is assigned to read and checking in with them between sessions.

How much time does it take to be an Advocate?

Being an Advocate is a loving sacrifice of your time, no doubt. The total number of hours is hard to estimate, but expect at least 90 minutes per counseling session and at least 30 minutes between sessions connecting with the Counselee and/or participating in their homework assignments.

Does the Advocate have to be present at every counseling session?

Because each counseling case is unique, it is up to the Counselor's discretion whether or not they require the Advocate to be present at each session or not. A good rule of thumb is that the Advocate should be able to attend at least half of the sessions.

What do I do next?

If you're a Counselee at Doxa, your next step is to prayerfully consider who could be an Advocate for you in your counseling. Once a name comes to mind, ask them to consider it and send them this information. If you've been asked to be an Advocate, pray and consider if you have the time, interest, and willingness to enter in to this important role.

If you have been formally requested to be an Advocate (meaning you've received an email from Soul Care Leadership at Doxa) and you are saying "Yes", the next step will be to accept the invitation you received and create an account on Soul Care Online. From there, the Counselor and Counselee will be in touch about coordinating your meetings.

What are the benefits of having the role of Advocate at Doxa?

To the Counselee:

- Hope from a committed friend who is willing to walk through the experience with them
- Continuity of counseling and help on the home front
- Help communicating greater context, to bring to remembrance key issues and/or remind them of truth gained while in counseling
- Freedom to be attentive without the need to capture every detail with a friend there taking notes.

To the Advocate:

- Deeper insight into the life of the person they love
- Direction for conversation and accountability
- An opportunity to ask questions and receive insight into helping the person they love
- An opportunity to fulfill the law of Christ
- A practical way to apply the one-anothers of Scripture
- An opportunity for further training/equipping
- Personal growth in closing the gaps between knowing Scripture and living it

To the Counselor:

- Another perspective into life of the counselee
- Built-in accountability for homework and application
- Assistance in validating or clarifying insights in the life of the counselee and his community
- Natural tie-back into the regular flow of discipleship at Doxa

To Doxa:

- A person is trained to support a body member in a short period of time
- Creates a support network for Pastors and ministry leaders, allowing them to focus on shepherding the entire flock
- Built-in accountability for the church's counseling ministry
- Provides a testimony of love and commitment to one another and a watching world
- Creates a culture of obedience to the 40+ one-anothers of Scripture