

## Short response No. 2

### Genetic counseling: bridging mutation and social filter

#### References:

Genetic Counseling. Human Genome Project Information.

[http://www.ornl.gov/sci/techresources/Human\\_Genome/medicine/genecounseling.shtml](http://www.ornl.gov/sci/techresources/Human_Genome/medicine/genecounseling.shtml)

Understanding Gene Testing. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

<http://www.accessexcellence.org/AE/AEPC/NIH/index.php>

**Student's website:** [http://www.iianthropology.org/psychology\\_genetic\\_test.html](http://www.iianthropology.org/psychology_genetic_test.html)

According to the definition "Genetic counselors are health professionals with specialized graduate degrees and experience in the areas of medical genetics and counseling. Most enter the field from a variety of disciplines, including biology, genetics, nursing, psychology, public health, and social work".

Today there are many methods to prevent diseases and to reproduce healthy generations. They compliment the mutation which is a sort of a biological filter - through the process of mutation it is possible the altered genes not to be passed to the next generation. This positive biological reproduction is valid for the cancer, a "disease of genes gone awry", which usually starts in a single cell. There is a variety of cancers with documented genes - melanoma, leukemia, thyroid and renal cell cancers.

Genetic counselors serve as patient advocates, educators and resource people. Their fields of works are clinical, commercial (biotech companies), diagnostic laboratories, education and public policy and research.

Genetic counselors play vital role in the predictive genetic tests. They meet with the person considering testing before and after the test. By explaining the customer the peculiarities of the test, the genetic counselors assist them in their psychological

adjustment in case of a positive test. In this mission, they are like a social filter on which many human destinies can depend since testing is a controversial ethical issue.

The people meet and interconnect by committing themselves for whole life, but in many cases their life break down because of health issues. Although with possible huge psychological and social sequences, today we can use the given by the technology privilege to know more about us before taking crucial steps in our life. One of these steps is the gene test.