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BRAND BREAKDOWN BRIEF

Prepared for Dr. Paul Standal, AQC

A deeper look into the digital foundation of
Affordable Quality Counseling

Clarifying purpose, structure, trust, and
direction for the next chapter of the
practice's website, messaging, and
branding.

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Overview

This **Brand Breakdown** engagement is designed to take a thoughtful, grounded look at how Affordable Quality Counseling shows up online, and how that experience aligns with the care, clarity, and trust clients experience in person.

Rather than approaching this as a traditional website redesign, this plan focuses on understanding what is working, identifying where friction exists, and creating a clear, phased path forward. The intention is to reduce overwhelm, remove unnecessary complexity, and allow the heart of the practice to come through more naturally.

The result is a website that feels calmer, clearer, safer, and easier to navigate for people who may already be arriving in a vulnerable state, while also strengthening the site's underlying stability and reliability.

What We Discovered During the Brand Breakdown

Through our conversation and review of the website, it became clear that the core of Affordable Quality Counseling is already strong. The practice communicates genuine care, professionalism, and experience, and the intention behind the existing content is thoughtful and client-centered.

Where the site begins to struggle is not in heart or credibility, but in scale and structure.

At present, the website contains a high number of pages, many of which overlap in purpose or repeat similar messaging. This level of redundancy makes it harder for visitors to quickly understand where to begin and which pages matter most. It can also dilute clarity for search engines, making it more difficult for the site to clearly communicate its primary services and focus areas.

In addition to page redundancy, the site is currently running with approximately 29 active plugins. While plugins are often added with good intentions over time, an excessive plugin count can introduce several issues. Each additional plugin increases the complexity of the site, raises the risk of compatibility problems during updates, and expands the potential surface area for security vulnerabilities.

Taken together, a high page count combined with plugin bloat can negatively impact site speed, reliability, and overall stability. For a counseling practice, where trust, privacy, and reliability are essential, this type of complexity can quietly work against the experience you want visitors to have.

Why This Matters for Visitors Seeking Help

People landing on the Affordable Quality Counseling website are often already navigating stress, uncertainty, or emotional weight. When a site feels crowded, confusing, or slow, even unintentionally, it can add friction at the exact moment clarity and reassurance are needed.

Streamlining both the page structure and the plugin ecosystem allows the website to feel calmer and more grounded. Fewer pages means clearer navigation and less cognitive load. Fewer plugins means a faster, safer, and more stable site that is easier to maintain over time.

This is not about stripping the site down to the bare minimum. It is about removing what no longer serves the visitor or the practice, so what truly matters can come forward more clearly.

The Goal Moving Forward

The primary goal of this rebuild is to create a clear, welcoming, and dependable online front door for Affordable Quality Counseling, while significantly improving how the site is understood and surfaced by search engines (SEO).

By reducing redundancy, simplifying navigation, and strengthening the site's technical and structural foundation, the website can more clearly communicate its purpose, services, and areas of focus, both to visitors and to search platforms. This clarity is essential for improving local search visibility and ensuring the site appears for the types of counseling-related searches that reflect the practice's values and services.

For visitors, this means feeling oriented more quickly, understanding whether the practice is a good fit, and feeling supported in taking the next step. For the practice, it means a site that is easier for search engines to interpret, prioritize, and recommend to the right people at the right time.

At the same time, this approach improves long-term stability by reducing security risk, minimizing update conflicts, and making the site easier to manage and evolve. A streamlined site with fewer pages and fewer plugins is not only safer and more reliable, but also better positioned to support consistent SEO growth over time without introducing unnecessary complexity.

Recommended *Phase 1* Starting Point

Purpose

Phase One focuses on stabilizing the website, reducing unnecessary complexity, and significantly improving how the site is understood by both visitors and search engines. This phase addresses the foundational issues that most directly affect trust, safety, speed, ease of use, and search visibility.

By clarifying structure, simplifying navigation, and strengthening the site's technical foundation, Phase One creates a calmer experience for people seeking help while also improving the site's ability to appear for relevant counseling-related searches.

What Phase 1 Addresses

- Page redundancy and unclear structure that dilute both visitor understanding and search visibility.
- Excess plugin count and associated security exposure, update conflicts, and performance risk.
- Navigation friction that makes it difficult for first-time visitors to orient themselves and move forward confidently.
- Homepage clarity and first impressions that influence trust and decision-making within seconds.
- Foundational search structure and on-page clarity that help search engines clearly interpret services, priorities, and local relevance.

SEO Clarity with Phase 1

Before vs. After Phase 1

Before Phase One

After Phase One

Large number of pages with overlapping topics, making it difficult for search engines to identify priority services.	Focused set of core pages with clearly defined service intent and hierarchy.
Multiple pages competing for similar themes and keywords, diluting overall visibility.	Each primary service has a distinct role, improving relevance and search visibility.
Navigation and internal linking do not clearly reinforce which pages matter most.	Navigation and internal linking support clear page relationships and priorities.
Excess plugins introduce technical complexity and increase the risk of performance or indexing issues.	Reduced plugin count improves performance, stability, and crawl reliability.
Broad or mismatched search visibility can lead to lower-quality or inappropriate inquiries.	Search visibility aligns more closely with how people seek counseling support locally.
Search engines receive mixed signals about the site's structure and focus.	Search engines receive clearer, more consistent signals, supporting sustainable SEO growth.

What This Shift Accomplishes

- Clear structure helps search engines understand the practice.
- Clear messaging helps visitors understand fit.
- Clear intent connects the right people with the right support.

Phase 1 Scope

- Site architecture review and page consolidation
- Navigation and user flow redesign
- Homepage restructuring and messaging flow
- Plugin audit and cleanup, reducing the current plugin count to a lean, stable set
- Security and stability improvements tied to plugin and platform cleanup
- Light visual refresh focused on spacing, hierarchy, and readability
- Foundational on-page search structure and clarity

Phase 1 Investment

- Itemized range when selected à la carte: approximately \$4,800 – \$5,600 (pricing for each piece of Phase 1 can be broken down upon request)
 - ***Recommended Phase 1 bundled option: \$3,750 – \$4,500 (explained in further detail on pg. 8)***
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Phase 2 – Service Clarity and User Experience

Purpose

Phase 2 builds on the stabilized foundation by improving how services are explained, how visitors understand fit, and how clearly the practice communicates its approach.

Phase 2 Scope

- Service page refinement and differentiation
- Improved internal linking between related services
- Expanded clarity around who the practice is for and who it is not
- Call-to-action refinement across service pages
- Continued visual and layout refinements where needed

Phase 2 Investment

- Estimated range: \$1,800 – \$2,750
- Can be implemented all at once or selectively over time

Phase 3 – Education, Content, and Refinement

Purpose

Phase 3 focuses on longer-term clarity, education, and refinement. Rather than aggressive growth, this phase helps reduce mismatched inquiries and support the right client relationships.

Phase 3 Scope

- Content rewrites for clarity, warmth, and alignment
- Therapist bio storytelling and refinement
- Blog or resource framework setup
- Ongoing refinement based on real visitor behavior
- Light ongoing maintenance and oversight options

Phase 3 Investment

- Estimated range: \$2,500 – \$4,000, depending on scope
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Bundled Phase 1 Option

A Clear Starting Point

For practices that prefer a simpler, more predictable path forward, Phase 1 can be implemented as a bundled engagement rather than selecting individual components.

This bundled option includes the most important foundational elements needed to stabilize the site, reduce complexity, and create a calmer, more trustworthy experience for visitors.

What's Included in the Phase 1 Bundle

Site architecture review and page consolidation, reducing the current page count into a focused set of core pages that clearly communicate services and priorities.

Navigation and user flow redesign, simplifying menus and pathways so visitors can easily find their way without confusion.

Homepage restructuring and messaging flow, clarifying who the practice serves, how it helps, and how to begin.

Plugin audit and cleanup, reducing the current plugin count to only what is essential, improving site speed, security, and long-term reliability.

Security and stability improvements tied to platform and plugin cleanup, reducing exposure to update conflicts and vulnerabilities.

Light visual refresh, improving layout, spacing, and hierarchy using existing brand elements to reinforce clarity and trust.

Foundational on-page search structure and clarity aligned with counseling-related search intent.

Phase 1 Bundled Investment

The Phase 1 bundled engagement is proposed in the range of:

\$3,750 – \$4,500

This range reflects scope flexibility depending on final page count, plugin cleanup complexity, and depth of homepage restructuring.

The bundled option is designed to:

- Reduce decision fatigue
- Improve Search Engine Optimization
- Avoid technical overwhelm
- Provide a confident, complete starting point
- Deliver meaningful improvements without overextending scope



Optional Add-Ons to the Bundle

These elements are commonly added once Phase One is underway, or can be layered in as a Phase Two expansion.

- Service page deepening and differentiation; \$850
 - Call-to-action refinement across service pages; \$450
 - Therapist bio storytelling rewrite; \$650
 - Expanded content rewrites for all key pages; \$1,800
 - Blog or resource framework setup; \$600
 - Homepage welcome video integration (filming/editing included); \$1500
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Path Forward

The recommended path forward, and most cost-effective is to begin with the **Phase 1 bundled engagement** and allow the website to stabilize, simplify, and better reflect the values of Affordable Quality Counseling.

Once Phase 1 is complete, we can review how the site is performing and determine which Phase Two or Phase Three elements would be most valuable to layer in next.

Nothing needs to be decided upfront. The purpose of this structure is to create clarity, confidence, and forward momentum without pressure.

Final Thought

This approach ensures the website begins working with the practice rather than against it, supporting visitors with clarity, safety, and ease from the very first interaction.

It also creates a long-term roadmap that can evolve naturally, without rushing or forcing decisions before they are needed.