



Client-Counselor Service Agreement

Welcome to my practice--*Major Transformations*. This document contains important information about my professional services and business policies. It also contains summary information about the *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)*, a federal law that provides privacy protections and patient rights about the use and disclosure of your *Protected Health Information (PHI)* for the purposes of treatment, payment, and health care operations. Although these documents are long and sometimes complex, it is very important that you understand them. When you sign this document, it will also represent an agreement between us. We can discuss any questions you have when you sign them or at any time in the future.

Counseling is a relationship between people that works in part because of clearly defined rights and responsibilities held by each person. As a client in counseling, you have certain rights and responsibilities that are important for you to understand. There are also legal limitations to those rights that you should be aware of. I, as your counselor, have corresponding responsibilities to you. These rights and responsibilities are described in the following sections.

Goals of Counseling

There can be many goals for the counseling relationship. Some of these will be long term goals such as improving the quality of your life, learning to live with mindfulness and self-actualization. Others may be more immediate goals such as decreasing anxiety and depression symptoms, developing healthy relationships, changing behavior or decreasing/ending drug use. Whatever the goals for counseling, they will be set by the clients according to what they want to work on in counseling. The counselor may make suggestions on how to reach that goal but you decide where you want to go.

Risks/Benefits of Counseling

Counseling is an intensely personal process which can bring unpleasant memories or emotions to the surface. There are no guarantees that counseling will work for you. Clients can sometimes make improvements only to go backwards after a time. Progress may happen slowly. ***Counseling requires a very active effort on your part.*** In order to be most successful, you will have to work on things we discuss outside of sessions.

However, there are many benefits to counseling. Counseling can help you develop coping skills, make behavioral changes, reduce symptoms of mental health disorders, improve the quality of your life, learn to manage anger, learn to live in the present and many other advantages.



Appointments

Appointments will ordinarily be 45-50 minutes in duration, once per week at a time we agree on, although some sessions may be more or less frequent as needed. The time scheduled for your appointment is assigned to you and you alone. If you need to cancel or reschedule a session, I ask that you provide me with no less than 24 hours' notice. If you miss a session without canceling, or cancel with less than 24 hour notice, you will be charged for the session using the credit card on file [unless we both agree that you were unable to attend due to circumstances beyond your control]. In addition, you are responsible for coming to your session on time; if you are late, your appointment will still need to end on time.

Confidentiality

Your counselor will make every effort to keep your personal information private. If you wish to have information released, you will be required to sign a consent form before such information will be released. There are some limitations to confidentiality to which you need to be aware.

- Your counselor may consult with a supervisor or other professional counselor in order to give you the best service. In the event that your counselor consults with another counselor, no identifying information such as your name would be released.
- Counselors are required by law to release information when the client poses a risk to themselves or others and in cases of abuse to children or the elderly.
- If your counselor receives a court order or subpoena, she may be required to release some information. In such a case, your counselor will consult with other professionals and limit the release to only what is necessary by law.

Confidentiality and Group Therapy

The nature of group counseling makes it difficult to maintain confidentiality. If you choose to participate in group therapy, be aware that your counselor cannot guarantee that other group members will maintain your confidentiality. However, your counselor will make every effort to maintain your confidentiality by reminding group members frequently of the importance of keeping what is said in group confidential. Your counselor also has the right to remove any group member from the group should she discover that a group member has violated the confidentiality rule.

Confidentiality and Technology

Some clients may choose to use technology in their counseling sessions. This includes but is not limited to online counseling via Skype, telephone, email, text or chat. Due to the nature of online counseling, there is always the possibility that unauthorized persons may attempt to discover your personal information. Your counselor will take every precaution to safeguard your information but cannot guarantee that unauthorized access to electronic communications could not occur. Please be advised to



take precautions with regard to authorized and unauthorized access to any technology used in counseling sessions. Be aware of any friends, family members, significant others or co-workers who may have access to your computer, phone or other technology used in your counseling sessions. Should a client have concerns about the safety of their email, upon request, your counselor can arrange to encrypt email communication with you.

Record Keeping

I keep brief records of each session noting the dates we meet, the topics we cover, progress reports from the client's perspective, interventions and impressions from the therapist and next steps. These records are kept to ensure a direction to your sessions and continuity in service. They will not be shared with anyone without your written consent except with respect to the limits to confidentiality discussed in the Confidentiality section. Should the client wish to have their records released, they are required to sign a release of information which specifies what information is to be released and to whom. Records will be kept for at least 5 years but may be kept for longer. Records will be kept either electronically on a USB flash drive or in a paper file and stored in a locked cabinet in the counselor's office.

Professional Fees

You are responsible for paying at the time of your session unless prior arrangements have been made. Payment must be made by credit card, PayPal, or cash. If you refuse to pay your debt, I reserve the right to use an attorney or collection agency to secure payment.

If you anticipate becoming involved in a court case, I recommend that we discuss this fully before you waive your right to confidentiality. If your case requires my participation, you will be expected to pay for the professional time required.

Fees are non-negotiable. To receive sliding scale fees, you must present proof of income through recent pay stubs or tax forms. Fees are subject to change at counselor's discretion.

Fee Schedule

Evaluation (Intake) – \$150	Family/Couple counseling session – \$150 (with or without the patient)
Counseling Session 45 minutes – \$110	Group Counseling Session 55 minutes – \$60
(KISD discount) 45 minutes-- \$99	Coaching Session 60 minutes -- \$150
Counseling Session 75 minutes – \$150	Consultation Services --\$75/hour



Sliding Scale Fees: To receive sliding scale fees, you must present proof of income through recent pay stubs or tax forms. Fees are subject to change at counselor’s discretion.

45-50 minute individual session

\$30,000 (Yearly) and below	\$50
\$30,001 (Yearly) to \$50,000	\$75
\$50,001 (Yearly) to \$70,000	\$99
\$70,001 (Yearly) and above	\$120

Insurance

If you have a health insurance policy, it will usually provide some coverage for mental health treatment. You should be aware that most insurance companies require the therapist to provide them with a clinical diagnosis in addition to clinical information which will become part of the insurance company file which can result in a breach to confidentiality. Some insurance companies also have a deductible, which is an out-of-pocket amount that must be paid by the patient before the insurance companies are willing to begin paying any amount for services.

For these reasons I do not accept any form of insurance.

I will supply you with a receipt of payment for services, which you can submit to your insurance company for reimbursement. Please note that not all insurance companies reimburse for out-of-network providers. If you prefer to use a participating provider, I would be more than happy to assist you with a list of in-network providers from your insurance provider.

Other Rights

You have the right to ask questions about anything that happens in therapy. I’m always willing to discuss how and why I’ve decided to do what I’m doing, and to look at alternatives that might work better. You can feel free to ask me to try something that you think will be helpful. You can request that I refer you to someone else if you decide I’m not the right therapist for you. You are free to leave therapy at any time, but I would appreciate advance notice so that I can help you end treatment well. Because I have a limited practice, I do not have 24 hour emergency or “on call” coverage. If you believe you will need a



therapist with 24 hour coverage I will be happy to make a referral. *If you experience a psychiatric emergency, you should call 911 or go to the nearest hospital emergency room rather than waiting for me to call you back.* When I am out of town for an extended period of time I will give you the name of a colleague you can contact in case of an urgent need.

Contacting Me

I am often not immediately available by telephone. I do not answer my phone when I am with clients or otherwise unavailable. At these times, you may leave a message on my confidential voice mail and your call will be returned as soon as possible, but it may take a day or two for non-urgent matters. If you feel you cannot wait for a return call or it is an emergency situation, go to your local hospital emergency room or call 911.

I recognize that situations may arise, and you may want to speak with me via telephone in between sessions. You are welcome to contact me, and your call will be returned at my earliest availability. Please use crisis numbers if you need immediate attention. Please be aware that you will be billed in 15 minute increments after the first 15 minutes at the rate of \$25 per 15 mins. Initials _____

Email

Counselor may request client's email address. Client has the right to refuse to disclose an email address. Counselor may use email addresses to periodically check in with clients who have ended therapy suddenly. Counselor may also use email addresses to send newsletters with valuable therapeutic information such as tips for depression or relaxation techniques. Counselor also has a blog and if this is appropriate for the client, counselor may send information through email about subscribing to the blog or information related to mental health and wellness.

If you would like to receive any correspondence through email, please write your email address:



Although e-mail has become a major means of communication between individuals, internet communication has significant limitations. Please note the following guidelines for use of e-mail as a form of communication with your therapist.

- Your therapist cannot provide personal counseling solely through e-mail, but your therapist may offer limited support via email. Please be aware that email communication is not a substitute for interpersonal therapy.
- Your therapist cannot guarantee that your e-mail will remain confidential. Although your therapist may keep your e-mail message private, your therapist cannot ensure administrators of the system and experienced computer users may be able to access e-mail, so confidentiality cannot be ensured.
- Although e-mail may seem like a fast way to contact someone, your therapist may not have the ability to check e-mail as frequently and as consistently. Absence from the office, a busy schedule, unexpected illness, or difficulty getting online may mean that several days go by before a message is received. Please call your therapist at (817) 888-8064 to ensure communication.

If you would like to opt out of email correspondence, please initial here _____ .

Consent to Counseling

Your signature below indicates that you have read this Agreement and agree to its terms.

Client Name (printed) _____

Parent/Guardian Name if Client is a Minor _____

Signature _____ Date _____