

CONFIDENTIALITY

In general, the law protects the privacy of all communications between a client and a psychotherapist, and I can only release information about our work to others with your written permission. But there are a few exceptions.

In most legal proceedings, you have the right to prevent me from providing any information about your treatment. In some proceedings, a judge could order my testimony if he/she determines that the issues demand it. Additionally, the Florida Dept. of Health can subpoena records if it receives a complaint against me.

There are some situations in which I am legally obligated to take action to protect others from harm, even if I have to reveal some information about a client's treatment. For example, if I believe that a child or vulnerable adult is being abused, I am required by law to report my suspicions to the appropriate state agency. If I believe that a client is threatening serious bodily harm to another, I am required to take protective actions. These actions may include notifying the potential victim, contacting the police, or seeking hospitalization for the client. If the client threatens to harm himself/herself, I may be obligated to seek hospitalization for him/her or to contact family members or others who can help provide protection.

These situations have rarely occurred in my practice. If such a situation does occur in our work together, I will make every effort to fully discuss my responsibilities and the options available to me with you before taking any action. I may occasionally find it helpful to consult other professionals about a case. During a consultation, I make every effort to avoid revealing the identity of any client. The consultant is also a trained professional who is also legally bound to keep our communications confidential.

While this written summary of exceptions to confidentiality should prove helpful in informing you about potential problems, it is important that we discuss any questions or concerns that you may have at our next meeting. Additionally, you are being provided with detailed information on your rights and responsibilities regard to the privacy and protection of your health information (**FLORIDA HEALTH INFORMATION NOTICE FORM**).

Your signature below indicates that you have read this AGREEMENT, that you consent to treatment, and that you agree to abide by the terms of this agreement during our professional relationship. You also have the right to rescind your consent at any time.

I agree with a 3 and/or 6 months follow-up after termination/last visit from therapist.

_____ / ____ / 2020 (SIGN/DATE)

Client's Name

Client's Signature

Date

If signing for minor, print minor's name

Minor's Age

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OUTPATIENT SERVICES AGREEMENT / CONSENT TO TREATMENT

Welcome to our practice. This document contains important information about our professional services and business policies. Please read it carefully and jot down any questions you might have so that we can discuss them at our next meeting. When you sign this document, it will represent an agreement between us.

PSYCHOTHERAPY SERVICES

Psychotherapy is not easily described in general statements. It varies depending on the personalities of the therapist and client, and the particular problems you wish to address. There are a variety of methods I use to help you to work through the issues and problems that you want to address at this time. Psychotherapy is not like a medical doctor visit. Instead, to be successful, the therapy process requires your full participation and commitment.

Psychotherapy can have benefits and risks. I frequently utilize integrated psychotherapy methods that involve developing insight and understanding with regard to the impact of your development history on your relationships and ways of being in the world. Since therapy often involves discussing unpleasant aspects of your life, you may experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness, and helplessness. On the other hand, psychotherapy has also been shown to have benefits for those who actively engage in the therapy process. Therapy often leads to better relationships, solutions to specific problems, and significant reductions in feelings of distress. But there are no guarantees of what you will experience during or as a result of the process.

Our first few sessions will involve an evaluation of your needs. By the end of the evaluation, I will be able to offer you some first impressions of what our work will include and a suggested plan for how we will work together if you decide to continue with therapy. You should evaluate this information along with your own opinions and determine whether you feel comfortable working with me. Therapy involves a large commitment of time, money, and energy, so it is important to be very careful about the therapist you select. If you have questions about my procedures, we should discuss them whenever they arise. If your doubts persist, I will be happy to help you set up a meeting with another mental health professional for a second opinion.

THERAPY SESSIONS

I normally conduct an evaluation that will last 2-3 sessions. During this time, we can both decide if I am the best person to provide the services you need in order to meet your treatment goals. If psychotherapy is begun, I will usually schedule one or more 45-minute session(s) (60-min session is also available, and it is required for couples and families) per week at a time or times that we agree on.

Once an appointment hour is scheduled, you will be expected to pay for any appointment cancellation, unless we both agree that you were unable to attend due to circumstances beyond your control. Appointments must be rescheduled prior to 48 hours (7 days for Saturday appointments) or a full fee will be charged.

PROFESSIONAL FEES

My hourly fee is \$200 per 60-min session (a must for Couple/Families) or \$ 150.00 for 45-min individual session. Discounts for pre-paid session packages may be offered. In addition to weekly appointments, I charge this amount for other professional services you may need. Other services include report writing, telephone conversations, attendance at meetings with other professionals you have authorized, preparation of records or treatment summaries, and the time spent performing any other service you may request of me. The professional services acquired will be accumulative and charged in 15 minutes' increments. If you become involved in legal proceedings that require my participation, you will be expected to pay for my professional time even if I am called to testify by another party. Because of the difficulty of legal involvement, an additional \$300.00 per hour fee will apply for preparation and attendance at any legal proceeding.

BILLING AND PAYMENTS

You will be expected to **pay for each session at the beginning of the session**, unless we agree otherwise. Payment schedules for other professional services will be agreed to when they are requested. In circumstances of unusual and unforeseeable financial hardship, I may be willing to negotiate extended payment arrangements. If such a condition arises, please discuss it with me as soon as possible.

If your account has not been paid for more than 60 days and arrangements for payment have not been agreed upon, I have the option of using legal means to secure the payment. This may involve hiring a collection agency or going through small claims court. In collection situations, the only information I release regarding a client's treatment is his/her name, the nature of services provided, and the amount due. Returned checks incurs \$30 fee.

I accept cash, check, or online transfers made prior to the session.

INSURANCE REIMBURSEMENT

In order for us to set realistic treatment goals and priorities, it is important to evaluate what resources you have available to pay for your treatment. If you have a health insurance policy, it will usually provide some coverage for mental health treatment. I will fill out forms and provide you with whatever assistance I can in helping you receive the benefits to which you are entitled; however, you are responsible for full payment of my fees. It is very important that you find out exactly what mental health services your insurance policy covers. You should carefully read the section in your insurance coverage booklet that describes mental health services. If you have questions about the coverage, call your plan administrator. Of course, I will provide you with whatever information I can based on my experience and will be happy to help you in understanding the information you receive from your insurance company. If it is necessary to clear confusion, I will be willing to call the company on your behalf.

Due to the rising costs of health care, insurance benefits have increasingly become more complex. It is sometimes difficult to determine exactly how much mental health coverage is available. "Managed Care" plans such as HMOs and PPOs often require authorization before reimbursement for mental health services. HMO's usually require that you see therapists within the HMO network and may not reimburse for my services. Insurance reimbursement plans may require large deductibles, usually pay only a portion of fees, and may be limited to short term treatment of specific mental health diagnoses. It may be necessary to seek approval for more therapy after a certain number of sessions. While a lot can be accomplished in short-term therapy, some clients feel they need more services after insurance benefits end.

You should also be aware that most insurance companies require you to authorize me to provide them with a clinical diagnosis. Sometimes I have to provide additional clinical information such as treatment plans or summaries, or copies of the entire record (in rare cases). This information will become part of the insurance company files and will probably be stored in a computer. Though all insurance companies claim to keep such information confidential, I have no control over what they do with it once it is in their hands. In some cases, they may share the information with a national medical information databank. When you ask for my assistance in obtaining health insurance benefits, I will provide you with a copy of any report I submit, if you request it. Once we have all of the information about your insurance coverage, we will discuss what we can expect to accomplish with the benefits that are available and what will happen if they run out before you feel ready to end our sessions. It is important to remember that you always have the right to pay for my services yourself to extend treatment or to avoid the problems described.

CONTACTING ME

I am often not immediately available by telephone. While I am usually in this office between 9 am and 5 pm, Thursday through Saturday, I will not answer the phone when I am with a client, even on the other weekdays when I am in another office. I do have call-in hours at 9 am on Thursday through Saturday. When I am unavailable, my telephone is answered by voice mail that I regularly monitor. I will make every effort to return your call on the same day you make it, with the exception of weekends and holidays. If you are difficult to reach, please inform me of times when you will be available. In emergencies, you can try me at **(813) 613-8587**. If you are unable to reach me and feel that you can't wait for me to return your call, contact your family physician or the nearest emergency room and ask for the psychologist or psychiatrist on call. If I will be unavailable for an extended time, I will provide you with the name of a colleague to contact, if necessary.

PROFESSIONAL RECORDS

The laws and standards of my profession require that I keep treatment records. You are entitled to receive a copy of your records, or I can prepare a summary for you instead. Because these are professional records, I recommend that you review them in my presence so that we can discuss the contents. There will be fees for preparation, copies, or faxing per page.

MINORS

If you are under eighteen years of age, please be aware that the law may provide your parents the right to examine your treatment records. It is my policy to request an agreement from parents that they agree to give up access to your records. If they agree, I'll only provide your parents with general information about our work together, unless I feel there is a high risk that you will seriously harm yourself or someone else. In this case, I will notify them of my concern. Before giving them any information, I will discuss the matter with you, if possible, and do my best to handle any objections you may have with what I am prepared to discuss. At the end of your treatment, I will prepare a summary of our work together for your parents, and we will discuss it before I send it to them.