

PSYCHOTHERAPY TREATMENT CONTRACT OF INFORMED CONSENT

A clear framework for our work together can avoid misunderstandings and facilitate our working relationship. The following are policies under which I operate my practice. Please feel free to discuss any of these with me.

Psychological Services

Psychotherapy is a treatment that addresses psychological distress and problems in life. Psychotherapy, as I practice it, is a collaborative process. My intent is to build a relationship with you in which you feel free to explore your thoughts, feelings and behaviors, particularly those aspects that may be causing you distress, impeding progress toward you life goals, or getting in the way of your ability to find fulfillment in your life.

Psychotherapy has benefits and risks. Since therapy involves the discussion of unpleasant aspects of life, you may at times experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness, and helplessness. On the other hand, psychotherapy has been shown to have benefits for people who follow through with it. Psychotherapy often leads to better relationships, solutions to specific problems, and significant reductions in feelings of distress.

Appointments

Psychotherapy sessions are 45 minutes in length and meetings are held at least once a week. More frequent meetings may be arranged to facilitate more intensive work on deeper psychological issues, or may be recommended in order to meet your particular needs. Once an appointment hour is scheduled, you will be expected to pay for it unless you provide 48 hours advance notice of cancellation.

Confidentiality

Information revealed within sessions will remain confidential unless disclosure is required by law. These conditions include any reasonable suspicion of child, dependent, or elder abuse; when you are in danger to others; or when you are likely to harm yourself unless protective measures are taken. If there is ever a time when your emotional status is an issue in a legal proceeding, i.e., child custody evaluation, Workmen's Compensation claim, etc., then a judge may subpoena your records, and/or my testimony if he/she determines the issues demand it. In most legal proceedings, however, I will be able to prevent providing others information about your treatment.

I may occasionally find it helpful to consult other professionals about a case. During a consultation I will not give any identifying information about you. The consultant is also legally bound to keep the information confidential.

### Professional Fees

At the outset of treatment I will set a per session fee with you. That fee will either be my full fee of \$200 per individual therapy session and \$250 per couple's therapy session, or a reduced fee based on an our agreement. My fees may change over the course of your treatment. Fee for writing a psychology report or other services (e.g., lengthy telephone conversations) are based on the hourly fee. 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 by another party. Because of the difficulties involved in attending to legal matters, my fees for participation differs from my customary rates. A schedule of those fees is available to you upon request.

If your account is unpaid for over 60 days and we have not agreed upon other arrangements for payment in full, I have the option of using a collection agency, going through small-claims court, or billing your credit card. If such action is necessary, it's costs will be included in the claim. I will also let you know if I plan on taking such actions.

### Insurance Reimbursement

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 me to provide them with a clinical diagnosis. Sometimes, I have to provide additional information such as treatment plans or summaries.

### Contacting Me

I have a voice mail on which you can leave me a message. I will make every effort to return your call on the same day you make it. Calls after 8pm may be returned on the following day. While I do have a paging function for more urgent matters that may arise, I cannot guarantee that I will be able to respond to you immediately at all times. In case of a true emergency, particularly one that is life threatening, you should go to your local emergency room and ask for the psychologist or psychiatrist on call, or dial 911. Sometimes I might need to call you from a cellular phone. I will notify at the time should this happen.

Whenever I am on vacation or unavailable for some other reason, you will be informed in advance if possible and you will be able to reach an on-call therapist if an emergency should occur. That person's name and number will be accessible by calling my voicemail while I am unavailable.

### Professional Records

Both California Law and the standards of my profession require that I keep appropriate records of services provided. The confidentiality of these records is closely safeguarded.

Patients' Rights

You have the right to end therapy at any time, for whatever reason. You also have a right to question any aspect of treatment, and to expect that I will provide you with a referral to another qualified therapist for adjunctive treatment, or alternative treatment, if you request.

Please feel free to speak to me about any of the above if you have any questions or concerns. Your signature below acknowledges that you have read and understand these policies.

Names (printed)

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Signature

Date

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