

# Counselling Agreement

I offer a response to those in need of counselling regardless of faith, race, age, gender, disability or sexuality. I work within the Ethical Frameworks the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy UKCP and I am a registered Member of them both.

## Confidentiality

1. The information divulged by you during the counselling process will be treated as confidential, however:
  - a. Written notes of the counselling sessions will be made by me usually after each session, and used as an aide memoire. These notes are kept in a file with a code on it and not your name. I will not write your name in the notes. The file is locked away securely after each session.
  - b. I receive supervision on a regular basis with an external supervisor. An external supervisor would need to know some details in order to advise and support me, and such information will only be discussed without identifying you as the client.
  - c. You, the client give consent under the Data Protection Act 2018 to record personal information about you.

## Exceptions to confidentiality

2. There are some circumstances when I may need to break confidentiality:
  - a. If you disclose information that causes me to believe there is a risk of *serious* harm to any child, adult or the public, it is highly likely I would need to breach confidentiality. If this were the case, I would always discuss it with you first, providing it was legal and ethical to do so, and would support you through this process.
  - b. If I consider that you are intending to take your own life, then I would discuss with you the need for you to inform your GP whilst I am present. In some cases, I may need to take advice from my supervisor where there are serious concerns about your safety, and as a result may contact your GP or other emergency services without your consent. You will always be informed that I intend to do this.
  - c. It is a legal requirement upon me to disclose information on activities of money laundering, or acts of terrorism. If you make such a disclosure, I will tell the police without informing you that I am going to do so.
  - d. I may have been issued a subpoena by the courts in which case information would have to be released.

- e. You, the client, may request that your information is shared. Such requests should be discussed with me and a signed agreement will be drawn up authorizing the release of the information and releasing me of responsibility for confidentiality.

In short, I am likely to break confidentiality if you were actually going to seriously harm another person or yourself. I would, in most cases inform you that I intend to do so and would support you in whatever follows. If you need clarification, or are unsure, then we need to discuss this in session before you disclose information that might be damaging to you.

### **Payments and the cancellation policy**

There are financial issues for me regarding cancellations. For example, my time has been reserved for you (so I am no longer available to earn money from supply teaching), the room has been booked, and others were refused your time slot and more. Therefore, I ask that you to give at *least* 24 hours' notice of a cancellation otherwise there is no refund. With less than 24 hours' notice, rescheduling is not possible and the payment is non-refundable.

Sometimes a free 1<sup>st</sup> session is given\*. This adheres to the same cancellation policy as above, the only difference being that the free session is no longer available and the next session will be charged at my normal rate as advertised on my website.

Booked sessions are to be paid in advance by bank transfer (BACs) or Debit/Credit card. This can be done on my website via a Payment Gateway, in the counselling room via a Card Reader or in cash, and is to be paid as you book the next session.

### **Complaints**

In the event of any difficulties arising during the period of your counselling, please contact me in the first instance and if you are still not satisfied you need to contact BACP complaints

Sessions are 50 minutes

\* A first free session is not always available, for example for couples counselling or for referrals which includes referrals from non-professionals such as spouses and other family members.