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## Guidelines For Services

### Philosophy and Methods

I view therapy as a collaboration or team effort in working toward your goals. Your growth is mainly your responsibility. The more thought, energy, and honesty you give to your therapy/growth process, the more you will benefit from it. You are the ultimate authority on yourself, as you know yourself better than anyone else. Please ask questions when you don't understand something or need clarification. If you are uncomfortable about anything I say or do, I would like you to tell me. I can help you to understand yourself and others, tell you my observations, provide you with information and resources, and suggest new behaviors to try. You are the one to decide what to do and whether what I say fits for you.

Several types of psychotherapeutic methods may be used in your therapy. These can include talking about your concerns; identifying thoughts, behaviors, feelings, and goals; writing; drawing or other creative activities; guided imagery; hypnosis; use of therapeutic touch; psychodrama/role playing. The choice of which methods to use is based on what you are comfortable with and my professional judgment of what would be beneficial.

### Appointment Hours

Daytime office hours are available Monday through Friday. All appointments must be scheduled in advance. We will talk over which length of session is most appropriate for your therapy. If you arrive late for the session we end at the pre-scheduled ending time.

### Cancellation Policy

If you are unable to keep your appointment, I request that you cancel it by phone at least 24 hours before your appointment time. A full session fee will be charged if your appointment is canceled with less than 24 hours notice. This notice period consists of business days, not weekends or holidays, as "hours" of notice. For example, cancellations for Monday appointments must be phoned in the previous Friday by Monday's appointment time. **Cancellations are accepted by phone/voicemail only (not email).** Insurance companies do not pay for canceled or missed sessions.

### Telephone Service/Messages

Messages may be left on my voice mail 24 hours a day. I will try to return your call as soon as I can. Phone messages left after 6:00 pm on weekdays will be returned as soon as I'm able to on the next business day. Please let me know if you have any concerns related to caller ID (such as my office number being identified at your home or workplace.).

### Fees

I inform clients of the fee for service before or during the first appointment. Fees are expected to be paid in full at the start of each session. If you are using medical insurance, the amount you pay depends on what type of insurance you have. You are encouraged to discuss any questions you have regarding payment in the first meeting, as well as throughout the course of therapy

### Emergencies

My practice is not set up to deal directly with crises between sessions. If you have an emotional emergency, here are some 24-hour mental health emergency resources available by phone:

- 1) Crisis Connection: **612-379-6363**;
- 2) Community Outreach for Psychiatric Emergencies (COPE) provides emergency intervention services 24-hours a day, 7 days per week, when someone is experiencing an emotional crisis that threatens their personal safety. To access a COPE team, call **612-596-1223**. COPE professionals will go to the person in crisis, handle the immediate crisis, and provide a clinical assessment. COPE can arrange for inpatient psychiatric services if necessary or admission to a crisis shelter (during which they also provide case management for a few days). Services are available to adults whose crisis occurs in Hennepin County; clients do not need to reside in Hennepin County.
- 3) **Dial 211** and ask for the mental health crisis line in your county.
- 4) Go to any Emergency Room of a hospital. If you are admitted to a hospital, please leave me a phone message letting me know about it.

### Privacy and Confidentiality

My practice is independent of other agencies. Confidentiality of information and records is strictly maintained. Client files include the dates and type of contact (e.g., session, phone calls), fees paid, consultation sought, brief notes about the sessions, and any correspondence. Except in the situations described below, nobody other than you or I can obtain access to anything in your file without a release of information form signed by you. The release of information form authorizes me to provide information to a specific person or agency and is not a general release to everyone. Please discuss any concerns you have about this. I will retain therapy records for a minimum of 10 years. Please let me know if you have any confidentiality concerns related to caller I.D. (such as my number being identified at your home or workplace.)

**Exceptions:** I am required by law to break confidentiality to prevent physical harm from occurring to you or another person. I am required to break confidentiality if I have knowledge of, or reasonable cause to believe that a child or a vulnerable adult is being neglected or physically or sexually abused. I am required to report knowledge I have of prenatal exposure to controlled substances (cocaine, heroin, phencyclidine, methamphetamine, and amphetamine or their derivatives). I am required to report sexual misconduct and certain other unethical behaviors by mental health and some medical professionals. If I am subpoenaed by court, I must give the court access to your records, unless you go through a legal procedure to block me from releasing your records. In the event of your death, it is possible for the representative of your estate to gain access to your records through legal procedures. If you have a large unpaid bill and have refused to make payment arrangements, your name may be given to a collection agency to facilitate payment. Insurance companies require you to give them access to the records if they are to pay for services. The Affordable Healthcare Act requires me to provide information from your records to your insurance company or their representatives to help them do healthcare research and audits.

You have the right to see your file. If you request a copy of your records there may be a fee for copying and the time involved. A legal exception to your right to have a copy of your file is if I determine that having the information would be detrimental to your physical or mental health, or would be likely to cause you to harm yourself or someone else. In that case I may be able to provide the information to an appropriate third party or to another mental health provider.

### Ending Therapy

I ask that you have a closure session with me when the time comes to end therapy, in order to review your therapy progress and give each of us the opportunity to say good-bye.

### Consultation

I have an independent practice. To ensure quality of service, I have periodic consultation with several colleagues. Confidentiality is respected in all discussions of clients.

### Diagnosis

A psychiatric diagnosis is given to you for the purpose of assessment and for reimbursement by insurance. I will talk with you about which diagnosis or diagnoses fit best. I will get your opinion on it and will answer questions you have about diagnoses.

### Insurance

You are encouraged to investigate your health insurance company's coverage of outpatient mental health services. Due to the wide variety of types of insurance coverage available, I make no guarantee that any particular company will provide payment for the services rendered. If you have questions regarding coverage, I will be happy to discuss them with you. I can also help you find out what your policy covers. However, a final decision about reimbursement will be made by your insurance carrier.

I will provide you with a receipt of your payments that you can send in to be reimbursed by your insurance company. I do not file insurance claims, except with insurance companies with which I have signed an agreement to do so (ones I am "in-network" with). Again, insurance companies will not pay for canceled or missed appointments. Note: if you have Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Aware Gold of Minnesota, UCare, or PreferredOne, Medicare, or HealthPartners this point still applies.

### Alcohol and Drug Use

Please do not come to sessions under the influence of alcohol or any mood-altering drug. I suggest that you do not use alcohol or mood-altering drugs at all on the day of your therapy session.

### Vacations

I take vacations at times throughout the year. I will inform you in advance and will arrange for continuity of care, if you wish, while I am away.

### Bill of Rights

As a consumer of psychological services, you have the following rights, as outlined by the Minnesota Board of Psychology:

- A. To expect that the provider has met the minimum qualifications of education, training, and experience required by state law for licensure;
- B. To examine public records maintained by the Board of Psychology that contain the credentials of the provider;
- C. To report complaints to the Board of Psychology;
- D. To be informed of the cost of professional services before receiving services;
- E. To privacy as defined and limited by rule and law;
- F. To be free from being the object of unlawful discrimination while receiving psychological services;
- G. To have access to your records as provided in Minnesota Statutes, sections 144.291 to 144.298, except as otherwise provided by law or a prior written agreement;
- H. To be free from exploitation for the benefit or advantage of the provider;
- I. To terminate services at any time, except as otherwise provided by law or court order;
- J. To know the intended recipients of psychological assessment results;
- K. To withdraw consent to release assessment results, unless that right is prohibited by law or court order or is waived by prior written agreement;
- L. To a nontechnical description of assessment procedures; and
- M. To a nontechnical explanation and interpretation of assessment results, unless that right is prohibited by law or court order or is waived by prior written agreement.

The Board of Psychology's contact information is: 2829 University Ave SE Suite 320, Minneapolis, MN 55414, (612) 617-2230 FAX (612) 617-2240, Hearing/Speech Relay: (800) 627-3529 Website: <http://www.psychologyboard.state.mn.us/>