

This document answers some questions often asked about therapy. It is important that we have a mutual understanding of how we will work together. Please read it thoroughly and ask any questions you may have concerning the content.

Psychotherapy

Psychotherapy is a therapeutic relationship between a trained professional and client, working together to accomplish set goals. Research shows that one of the best predictors for success in counseling is the rapport between the client and therapist. Because you will be putting a good deal of time, money and energy into therapy, you should choose a therapist carefully, one whom you believe you will work well with and trust.

My approach toward helping people is collaborative and client-focused, integrating various counseling theories based on need and response of the client. I believe that we develop beliefs about ourselves, others, and the world based on our experiences in life. Consequently, these beliefs have an impact on our behaviors. As the client shares their experiences, I focus on understanding patterns and core beliefs. My role is to actively listen while providing empathy, insight and reflective feedback. All of this is done with the purpose of helping the client reach his/her goals which were set at the beginning of treatment.

As the client, you will generally be expected to come to a 45-minute session once a week. We will identify together the goals you wish to accomplish during our work. You will be encouraged to talk as freely as you can about the problems, concerns and difficulties that are impacting you presently. Occasionally, you may be asked to consider trying a new skill outside of therapy sessions as homework. Open discussion about thoughts, feelings and behaviors, will help to uncover insights beneficial to treatment and growth.

Many factors influence the length of therapy. Initially, the therapist and client may agree on a projected time of termination. However the process for ending therapy will be the result of our collaborative effort. If at any time you wish to stop therapy, I ask that you agree at that point to meet for at least one final session to review and process our work together.

Counselor's Background

I am a Licensed Professional Counselor in the state of Pennsylvania, holding a Master of Arts in Counseling from Eastern University and a Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Studies from Central Bible College. With over 10 years working in the mental health field, I have experience in the areas of: anxiety, depression, chronic mental health illness, anger, grief and loss, trauma and adjustments to significant life changes. My work has allowed me to partner with non-profit agencies, churches, schools and private group practices, providing counseling services in both traditional offices and community settings.

Confidentiality

All information shared in treatment is confidential except in rare or special circumstances, some of which are required by law. These situations include (1) if you express a threat or a serious intent to harm yourself or others; (2) any suspicion of child or elder abuse; (3) a court order to disclose information;* (4) contact with a relative or friend in the event that you experience a medical emergency. In keeping with professional standards of quality care, I may share parts of your case (but not your identity) with other therapists who provide consultation to ensure that I provide high quality service, or who may provide coverage when I am unavailable. These professionals are also obligated to protect your privacy.

If you are a minor, parents or guardians have a right to know how you are doing. I may discuss with them any concerns or worries they or I have about you, or anything you would like me to discuss with them. The specific things you and I talk about will be confidential unless you ask me to discuss them with your parent/guardian or if I believe you to be in danger of harm.

*I do not provide counseling services to those who are court ordered to receive mental health treatment. If you are in need of documentation for legal reasons on your therapy treatment, please contact a forensic psychologist or counselor.

Email Communication, Internet and Social Media Policy

Please be aware that email is not considered fully confidential. That being said, you have the option of contacting me by email for the purpose of brief communication, such as rescheduling appointments. Emails will not be shared with any party except the client, or their legal guardian, without written permission.

The internet and navigation devices can also impact confidentiality. Please be mindful of what you decide to post online or where you “check-in” through mobile devices.

In regard to social media, I do not accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking site. This type interaction can blur the boundaries of our professional therapeutic relationship, as well as potentially breach confidentiality.

Emergencies

In the case of an emergency you will need to call 911 and go to your local emergency room or crisis center. I am not available 24 hours a day. I do have voicemail and check my messages often Monday through Friday. If need be, we can discuss an emergency plan for your location and specific situation.

Insurance

I do not bill insurance for treatment. Your health plan may cover “out of network” services in full or in part. Per your request, a receipt of services can be provided to you in order to be submitted to your insurance provider for possible reimbursement. Please first call your health insurance member services to find out the specifics of what your plan covers.

Payment of fees, no-show and cancellation policy

An individual 45-minute session is \$120. This amount is due at the appointment time and collected at the beginning of each session. Cash, check or online payment, through paypal, are accepted. A 24-hour notice for cancellation is required; otherwise you may be charged a \$50 late cancellation fee. The full cost will be charged for “no-show” appointments. If sessions are missed consistently, the client will be reached out to by their preferred method of contact. If I am unable to make contact after 3 missed sessions, I have the right to terminate the therapy contract and notification will be sent through the mail to the most recent address provided.