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SERVICE AGREEMENT: THIS COPY IS FOR YOUR RECORDS

Psychological Services

In order for psychotherapy to be effective, it is necessary for you to work on issues we talk about both during our sessions and outside of our sessions. Psychotherapy has shown to have many benefits including increased ability to function in various roles in your life such as relationships and school or work. Increased ability to function can lead to greater satisfaction in your roles in life.

About Me:

I received my doctorate in clinical psychology from the University of Denver Graduate School of Professional Psychology in Denver, Colorado and am a licensed psychologist in the state of Colorado. I received a Masters in Counseling Psychology from the University of Colorado, Denver. I completed my Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Syracuse University, New York. I have had 16 years of clinical experience in the mental health field. I have spent the past 7 years in private practice. Prior to this, my experience has included: psychiatric hospitals, residential treatment facilities, elementary schools, and university counseling centers. I am currently an adjunct professor at the University of Denver in the Graduate School of Professional Psychology and teach a course on the Psychology of Grief and Loss.

Sessions

Our first few sessions will involve an evaluation of your needs. Following this process, I will offer you an impression of what therapy would include. You are encouraged to evaluate this information along with your opinion of whether you feel comfortable working with me. If you have questions about my procedures, we should discuss them whenever they arise. If you choose to begin psychotherapy, we will schedule 45-50 minute sessions. The frequency of your sessions will vary according to your needs. The length of treatment varies widely and is often difficult to predict ahead of time. However, we can discuss the length of treatment and I will attempt to give you my best estimate.

Professional Fees

My fee is \$180.00 for the initial evaluation and \$130.00 for follow-up appointments if I am not contracted with your insurance. If I am contracted with your insurance company, it is your responsibility to determine what your co-pay/deductible/financial responsibility is.

You will not be charged for any appointments that are cancelled at least 24 hours in advance. Appointments missed without any notification or are cancelled with 24 hours or less notice are subject to the full amount of that scheduled appointment. It is important to note that insurance companies do not provide reimbursement for cancelled or "no show" sessions. This means that even if your co-payment is typically \$25.00, you would be billed the total amount of a session if you do not show without notice.

Insurance Reimbursement

If you have a health insurance policy, I will bill your insurance as a complimentary service. Although you may choose to use insurance, 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, the process you need to follow to obtain those benefits and the amount of your co-pays, deductibles or other obligations before you begin treatment or whenever your insurance company and/or policy changes. If your insurance company denies payment, you will be billed the total amount for the session and you will be responsible for working with your insurance company to clarify the problems. I will be glad to 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.

Contacting Me

I will make every effort to return routine phone calls the same day that you leave a message. In emergencies, follow the directions on my outgoing voice mail message, and I will be paged and will attempt to return your call as soon as possible. If you are unable to reach me and feel that you cannot wait for me to return your call, contact the nearest emergency room or call 911.

Limits on Confidentiality

The law protects the privacy of all communications between a patient and a psychotherapist. In most situations, I can only release information about your treatment to others if you sign a written authorization form that meets certain legal requirements imposed by HIPAA. There are other situations that require only that you provide written, advance consent. There are some situations where I am permitted or required to disclose information without either your consent or authorization: if a government agency is requesting the information for health oversight activities, I am required to provide it for them, if a patient files a complaint or lawsuit against me, I may disclose relevant information regarding that patient in order to defend myself, if a patient files a worker's compensation claim, I am required to submit a report to the Worker's Compensation Division, if a patient 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. There are some situations in which I am legally obligated to take actions, which I believe are necessary in attempt to protect others from harm and I may have to reveal some information about a patient's treatment: if I have reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect or if I have observed a child being subjected to circumstances or conditions that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, the law requires that I file a report with the appropriate governmental agency. Once such a report is filed, I may be required to provide additional information, if a patient communicates a serious threat of imminent physical violence against a specific person or persons, I must make an effort to notify such person; and/or notify an appropriate law enforcement agency; and/or take other appropriate action including seeking hospitalization of the patient. If any such a situation arises, I will make every effort to fully discuss it with you before taking any action and I will limit my disclosure to what is necessary. 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 now or in the future. The laws governing confidentiality can be quite complex. In situations where specific advice is required, you may need to get formal legal advice.

Professional Records

You should be aware that, pursuant to HIPAA, I keep Protected Health Information about you in professional records. Your Clinical Record includes information about your reasons for seeking therapy, a description of the ways in which your problem impacts on your life, your diagnosis, the goals that we set for treatment, your progress towards these goals, your medical and social history, your treatment history, any past treatment records that I receive from other providers, reports of any professional consultations, your billing records, and any reports that have been set to anyone, including reports to your insurance carrier. Your Clinical Record may be contained in both an electronic and paper record, and both are secured per HIPAA requirements.

Patient Rights

You are entitled to receive information about my methods of therapy, techniques used, the duration of therapy (if it can be determined), and the fee structure and policies I use. You have the right to decide not to receive psychotherapy from me. If you wish, I can provide you with the names and phone numbers of other qualified mental health professionals. You have the right to end therapy at any time without any moral or legal obligations or without incurring any further financial obligations. You have the right to avoid a dual relationship with your psychotherapist. The relationship with your psychotherapist should remain strictly professional. In this regard, it is unethical and illegal for a psychotherapist to engage in any sexual behavior with any client, at any time. If any sexual behavior occurs, a written complaint should be sent to The Colorado State Board of Psychological Examiners or a phone call should be made to that agency. The address, phone number and website for that agency are listed elsewhere in this agreement.

Minors and Parents

Patients under 15 years of age who are not emancipated and their parents should be aware that the law may allow parents to examine their child's treatment records, unless I decide that such access is likely to injure the child. Because privacy in psychotherapy is often crucial to successful progress, particularly with young people, it is my policy to request an agreement from parents that they consent to give up their access to their child's records. By signing this document they agree to this request and understand that, I will provide them only with general information about the progress of the child's treatment, and his/her attendance at scheduled sessions.