



INFORMED CONSENT FOR PSYCHOTHERAPY

General Information

The therapeutic relationship is unique in that it is a highly personal and at the same time, a contractual agreement. Given this, it is important for us to reach a clear understanding about how our relationship will work, and what each of us can expect. This consent will provide a clear framework for our work together. Feel free to discuss any of this with me. Please read and indicate that you have reviewed this information and agree to it by filling in the checkbox at the end of this document.

The Therapeutic Process

You have taken a very positive step by deciding to seek therapy. The outcome of your treatment depends largely on your willingness to engage in this process, which may, at times, result in considerable discomfort. Remembering unpleasant events and becoming aware of feelings attached to those events can bring on strong feelings of anger, depression, anxiety, etc. There are no miracle cures. I cannot promise that your behavior or circumstance will change. I can promise to support you and do my very best to understand you and repeating patterns, as well as to help you clarify what it is that you want for yourself.

Confidentiality

The session content and all relevant materials to the client's treatment will be held confidential unless the client requests in writing to have all or portions of such content released to a specifically named person/persons. Limitations of such client held privilege of confidentiality exist and are itemized below:

1. If a client threatens or attempts to commit suicide or otherwise conducts him/her self in a manner in which there is a substantial risk of incurring serious bodily harm.
2. If a client threatens grave bodily harm or death to another person
3. If the therapist has a reasonable suspicion that a client or other named victim is the perpetrator, observer of, or actual victim of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect of children under the age of 18 years or a vulnerable adult.
4. If a court of law issues a legitimate subpoena for information stated on the subpoena.
5. If a client is in therapy or being treated by order of a court of law, or if information is obtained for the purpose of rendering an expert's report to an attorney.
6. Therapist's duty to report prenatal exposure to cocaine, heroin, phencyclidine, methamphetamine, and amphetamine, THC (marijuana), excess & habitual use of alcohol or their derivatives.
7. Therapist's duty to report the misconduct of mental health or health care professionals.
8. Therapist's duty to provide a spouse or parent of a deceased client access to their child or spouse's records.
9. Therapist's duty to provide parents of minor children access to their child's records. Minor clients can request, in writing, that particular information not be disclosed to parents. Such a request should be discussed with the therapist.
10. Therapist's obligations to contracts (e.g. to employer of client, to an insurance carrier or health plan).
11. In case of emergency – including serious injury or concern of serious injury to client, therapist will have the option of contacting client's emergency contact noted in the registration.

If we see each other accidentally outside of the therapy office, I will not acknowledge you first. Your right to privacy and confidentiality is of the utmost importance to me, and I do not wish to jeopardize your privacy. However, if you acknowledge me first, I will be more than happy to speak briefly with you, but feel it appropriate not to engage in any lengthy discussions in public or outside of the therapy office.

Consultation/Collaboration

Occasionally I may need to consult with other professionals in their areas of expertise in order to provide the best treatment for you. Information about you may be shared in this context without using your name.

Turning Leaf Therapy reserves the right as an agency to consult with other licensed professionals contracted with Turning Leaf Therapy regarding client’s treatment and records, in efforts to provide competent care. All professionals operating under Turning Leaf Therapy are bound by the same limits of privacy and confidentiality.

Client’s Rights

When receiving psychotherapy clients have the following rights:

1. You have the right to be treated with respect, dignity and consideration and be free from discrimination based on race, religion, gender or any other unlawful category while receiving services.
2. You have the right to confidentiality of information provided or obtained during the therapy process within the limits of the law.
3. You have the right to expect that your therapist has the training and education required by law and to examine public records about your therapist.
4. You have the right to obtain a copy of the code of ethics from your therapist’s board
5. You have the right to be free of exploitation for the benefit or advantage of the therapist.
6. You have the right to review your file with your therapist.
7. You have the right to be informed on the cost of services before receiving them.
8. You have the right to obtain a referral to other appropriate services.
9. You have the right to refuse treatment at any point.
10. You have the right to report any grievances about a therapist to the therapist’s supervisor and/or licensing board to which the therapist belongs. Grievances reportable include: sexual harassment, sexual advances, initiating or participating in social relationships and/or sexual behavior on the part of the therapist.

BY SIGNING BELOW, I AM AGREEING THAT I HAVE READ, UNDERSTOOD AND AGREE TO THE ITEMS CONTAINED IN THIS DOCUMENT.

Client Signature: _____ Date: _____

Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

PRACTICE POLICIES

Appointments and Cancellations:

Please remember to cancel or reschedule 24 hours in advance. You will be responsible for the entire fee if cancellation is less than 24 hours.

The standard meeting time for psychotherapy is 53 minutes. It is up to you, however, to determine the length of time of your sessions. Requests to change the 53 minute session needs to be discussed with the therapist in order for time to be scheduled in advance.

A \$10.00 service charge will be charged for any checks returned for any reason for special handling.

Cancellations and re-scheduled session will be subject to a full charge if NOT RECEIVED AT LEAST 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE, unless prohibited by law. This is necessary because a time commitment is made to you and is held exclusively for you. If you are late for a session, you may lose some of that session time. If you have three no-show or late cancellations your services may be terminated.

Billing and Payments and Insurance:

If paying privately, session fees are due at time of service.

If you are billing insurance, you understand that you are financially responsible for all charges whether or not paid by insurance. You understand that co-pays are also due at time of service (unless your insurance requires another arrangement). Clients are responsible for checking their coverage and knowing if there is a deductible that needs to be met at time of appointment, and how much it is, as well as the amount of their copay. You are also authorizing the healthcare provider to release all information necessary to secure the payment of benefits and to mail client statements to the insurance carrier.

If you need a receipt of payment please let me know and I will provide one. If your account is 60 days past due and arrangements for payment have not been agreed upon, I have the option of using legal means to secure the payment. This may involve using our collection agency or going through small claims court which will require me to disclose otherwise confidential information. If such legal action is necessary, the client will be responsible for all costs associated with it (collection agencies usually charge between 33-50% of the original amount.)

Our current rates for services are as follows (unless you qualify for our sliding-scale fee option):

- Initial Intake / Diagnostic Assessment: \$200
- Family Therapy (53-60 min): \$175
- Couples Therapy (53-60 mins): \$175
- Individual Therapy (16-37min): \$100
- Individual Therapy (38-52min): \$150
- Individual Therapy (53 + mins): \$175

Telephone Accessibility:

If you need to contact me between sessions, please leave a message on my voice mail. I am often not immediately available; however, I will attempt to return your call within 24 hours. Please note that Face- to-face sessions are highly preferable to phone sessions. However, in the event that you are out of town, sick or need additional support, phone sessions are available. If a true emergency situation arises, please call 911 or any local emergency room.

Social Media and Telecommunication:

Due to the importance of your confidentiality and the importance of minimizing dual relationships, I do not accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking site (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc). I believe that adding clients as friends or contacts on these sites can compromise your confidentiality and our respective privacy. It may also blur the boundaries of our therapeutic relationship. If you have questions about this, please bring them up when we meet and we can talk more about it.

Electronic Communication:

I cannot ensure the confidentiality of any form of communication through electronic media, including text messages. If you prefer to communicate via email or text messaging for issues regarding scheduling or cancellations, I will do so. While I may try to return messages in a timely manner, I cannot guarantee immediate response and request that you do not use these methods of communication to discuss therapeutic content and/or request assistance for emergencies.

Services by electronic means, including but not limited to telephone communication, the Internet, facsimile machines, and e-mail is considered telemedicine. Telemedicine is broadly defined as the use of information technology to deliver medical services and information from one location to another. If you and your therapist chose to use information technology for some or all of your treatment, you need to understand that: (1) You retain the option to withhold or withdraw consent at any time without affecting the right to future care or treatment or risking the loss or withdrawal of any program benefits to which you would otherwise be entitled. (2) All existing confidentiality protections are equally applicable. (3) Your access to all medical information transmitted during a telemedicine consultation is guaranteed, and copies of this information are available for a reasonable fee. (4) Dissemination of any of your identifiable images or information from the telemedicine interaction to researchers or other entities shall not occur without your consent. (5) There are potential risks, consequences, and benefits of telemedicine. Potential benefits include, but are not limited to improved communication capabilities, providing convenient access to up-to-date information, consultations, support, reduced costs, improved quality, change in the conditions of practice, improved access to therapy, better continuity of care, and reduction of lost work time and travel costs. Effective therapy is often facilitated when the therapist gathers within a session or a series of sessions, a multitude of observations, information, and experiences about the client. Therapists may make clinical assessments, diagnosis, and interventions based not only on direct verbal or auditory communications, written reports, and third person consultations, but also from direct visual and olfactory observations, information, and experiences. When using information technology in therapy services, potential risks include, but are not limited to the therapist's inability to make visual and olfactory observations of clinically or therapeutically potentially relevant issues such as: your physical condition including deformities, apparent height and weight, body type, attractiveness relative to social and cultural norms or standards, gait and motor coordination, posture, work speed, any noteworthy mannerism or gestures, physical or medical conditions including bruises or injuries, basic grooming and hygiene including appropriateness of dress, eye contact (including any changes in the previously listed issues), sex, chronological and apparent age, ethnicity, facial and body language, and congruence of language and facial or bodily expression. Potential consequences thus include the therapist not being aware of what he or she would consider important information, that you may not recognize as significant to present verbally the therapist.

Minors:

If you are a minor, your parents may be legally entitled to some information about your therapy. I will discuss with you and your parents what information is appropriate for them to receive and which issues are more appropriately kept confidential.

Termination:

Ending relationships can be difficult. Therefore, it is important to have a termination process in order to achieve some closure. The appropriate length of the termination depends on the length and intensity of the treatment. I may terminate treatment with you if I determine that the psychotherapy is not being effectively used or if you are in default on payment. If therapy is terminated for any reason or you request another therapist, I will provide you with a list of qualified psychotherapists to treat you. You may also choose someone on your own or from another referral source.

Should you fail to schedule an appointment for three consecutive weeks, unless other arrangements have been made in advance, for legal and ethical reasons, I must consider the professional relationship discontinued.

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Client Signature: _____ Date: _____

Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

**MINNESOTA NOTICE FORM:
Policies and Practices to Protect the Privacy of Your Client's Health Information (HIPAA)**

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW PSYCHOLOGICAL AND MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY AND ASK IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS.

I. Uses and Disclosures for Treatment, Payment, and Health Care Operations

I may use or disclose your protected health information (PHI), for treatment, payment, and health care operations purposes with your consent. To help clarify these terms, here are some definitions:

- “PHI” refers to information in your health record that could identify you.
- “Treatment, Payment, and Health Care Operations”
 - *Treatment* is when I provide, coordinate or manage your health care and other services related to your health care. An example of treatment would be when I consult with another health care provider, such as your family physician or a psychologist.
 - *Payment* is when I obtain reimbursement for your healthcare. Examples of payment are when I disclose your PHI to your health insurer to obtain reimbursement for your health care or to determine eligibility or coverage.
 - *Health Care Operations* are activities that relate to the performance and operation of my practice. Examples of health care operations are quality assessment and improvement activities, business-related matters, such as audits and administrative services, and case management and care coordination.
- “Use” applies only to activities within my [office, clinic, practice group, etc.], such as sharing, employing, applying, utilizing, examining, and analyzing information that identifies you.
- “Disclosure” applies to activities outside of my [office, clinic, practice group, etc.], such as releasing, transferring, or providing access to information about you to other parties.

II. Uses and Disclosures Requiring Authorization

If I need to use or disclose your PHI for purposes outside of treatment, payment, or health care operations I will need an authorization from you. An “authorization” is written permission above and beyond the general consent that permits only specific disclosures.

You may revoke an authorization at any time by notifying me in writing. You may not revoke an authorization to the extent that (1) I have relied on that authorization; or (2) if the authorization was obtained for insurance coverage, and the insurer the right to contest the claim under the policy.

III. Uses and Disclosures with Neither Consent nor Authorization

I may use or disclose PHI without your consent or authorization in the following circumstances:

- **Child Abuse:** If I know or have reason to believe a child is being neglected or physically or sexually abused, or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years, I must immediately report the information to the local welfare agency, police or sheriff's department.
- **Adult and Domestic Abuse:** If I have reason to believe that a vulnerable adult is being or has been maltreated, or if I have knowledge that a vulnerable adult has sustained a physical injury which is not reasonably explained, I must immediately report the information to the appropriate agency in this county. I may also report the information to a law enforcement agency.
“Vulnerable adult” means a person who, regardless of residence or whether any type of service is received, possesses a physical or mental infirmity or other physical, mental, or emotional dysfunction:
 - (i) that impairs the individual's ability to provide adequately for the individual's own care without assistance, including the provision of food, shelter, clothing, health care, or supervision; and
 - (ii) because of the dysfunction or infirmity and the need for assistance, the individual has an impaired ability to protect the individual from maltreatment.
- **Health Oversight Activities:** A state licensing board may subpoena records from me if they are relevant to an investigation it is conducting.

- **Judicial and Administrative Proceedings:** If you are involved in a court proceeding and a request is made for information about the professional services that I have provided you and/or the records thereof, such information is privileged under state law and I must not release this information without written authorization from you or your legally appointed representative, or a court order. This privilege does not apply when you are being evaluated for a third party or where the evaluation is court-ordered. I will inform you in advance if this is the case.
- **Serious Threat to Health or Safety:** If you communicate a specific, serious threat of physical violence against a specific, clearly identified or identifiable potential victim, I must make reasonable efforts to communicate this threat to the potential victim or to a law enforcement agency. I must also do so if a member of your family or someone who knows you well has reason to believe you are capable of and will carry out the threat. I also may disclose information about you necessary to protect you from a threat to commit suicide.
- **Worker's Compensation:** If you file a worker's compensation claim, a release of information from me to your employer, insurer, the Department of Labor and Industry or you will not need your prior approval.

IV. Patient's Rights and Clinician's Duties

- *Right to Request Restrictions* –You have the right to request restrictions on certain uses and disclosures of protected health information. However, I am not required to agree to a restriction you request.
- *Right to Receive Confidential Communications by Alternative Means and at Alternative Locations* – You have the right to request and receive confidential communications of PHI by alternative means and at alternative locations. (For example, you may not want a family member to know that you are seeing me. On your request, I will send your bills to another address.)
- *Right to Inspect and Copy* – You have the right to inspect or obtain a copy (or both) of PHI (and psychotherapy notes) in my mental health and billing records used to make decisions about you for as long as the PHI is maintained in the record. I may deny your access to PHI under certain circumstances, but in some cases, you may have this decision reviewed. On your request, I will discuss with you the details of the request and denial process.
- *Right to Amend* – You have the right to request an amendment of PHI for as long as the PHI is maintained in the record. I may deny your request. On your request, I will discuss with you the details of the amendment process.
- *Right to an Accounting* – You generally have the right to receive an accounting of disclosures of PHI for which you have neither provided consent nor authorization (as described in Section III of this Notice). On your request, I will discuss with you the details of the accounting process.
- *Right to a Paper Copy* – You have the right to obtain a paper copy of the notice from me upon request, even if you have agreed to receive the notice electronically.

V. Complaints

If you are concerned that I have violated your privacy rights, or you disagree with a decision I made about access to your records, you may make a written complaint to me. You may also send a written complaint to the Secretary of the US Department of Health and Human Services.

IV. Effective Date, Restrictions and Changes to Privacy Policy

This notice will go into effect on April 14, 2003. I reserve the right to change the terms of this notice and to make the new notice provisions effective for all PHI that I maintain. Prior to the change taking effect, I will provide you with a revised notice.

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