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Please read and sign. Keep a copy for your records.

#### CONSENT TO TREATMENT

A “therapeutic” or “therapist-client” relationship does not exist until after initial assessment is completed and we have decided to work together. It is important that we both agree that we are a good match to work together toward your goal. We will discuss this during the first visit and decide whether or not to proceed, and whether we need to continue the assessment for one or more subsequent visits. It is also important that you be aware of the benefits and limitations of psychotherapy and other services you will be receiving. While it is generally expected that you will benefit from therapy, there may be periods of feeling worse before feeling better and there is no guarantee of success in therapy. Other options for counseling include talking with other professionals, your clergy person, or choosing to let the situation remain the same. I encourage you to become aware of these options and to ask any questions you may have at any time during our work together.

Counseling is not an overnight process or a “quick fix”. It is not possible for me to guarantee how long it will take for you to satisfactorily resolve the problems that brought you to therapy. However, I do believe that change is possible for everyone if they are willing. It is this commitment that I look for when deciding to work with a client. I cannot fix you or change you but I will collaborate with you to help you change yourself and your circumstances. Please remember that as a client you are in control and may choose to end our therapeutic relationship at any time. A successful outcome for our work together is that a time will come when you feel able to face life’s challenges without my support or intervention.

#### RELATIONSHIP

Although our relationship may be friendly and very intimate psychologically, it is important to understand that we have a professional relationship rather than a social one. Our contact will be limited to sessions you will arrange with me. My ethical code does not allow me to accept invitations to social gatherings, accept gifts, or relate to you in any way other than in the professional context. You will be best served while I am seeing you for counseling if our relationship stays strictly professional and if our sessions concentrate exclusively on your concerns.

#### CONFIDENTIALITY

State law protects the confidential nature of the therapist-client relationship but this protection is not absolute. I will not release clinical information to anyone unless given written permission to do so by the client (or if the client is a minor, by his or her parent or guardian). However, there are a few exceptions that allow or require the release of confidential information even in the absence of client consent.

Examples include:

1) The therapist must act appropriately when there is danger to the client or to another person at the client’s hands. Generally, this means that the therapist may involve others when it is necessary to protect the client

if he/she is suicidal or unable to provide self-care at a level necessary for basic survival, or to prevent harm to another person. State law also requires the reporting of abuse or neglect of a child or an elderly or disabled person when there is a reason to believe it has occurred.

2) In response to a *court order*, the therapist must testify or release records. However, a therapist does not release records, depose or testify in response to a *subpoena* unless the client or client's guardian has given written authorization to do so or if the therapist is required by law to do so.

3) As professionals, we do consult with one another from time to time. Any clinical material is conveyed without identification whenever possible.

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Signature

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Date