

## **COUNSELLING CONTRACT**

It is often a big step to enter individual or couples' counselling. Congratulations! In order to get the most out of this experience it will be helpful to read and think about the following information. If you have any questions or concerns raise them with your counsellor at the beginning of the next session. When you are sure that you are clear on the terms of the contract, sign it and your counsellor will also sign it and give you a copy.

### **1. THE TERMS OF THE CONTRACT**

The terms of the treatment contract are important. They help you to know what to expect. They include the fees you pay, the time of your appointments, the frequency of sessions and what you and your counsellor expect from each other.

### **2. CONFIDENTIALITY**

All sessions will be conducted in confidence and may be recorded on audiotape (only with your informed consent). Normally, what you talk about with your counsellor will be kept confidential. There are certain exceptions to this, for example if you tell your counsellor about some activity that is illegal or if the safety of a minor is involved – under such circumstances the counsellor must obey the law, which overrides the normal rules of confidentiality.

Your counsellor has regular supervision and may take your case to supervision. This is to ensure that the best possible service is offered to clients and it is the professional responsibility of any counsellor to access regular supervision. Personal details will be kept to a minimum to protect your identity.

### **3. CANCELLATIONS**

You are expected to give at least 24 hours notice of any cancellation, otherwise you are expected to pay for the session. The counsellor will also do her best to give reasonable notice of any changes.

### **4. CONTINUITY**

Continuity of sessions is important. Let's say you have agreed to weekly sessions. It would be disruptive to suddenly change this; if, however you find that you are wanting to make a change to the arrangements then you need to discuss this with your counsellor.

**5. MAKING THE MOST OF EACH SESSION**

Clients who get the most out of counselling are usually the ones who use their session time to increase awareness, learn new skills and be actively involved in getting what they want from the sessions.

They are also the ones who are willing to try out new behaviours in between sessions and take time to reflect on the work. Sometimes it is helpful to write or draw after a session and bring this to your next session.

If, at any time, you are left with concerns or discomfort from a session it is very important that you tell your counsellor about this either when it is happening or at the next session.

**6. TERMINATION**

When you feel ready to finish your counselling it is important to bring this up with your counsellor so that together you can plan for ending your work in a satisfactory way. This may take several sessions to accomplish.

**7. OUT OF SESSION CONTACT**

Sometimes clients want extra contact with their counsellor. It is inadvisable to mix a social and a therapeutic relationship. Sometimes you may accidentally meet your counsellor outside of the sessions – it is important to tell her how you want to handle this.

I have read the above information. I have discussed any questions or concerns with my counsellor. I agree to the terms of this contract.

**CLIENT/S**

SIGNED.....

.....  
(Print Name)

DATE.....

**COUNSELLOR**

SIGNED.....

.....  
(Print Name)

DATE.....