



## Contract for Therapy Sessions.

### 1. Introduction.

This is a written agreement between us to define what our way of working together will be over the period of time in which we are working together. The aim is to help you understand what is involved with the therapeutic process and the therapeutic relationship, so that you are well informed and know what to expect from the very beginning. We can also use the contract as a guide, if needed, as the work progresses.

This contract is voluntary, and you can end this agreement at any time. I retain the right to terminate this contract at my discretion.

### 2. Confidentiality.

As your therapist I recognise the need to respect confidentiality. As a registered member of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP), I work

within their Ethical Framework, and as such, seek to offer the highest level of confidentiality, consistent with the law and BACP codes. My BACP membership number is 395090.

Normally, the content of each session will be held in confidence between you and, from time to time, myself and my Clinical Supervisor. An important part of the BACP Ethical Framework is that Therapists are supported by a Clinical Supervisor, with whom they discuss their work. This is to ensure that the therapist is working ethically and that the therapy is serving the client in the best way possible. I receive monthly supervision. From time to time, I may discuss aspects of our work with my Clinical Supervisor but would keep your identity anonymised within this. My supervisor is also in possession of my Professional Will. The therapist-supervisor relationship is confidential.

Exceptionally, I will involve outside agencies when harm to a client, or others, is considered a serious risk. In such circumstances, if possible, I will first discuss the situation with you and then agree a course of action. If necessary, I may ask you to sign an 'Authorisation to Share Information' form.

There are circumstances, however, when the law requires me to break confidentiality without informing you or gaining your consent. These relate to the Terrorism Act (2000), the Children Act (1989/2004), the Drug Trafficking Offences Act (1986-amended by the Criminal Justice Act 1993), the Road Traffic Act (1988), and court orders.

If you have any questions or concerns about these limitations to confidentiality, you can discuss them with me at any time.

### 3. Data Protection.

I am registered with the Information Commissioner's Office as a Data Controller and operate within the General Data Protection Regulations. You have rights under Data

Protection law. For further information about your rights, please contact

[www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk).

#### 4. The Therapy Process.

I will explain the therapeutic process and my personal approach during our initial session and as is therapeutically helpful in subsequent sessions. In particular, it is helpful to understand that therapy is not advice giving. The therapist may be likened to a mirror who reflects back to the client themselves in their life. Through this, the client gains new awareness and is equipped with a range of perspectives and choices in their life.

I am trained as a 'Relational Integrative' Therapist. A 'relational' approach means that we are working in this process together – I alongside you. Much of the power in therapy resides in the therapeutic relationship that will form between us. I will be listening and will also offer concepts and reflections. I will offer perspectives which may assist you with finding meaning on your journey through life. An 'integrative' approach means that I draw on several theoretical approaches (Humanistic, Psychodynamic and Compassion-Focussed), so between us we can find a way of working that meets your needs and aims.

Let me know if you have previously had any therapy, and what was helpful and unhelpful for you. This can assist in developing the therapeutic relationship between us.

I offer 'open-ended' counselling, which means that we can work together for as long as feels relevant and helpful.

We will agree an initial process length during our first session. Usually this would involve a commitment of 6 further sessions. If after these 7 sessions, you wish to close your process, we would book one final session to complete an 'ending'. The full process would be a total of 8 sessions.

If you do not wish to close your process after 8 sessions, we can continue in an open-ended fashion and agree a closure when you are ready to do so. Depending on the length of our process together, we will agree a length of time for closing our work.

Ideally, sessions would be weekly, but some clients prefer fortnightly. This is specific to each therapeutic relationship and can be discussed openly.

If at any point you feel that you need to leave the process earlier than originally discussed, we would work with what you are feeling and arrange an ending process or session accordingly.

#### 5. Our Commitment to Sessions.

Appointments are 60 minutes duration and at present are online (via Zoom) or telephone.

Please contact me via telephone on 07949 430554 (please leave a voicemail if I am unable to answer) at the earliest opportunity if you realise that you will be unable to attend a session. If you fail to notify me 24 hours prior to your appointment that you are not attending – even in the event of illness- you will be charged the full session fee of £40.

Please give me a week's notice if you need to change your session time or day.

I commit to give you as much notice as possible regarding any absence on my part. If I am unable to attend a session, you will not be charged for that session, and I would endeavour to offer alternative dates and times.

If you fail to attend 2 consecutive sessions without notice, no further appointments will be offered.

If you would like to discuss this, please do not hesitate to bring it to your session.

## 6. Our Commitment Between Sessions.

This contract limits our contact between sessions solely for the purpose of administrative planning between us. We can agree your preferred mode of communication for this – phone call, text or email.

I am only contactable within office hours Monday to Friday.

This contract does not provide the client with a 'crisis service'. If you urgently need help or support outside of our arranged session times, please reach out to the crisis service providers.

It will be important for you to discover how you reflect between sessions – journaling, jotting down notes, visual representations. Creating intentional reflection time during your day and week can enhance the impact of your sessions. Paying attention to your 'take-away' from each session and how you sit with it, is a habit to cultivate.

## 7. Note-taking.

Factual notes will be made regarding each session. Notes will be stored securely until 5 years after the date of our last session.

It is your right as a client to request to see your notes.

## 8. Medication.

Please let me know if you are taking any medication. Some medication may affect the counselling process.

If you are receiving any other form of therapy, please let me know. It is not advisable to receive more than one type of counselling or psychotherapy at the same time.

Therapy will not take place if you appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

## 9. Costs and Payment.

My fee is £40 per 60-minute session. Fees may be subject to change, though I would provide 2 months' notice. If you are experiencing financial difficulties, please bring this to your session in order that we can discuss options.

Payment must be received no more than 24 hours following your session.

Payment is via BACS.

With warmest wishes,

Sarah Hird, BVM&S, MRCVS, PGCE, PGDip Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapy, MBACP.

07949 430 554

[sarahhirdcounselling@protonmail.com](mailto:sarahhirdcounselling@protonmail.com)

I have read and understand the above contractual agreement and commit to abide by its terms.

Client signature:

Client name printed:

Therapist: Sarah Hird

Therapist signature: *Sarah Hird*

Date: