

## PRACTICE POLICIES

### ***PRIOR AND CONCURRENT TREATMENT & RECORDS***

Fully advising your psychotherapist of your physical and emotional condition is important. To ensure that services are consistent with current and prior treatment and that important acts leading to your diagnosis and treatment are not overlooked, you hereby authorize your psychotherapist to communicate and obtain records from current and prior treating professionals. At the outset of seeking psychotherapeutic services, it may be advisable for you to see a physician to rule out any condition which might contribute to your difficulties.

### ***APPOINTMENT SCHEDULING AND CANCELLATION POLICIES***

Scheduling an appointment involves the reservation of time specifically for you. Once an appointment is scheduled, you are expected to keep it unless you provide a minimum of 24 hours prior notice to cancel or to reschedule or we both agree that you were unable to appear due to circumstances beyond your control. If you do not provide your therapist with at least 24 hours notice in advance, you are responsible for full payment for the missed session. Unfortunately, if you bring under-age children who must wait outside, we may have to reschedule your appointment.

### ***THERAPIST AVAILABILITY/EMERGENCIES***

Out of respect for you, your psychotherapist usually does not answer the telephone when seeing patients; the phone is answered 24 hours a day by voicemail which is monitored regularly. If you wish your therapist to return your call, please be sure to leave your name and phone number(s), along with a brief message concerning the nature of your call. Calls are returned during normal workdays usually within 48 hours. Your psychotherapist cannot guarantee a phone response within a certain period of time; if you are unable to reach the psychotherapist and cannot wait, call your family physician, the nearest emergency room, or 911.

### ***ABOUT THE THERAPY PROCESS***

It is your therapist's intention to provide services that will assist you in reaching your goals. Based upon the information that you provide to your therapist and the specifics of your situation, your therapist will provide recommendations to you regarding your treatment. We believe that therapists and patients are partners in the therapeutic process. You have the right to agree or disagree with your therapist's recommendations. Your therapist will also periodically provide feedback to you regarding your progress and will invite your participation in the discussion. Due to the varying nature and severity of problems and the individuality of each patient, your therapist is unable to predict the length of your therapy or to guarantee a specific outcome as a result.

### ***TERMINATION OF THERAPY***

The length of your treatment and the timing of the eventual termination of your treatment depend on the specifics of your treatment plan and the progress you achieve. It is a good idea to plan for your termination, in collaboration with your therapist. Your therapist will discuss a plan for termination with you as you approach the completion of your treatment goals. You may discontinue therapy at any time. If you or your therapist determines that you are not benefiting from treatment, either of you may elect to initiate a discussion of your

treatment alternatives. Treatment alternatives may include among other possibilities, referral, changing your treatment plan, or terminating your therapy.

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.

***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 by the State of California. Under the California Telemedicine Act of 1996, 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.

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