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INFORMED CONSENT FOR TREATMENT

If you have any questions regarding anything on this form, please discuss them with me during your first session.

PHILOSOPHY

I believe that sensitivity, professionalism, and respect for human dignity are fundamental to addressing the spiritual and emotional needs of people of all ages. I will respect the beliefs, whatever they may be, of all clients. I see people from many different faith traditions and believe that through creating authentic relationships individuals can integrate their beliefs into a healthier emotional and spiritual lifestyle.

COUNSELING

Counseling is an opportunity for healing and personal growth. I believe that individuals can possess the ability to do what is necessary to take an active role in this process. Psychotherapy involves change, which may feel threatening not only to you but also to those people close to you. At times you may feel more vulnerable as you face painful information and behaviors. At the same time, psychotherapy can aid you in discovering tools and techniques that you can use to improve the quality of your life and your relationships. If the disclosure of past hurts or current struggles causes a temporary increase in depressive or anxious symptoms, please share them during a session.

During the counseling process I may recommend books for you to read, offer handouts, or use techniques such as Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) to facilitate the processing of trauma and personal growth. I encourage you to discuss with me any approach, technique, or practice with which you have questions, concerns, or need clarification. Counseling can be a difficult experience for some people.

The relationship that exists between a counselor and a client is professional rather than social. Therefore, contact with me will only take place in the provision of a professional service. Your written consent is required to disclose any information about you or your family to individuals outside of your counseling. The length of time needed for counseling and the amount of intervention required varies with each individual. In order to receive the maximum benefits of counseling, *your regular attendance and participation is imperative*. In most cases, counseling is completely voluntary and you can discuss ending your counseling relationship at any time. However, we recommend that, when possible, all counseling relationships be ended in an appropriate and therapeutic manner, generally requiring a final session to allow for closure.

SCHEDULING AND SERVICES

Appointment Times and Cancellations: Session's (meaning a face to face consultation) ideal duration is 53 minutes – 50 minutes for consultation and 3 minutes for closing remarks and scheduling. It is important that all sessions begin on time. If you arrive late, your therapist will still have to end on time and you will be charged for the full session. If your therapist causes a late start, you will still have your full session. **A minimum of 48 hours notice is required for rescheduling or canceling any appointment.**

Legal proceedings: In the event that you involve me in legal proceedings, it will be assessed a charge of \$200 per hour. This is due to the fact that I will be required to prepare and provide information at your request. This fee will cover any activities related to legal proceedings, including but not limited to telephone time, preparing reports, testifying, waiting to testify, and travel time.

Telephone consultations: It will be charged in 15-minute increments of your hourly rate. This only applies to consultations. This does NOT apply to regular business phone calls such as appointment scheduling or requests for specific information.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is described as keeping private the information shared between a client and his/her counselor. Counseling sessions are strictly confidential. Information regarding your counseling sessions will not be discussed without your permission. Counselors are required to break confidentiality in instances of suspected or known child abuse, abuse to the elderly or disabled, or knowledge that a client is a danger to himself/herself or to someone else.

In any of the previous situations the counselor must report the suspicion or knowledge of abuse to the proper licensing board or authorities. Additionally, court orders requiring the release of counseling records may result in the release of those records. In reference to the treatment of minors, risk-taking behavior that is considered detrimental to the safety of the minor or others will be shared with the minor's parent(s) and/or guardian.

Participants who are in couples and/or family counseling and are or become involved in individual counseling will have discretion over their own information becoming part of a counseling session involving other family members. Individuals involved in group counseling are required to maintain the confidentiality of the other group members outside of the group sessions.

CLINICIAN

As the client you have the right to ask questions of your therapist about professional qualifications, treatment objectives, and the plan of your therapy at any time in the therapeutic process.

APPOINTMENTS

Counseling services are by appointment only. You are responsible for keeping your appointments and arriving on time. I retain the right to discontinue services if you have missed more than two consecutive appointments, if a pattern of missed and/or late appointments occur, if you do not pay your counseling fees in a timely manner, if you continually refuse to comply with treatment recommendations, if it is clear that you are receiving no benefits from counseling, if you exhibit abusive behavior, if you engage in criminal behavior on the premises, or if you knowingly violate the confidentiality of other clients; e.g. – group settings. I cannot allow unattended minors in the waiting room. If you do not have child care arranged, please call to reschedule your appointment. Parents and/or guardians must remain in the waiting room during their child's counseling session.

MISSED APPOINTMENTS

Since appointments are in high demand, please help me meet the needs of others by keeping your scheduled appointment. In order to maximize the benefits of therapy, it is very important that all scheduled appointments be

attended. The consistency of attending therapy sessions assures that you will obtain maximum treatment benefit and assists you in meeting your goals. Missed or late appointments disrupt therapy schedules, which impacts you, your therapist, and other patients.

You will be billed your regular fee for missed appointments, or appointments cancelled in less than 48 hours of the scheduled appointment time. Insurance clients will be charged the contracted rate for their session (varies based on individual plans), as I cannot bill insurance for sessions that do not take place.

STANDARD FEES

Standard fee for a counseling session is \$120. Payment is due at time of service. I accept Oscor, Friday Health Plans, Optum, Aetna and United Health Care insurance plans at this time. If you would like a receipt for partial reimbursement to submit to your insurance plan that accepts out-of-network providers, I will be happy to provide one.

CONSENT TO DISCLOSE INFORMATION

At times, I may need to consult with other professionals or agencies on your behalf. Your signed consent to disclose information to other agencies and/or individuals will be required. Exceptions may include a subpoena by the court of law. If you have received or are currently receiving mental health services and/or psychotropic medications from another health care provider I may request your consent to speak with those professionals and/or obtain copies of previous treatment records. Providing treatment may depend on my ability to communicate with these professionals. If you are using insurance, it will be necessary to disclose limited diagnostic and treatment plan information to your insurance provider for the authorization of payment by third party payers.

TREATMENT OF A MINOR

I generally require the consent of both parents prior to providing any services to minor children. If any questions exist I may ask you to provide supporting legal documentation, such as custody order, prior to commencement of services.

A minor client will benefit most from psychotherapy when his/her parents, guardians, or other caretakers are supportive of the therapeutic process. If your child is the client, you are an important part of the therapeutic process and your ongoing involvement is essential for the best outcome. You may be asked to be involved in each session for all or part of the session. Family sessions also work best if parents are regularly involved.

COMMUNICATION

You can reach me by calling 775.283.8738. If I am unavailable, or you have called after hours, you can leave a message. Your call will be returned at my earliest availability. If you are in crisis, and it is after hours, please call one of the following numbers:

Hill Country MHDD Centers

Mental Health Crisis?

1.877.466.0660

Operated 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

24 hours / 7 days

- **911**

An individual who wishes to file a complaint against a Licensed Professional Counselor may write to:

Complaints Management and Investigative Section
P.O. Box 141369
Austin, Texas 78714-1369

or call 1.800.942.5540 to request the appropriate form or obtain more information.