



## Informed Consent for Covered Psychotherapy

Welcome to my practice. This document contains important information about my professional services and business policies. Feel free to ask any questions you have. When you sign this document, it will represent an agreement between us.

### PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

I am a licensed clinical psychologist with a doctoral degree in clinical psychology, and I provide a range of psychotherapy services including assessment, psychotherapy and consultation, and covered therapy for colleagues and their clients. As a covered therapist, I am available to support you in crisis situations or check in to discuss something that is comping up for the period that your therapist is away or unavailable.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

I strive to protect the confidentiality and privacy of everybody I work with. In general, the privacy of all communications between a client and a psychologist is protected by law, and I can and will only release information about our work to others with your written permission. If it feels appropriate for me to talk to somebody in your world (partner, health care provider) we can complete a written release and discuss goals for the chat. However, there are a few exceptions.

There are some situations in which I am legally obligated to take action to protect you and others from harm, even if I have to reveal some information about you. If this occurs, I am required to contact the appropriate agency. I will always inform you about the process and work with you as we go through the process of the report.

- If you describe abuse towards a child, elderly person, or disabled person
- If you describe thoughts of engaging in serious bodily harm towards another
- If you discuss engaging in or considering acts of serious harm or death aimed at yourself
- If you disclose that you or others have accessed, streamed, or downloaded material where a child is engaged in an obscene sexual act
- In most legal proceedings, you have the right to prevent me from providing any information about your treatment. In some proceedings involving child custody and those in which your emotional state is an important issue, a judge may order my testimony if deemed necessary.

-As a covered therapist, I will provide a summary of what we discuss to your regular therapist. If you tell me something that you do not want me to disclose, I can't hold a secret but we can work together to decide how to proceed.

Sometimes we might discuss activities that are defined by our systems as illegal or might be deemed by some as high risk, such as use of substances, or sex work. I will always adhere to the above confidentiality policies and will not disclose any information you share unless required by law. In those events, I will limit my discussion of any activities that challenge our systems unless you consent to me doing so and we have a good reason for these disclosures.

I work with another therapist, Tim Lewis, Psy.D., as my own covered therapist. If I am ill or unable to attend an appointment and contact you directly, he may contact you to inform you of the change and next steps in re-scheduling. In the case of an emergency, Dr. Lewis may have limited access to your information for the sole purpose of maintaining your confidentiality and preserving any records on your behalf. He will be able to offer assistance and support if you are experiencing a crisis or concern and I am unavailable.

Additionally, I work with a billing person, Beth Jonasson, to make sure that my records accurately reflect what has been paid. Beth has access to your name, and if you use insurance, your address and diagnosis so she can track billing matters. She does not have access to your records or any other personal information.

Divergent Worlds Psychotherapy and Consulting is my private practice. Some record keeping and payment tools we use may occasionally display limited demographic details about you. No personal history or information is ever available to any other practice member. Your information will be held as confidential and we all significantly limit access to shared information.

If you have any questions about any of these confidentiality matters you are welcome to ask for more information, or about ways that this might impact you.

## MEETINGS

We will likely meet for short conversations to address a specific emergency or situation that has arisen.

If we schedule a session, I will usually schedule one 50-minute session per week at a time we agree on, although the frequency can vary depending on need and your plan with your therapist. Once an appointment hour is scheduled, you will be expected to pay for it unless you provide 48 hours [2 days] advance notice of cancellation.

## FEES

Full fees for intake interview and individual 50-minute therapy sessions are based on the rate you pay to your current therapist. I may also charge a portion of this fee for other professional services you may require (such as telephone conversations which last longer than 15 minutes, letters, meetings with other professionals, etc.).

Payment for each session is due at the time that it is held. Payment schedules for other professional services will be agreed to when these services are requested. I accept San Francisco Health Plan/Beacon insurance, and you are welcome to use this insurance if we meet for sessions.

I do not accept most insurance plans, and can offer you a superbill if we meet for sessions that you can submit to your insurance company if they offer reimbursement. If you are paying for services through an insurance company, cancelled sessions are not covered by insurance plans in most situations.

I accept payment via cash, check, or credit card. I will always aim to ensure that any payment is done as securely as possible. For credit card processing I use Ivypay. Ivypay is a secure, HIPAA compliant service that allows us to have a credit card on file and automatically charge for sessions after we meet. I will enter in our session and you will receive a text message notice from "Ivy" then you complete the transaction.

After we end our covered therapy time, I will delete any payment information you have provided.

## INSURANCE

Most insurance plans require you to authorize me to provide a clinical diagnosis, and sometimes additional clinical information such as treatment plans or summaries, or in rare cases, a copy of the entire record. This information will become part of the insurance company's record. All insurance companies aim to keep such information confidential, but once it is in their hands, I have no control over what your insurer will do with the information. In most situations I will use whatever diagnosis you have on record with your therapist. If that isn't an option, we can discuss alternatives.

## CONTACTING ME

You can contact me using telephone, email, or text. I will do my best to quickly respond whenever possible, and I will make every effort to return your contact on the same day you make it, with the exception of weekends and holidays. Text is OK for schedule changes, and phone or email are preferred for more detailed contact. If you are unable to reach me and feel that you can't wait for me to reply, contact your primary care provider, a friend, or a support line.

## PROFESSIONAL RECORDS

The laws and standards of my profession require that I keep treatment records. You are entitled to receive a copy of the records unless I believe that seeing them would be emotionally difficult, in which case I will be happy to send them to a mental health professional of your choice. I may forward any records to your therapist if we deem that helpful.

## COUPLES AND MULTI-PARTNER THERAPY

I typically work with all partners together in the room at the same time. This maintains a space where everybody gets equal time and space. If a partner shares something with me privately in the process of trying to work through and disclose an issue, I will not disclose these details to your partner without consent. However, I will pass on this information to your ongoing therapist so you can continue the conversation with them.

The couple or relationship is responsible for paying the fee, and the fee can be split in a way that feels comfortable for all partners.

## MINORS

If you are under eighteen years of age, please be aware that the law may provide your parents the right to examine your treatment records. It is my policy to request an agreement from parents that they give up or minimize access to your records. If they agree, I will provide them only with general information about our work together, unless I feel there is a high risk and sharing some details would assist you in accessing safety. Before giving them any information, I will discuss it with you, if possible, and do my best to address any objections you may have with what will be discussed.

## PHYSICAL HEALTH

At times I may suggest that it could be helpful to speak with a health care provider to address symptoms that appear to be impacting you. I may also talk with you about signing a release of information so that I can coordinate services with your providers and support you in your health care needs, if we agree that is needed.

## CLOSING OUR COVERED THERAPY

After your therapist returns, I offer them a review of what we covered in our sessions. Following our covered therapy sessions, I will close out our meetings, and you can return to meeting with your ongoing therapist. If their absence is extended for any reason, we can create a plan to either continue meeting or connect you to another therapist.

Please feel free to ask any questions that you might have. I look forward to working with you.