

## What I offer

I aim to provide a safe place in which you can look at your issues and resolve your difficulties.

I cannot give advice, offer an opinion, or tell you what to do. Instead, I will help you to work through the things you bring, to find your own resolution.

## Working online

I use Zoom for online appointments, and I will send a link to join the meeting before it starts. If we cannot connect via Zoom, I will offer reasonable alternatives. However, my fee is still payable, even if the technology fails, as I have already committed the time to you.

## When we will meet

I will see you once a week, for around 50 minutes, unless we agree to something different. If you arrive early or late for an appointment, I will not be able to see you outside the agreed times.

## How long we will work together

Unless we agree otherwise, I will see you for as long as it is helpful. From time to time, we will review our work together, just to keep things on track. You may finish counselling at any time. Please let me know before our last meeting that you want to finish so that we can plan a proper ending.

## What you will pay

My fees will be \_\_\_\_\_

I can accept payments by card payment or bank transfer. Invoice payment is available to established third party, organisations. Unless otherwise agreed, payment must be made at least 24-hours prior to our appointment.

## Changed/missed appointments

If I must cancel or rearrange an appointment, I will let you know as soon as possible. If I cannot contact you myself, someone else might contact you. They only know your appointment time and contact details. They do not know about the things we discuss.

If you need to cancel or change an appointment, please let me know at least two working days in advance. Otherwise, you will have to pay for the missed/rearranged session, even though you did not attend. If you are more than 15 minutes late without letting me know, I may consider your appointment cancelled. If you miss three meetings, I will assume that you no longer want to participate in therapy and will invoice you for the missed sessions.

## If I see you somewhere else

We would not, typically, have contact outside sessions. If we do meet by chance, I will only acknowledge or speak to you with your prior agreement and would not discuss session material. This practice helps to protect your confidentiality, especially if we are with other people.

## Social media

We have professional social media accounts. While you are welcome to 'follow' them, you are not required or expected to do so. We will not accept friend requests or engage with you through social media.

## Staying the course

Counselling can be demanding and, at times, challenging. Sometimes it can feel like you have said too much. If this happens, it might seem hard to come back. However, it is important to attend regularly, keeping absences to a minimum.

## Is it confidential?

Confidentiality means that what you tell me is kept as private as possible. The only exception to my maintaining confidentiality is if I become seriously concerned about your safety or the safety of others. Where possible, I will discuss with you who I need to talk to and what I'm going to say, in a supportive and open way. Unless it is an emergency, I won't talk to other people about you without discussing it with you first.

If you change, cancel, or fail to attend an appointment, I might have to inform someone of the change. For example, I might have to tell your partner if you were coming as a couple, or those responsible for paying for your counselling. I would inform them that you changed, cancelled, or missed the session, but nothing else.

I have a clinical supervisor and might discuss the things we talk about with them. I will only use your first name, so they will not know who you are. They will keep what is discussed confidential.

If I see you on your own and with others, anything said one-to-one remains confidential between us. However, if you told me something very serious that could impact them, you might have to inform them, too. If you chose not to inform them, I might not be able to continue to work with you.

I keep brief, factual about our sessions, and might record sessions. These notes and recordings form a record of our work together. I might use them in my supervision and ongoing professional training and development, but I would not identify you. They are stored securely and will be destroyed when they are no longer required, or upon my death.

Except as described above, I will not disclose anything we speak about to anyone else (even if they are paying for your counselling) without your explicit consent, a court order or a coroner's request.

While CCTV protects our premises, there is no CCTV in the counselling room. We keep the recordings for a few weeks, then overwrite them.

## COVID-19

We have conducted a COVID-19 risk assessment (<https://counselling-matters.org.uk/covid-19>) and will take all reasonable precautions to protect your health and ours. We are both required to comply with current government advice, including the use of masks and hand sanitiser as appropriate. Please inform me if you, or anyone you are in close contact with, tests positive for the virus within 14 days of our last appointment. If you develop COVID-19 symptoms, please let me know as soon as possible. Do not attend your session if you are unwell or have been advised to self-isolate.

## Track and Trace

If I develop COVID-19 I might be required to give details of those I have been in contact with to the Track and Trace service. While I might have to pass on your contact details, I would not indicate the nature of our relationship.

## Privacy Policy

You have a right to privacy under the General Data Protection Regulations (2018) and other legislation. I have a privacy policy which details the legal basis for underpinning my use of your data, and the personal information I hold about you. A copy is available from <https://counselling-matters.org.uk/privacy-policy>.

## Professional Standards

I am a registered member of a recognised professional body and work to their ethical framework. If you are unhappy with any aspect of my service, please discuss it with me as soon as possible. I will do all I can to resolve any difficulties to your satisfaction. If we are unable to resolve any issue, I will offer the services of an experienced mediator. If you are still not satisfied, you can raise a complaint with my professional body.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / 20\_\_\_\_

© Counselling Matters 2007–2021

