

Informed Consent to Couples Counseling

Please review the following carefully and if you have any questions please feel free to ask me at any time.

Guidelines of Couples Counseling Appointments:

Consistency/Frequency: Couples therapy is more effective when both individuals in the partnership attend appointments in a consistent manner. I will generally meet with you on a weekly basis for 50-80 minutes, which is recommended for effective progress and growth. The frequency of sessions/length of session time may be evaluated during times of crisis, as well as when it is mutually decided and clinically relevant to either increase or decrease the frequency/length of your session. I may also choose to meet with each partner of the couple individually for therapeutic purposes. I will communicate my intention and rationale to you prior to scheduling individual sessions.

Attendance/Cancellations: If you or your partner arrives late for your appointment, the session will only start with both individuals present and the session will still end at the regularly scheduled time.

If, for whatever reason, only one partner shows up to the session, for the sake of the neutrality and symmetry of the therapy, **I will not conduct an individual session.** I apologize in advance for the inconvenience, but it is important that I, as your therapist, maintain neutrality and objectiveness in the couples' counseling relationship. It is, nonetheless, expected that **the full session fee for the session will be paid.**

No Secrets Policy: When a couple enters into counseling, it is considered to be one unit. This means that my allegiance is to the couple "unit," and not to either partner as individuals. I find this is particularly important in creating a space where both partners can feel safe. Therefore, I adhere to a "No Secrets" policy. This means that I will not hold secrets for either partner. This policy is intended to allow me to continue to treat the couple by preventing, to the extent possible, a conflict of interest to arise where an individual's interests may not be consistent with the interests of the unit being treated.

On occasion during the counseling process, individual partners may be seen for an individual counseling session. In this case, the individual session is still considered as part of the couple's counseling relationship. Information disclosed during individual sessions may be relevant or even essential to the proper treatment of the couple or the family. If an individual chooses to share such information with me, I will offer the individual every opportunity to disclose the relevant information and will provide guidance in this process. If the individual refuses to disclose this information within the couple's session, I may determine that it is necessary to discontinue the counseling relationship with the couple. If there is information that an individual desires to address within a context of individual confidentiality, I will be happy to provide referrals to therapists who can provide concurrent individual therapy. This policy is intended to maintain the integrity of the couples/marital counseling relationship.

Confidentiality: I will adhere to the ethical and legal requirements of confidentiality as stated on your individual informed consent form. I cannot, however, ensure that you and your partner will maintain confidentiality about your therapeutic experience including content discussed within the couples' counseling session.

The signatures here show that we each have read, discussed, understand, and agree to abide by the points presented above as indicated by my signature below.

Signature of Client

Date

Signature of Client

Date