

VANCITY COUNSELLING

Agreement for Counselling and Informed Consent
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The purpose of this form is to outline several important elements of the counselling process, with the intention of helping to inform your decision to enter into therapy at Vancity Counselling. Please read the following information thoughtfully and do not hesitate to raise to your counsellor any questions or concerns you might have regarding what you have read.

Counselling Services

Your counsellor utilizes a variety of therapeutic approaches in his or her practice, and as such, will work with you to determine the best course of treatment for you and your particular issue. Should those issues change or evolve over time, your counsellor will inform you of any adjustments in treatment modalities as they occur. This area is always open to discussion, and at any time you are welcome to ask any questions you might have or express any concerns regarding your treatment.

Benefits and Risks of Counselling

You may benefit from counselling by experiencing some positive changes that include gaining personal insight, learning healthy new ways to cope with or solve problems, developing new skills, and/or changing unwanted behaviours. Because challenging personal issues are explored within the counselling relationship, it is also important to remember the potential for risks, which include strong emotions or difficult memories being evoked, changes in self-awareness, and the development of different ways of relating to family and friends.

Client's Responsibilities

Both counsellor and client have responsibilities within the counselling relationship. To the best of his or her ability, your counsellor will be present and prepared at scheduled appointments. As the client, you are responsible for taking an active role in your therapy. You agree to pay the full fee of \$120 per 60-minute appointment, or an amount otherwise agreed upon, once your session is completed. Payment may be made by cash, cheque, or e-mail transfer. Should you need to cancel your appointment, you must give a minimum of 24 hours notice, otherwise you will be charged in full for one missed session. If you arrive late to your appointment and attend only part of your session, you understand that you are responsible to pay the full fee for the entire session, regardless of the time you missed.

Client Rights

The British Columbia Personal Information Privacy Act (PIPA) sets forth the guidelines for how counsellors may collect, use, and disclose information about you, the client. As such, you have:

- A right to ask questions about your counsellor's credentials, to refuse particular therapeutic modalities, and to express concerns about the counselling process.
- A right to access the information in your clinical records or to obtain a copy of those records.
- A right to end counselling at any time.
- A right to file a written complaint with your counsellor's governing body, BCACC, should you have a concern and are not satisfied that your counsellor has addressed it.
- A right to confidentiality as outlined in PIPA.

Electronic Communication Policy (ECP)

Your counsellor may use technology in various ways within counselling, including email, telephone, texts, and Skype. Due to the nature of technology, there are, however, limitations in the security of information shared via each of these electronic mediums. Your counsellor will keep your personal information strictly confidential, and you are encouraged to carefully consider what kind of information you share via emails and text messages.

Your counsellor can be reached by telephone, email, or text message and will respond to you within one business day. If you require emergency mental health services or if you are in crisis, please call the Crisis Centre Hotline of Greater Vancouver at 604-872-3311, dial 9-1-1, or visit the nearest hospital's emergency department.

Social Media Policy (SMP)

To maintain professional boundaries and protect your confidentiality, your counsellor does not initiate or accept 'friend', 'contact', or 'follow' requests from current or past clients on any social networking site (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.). If you have any questions about this, please discuss them with your counsellor.

Confidentiality

All information you share with your counsellor remains confidential and will not be released to anyone without your explicit written consent. There are, however, a few exceptions to this confidentiality:

- If you share information indicating that a child or vulnerable adult is suffering emotional, physical, or sexual abuse or harm, your counsellor is required by law to report the information to the appropriate authorities.
- If there is reasonable cause to believe that you intend to inflict serious imminent harm upon yourself, or that you intend to inflict serious imminent harm upon another person, your counsellor is ethically bound to notify the appropriate authorities.
- If a judge-issued court order requires your counsellor to release the information contained in your records.

Informed consent is a continuous process throughout the counselling relationship. You are always welcome to discuss any questions or concerns you may have with your counsellor.

I, _____, have carefully read and discussed with my counsellor this statement and understand its contents. I understand the counselling services being offered to me, along with any benefits and risks that may be involved in the counselling process. I understand my rights and my responsibilities as a client, as well as my counsellor's responsibilities to me. I understand the limits to confidentiality required by law. I understand that I have the right to end counselling at any time.

Client's Signature

Counsellor's Signature

Date

Date