



ABOUT COUPLES COUNSELING SESSIONS

1. **Limits to Confidentiality:** Duty to Warn/Protect, Abuse (Child, Disabled, 65+), Subpoena's)
2. Any party may request copy of record however, both must sign releases of information for other releases.
3. **Timeliness:** Please be on time or call in advance if unable to attend. If you are unable to attend, someone else may benefit from that time-slot. If you are late, we will use whatever allotted time is left, or if you are very late we may reschedule. You will be charged for session if you are a no-show or do not give advance notice of being late.
4. Repeatedly missing appointments may lead to re-evaluation of need or readiness for therapy.
5. Assignments, if provided should be completed and be prepared to discuss during next session. Couples sessions are scheduled for one hour to an hour and fifteen minutes, depending on need. We will usually wrap up 10-15 minutes before end time.
6. Sessions must end on time and as such, some sessions may have to end on a not so happy note, if so we may do an ice-breaker; please avoid continuing to discuss issues outside of session – feel free to journal and bring in for next session.
7. Try to avoid discussing sensitive issues (those that may lead to arguments) outside of counseling – write down/journal to discuss during next session
8. Therapist will not form alliance with any party. This means you should not call to “tattle” or discuss any issues outside of session.
9. Therapist will not be “secret keeper”. Any issues presented will be discussed during couples sessions, unless there is some issue related to safety.
10. Therapist will never take sides. It may seem that way at times based on the situation however, therapist will always remain neutral and non-judgmental – nothing will surprise therapist.
11. Be aware that couples counseling may go either way. It is not always a fix. The goal is not to fix one person or other, rather to fix relationship.
12. Couple will be encouraged to set goals for treatment; Therapist encourages openness – this is a safe place.
13. Please avoid interrupting each other.
14. Verbal abuse or profanity directed at each other will be interrupted
15. Yelling or arguing during session will be interrupted; if unable to redirect, session will be terminated.
16. If someone becomes upset and needs to take a five-minute break, feel free to say so. If one party leaves and does not come back within a few minutes, session will be terminated.

The following are contraindications to Couple Therapy. If any of these exist, they need to be ameliorated/addressed prior to start of couples counseling.

1. Domestic Violence of any kind (physical, verbal, emotional, etc.): seek batterer's intervention/anger management
2. Ongoing affair
3. Substance Abuse