**Counselling Agreement for Online, Telehealth (phone call) and In-Person Therapy with Rory White at Comprehensive Counselling**

Please read the information below as this sets out the boundaries to our online and telehealth work together. This is an informed consent form and you are asked to read and agree its acceptance before commencing therapy.

Our practitioners have specialist training in conducting both online and telehealth therapy and adhere to the Codes of Ethics & Practice of their professional Accrediting bodies for counselling in Australia. For full details of my Privacy please refer to my website.

**DURATION OF SESSION**

The duration of each therapy session is approximately 50 minutes.

*(Please note that lateness cannot be made up for at the end of the appointment time).*

**PAYMENT OF FEE**

Non-payment for session may result in cessation or delay of future sessions. You will be informed in advance of the next agreed session time, should this arise.

**CANCELLATION / LATE OR MISSED SESSIONS**

Session are organised for an agreed date and time. If you are late attending the session, your therapist will wait in the therapy room or stay online for fifteen minutes to allow for any eventualities. If you do not make contact within this time, then the session will be considered missed and will be cancelled. You will be charged for this. If you are late attending your session, the session will still end on time.

A minimum of 48-hours’ notice is required to cancel a session. Missed appointments with less than the required notice will be charged at the agreed session rate as this does not leave sufficient time to offer the appointment to someone on the waiting list. The cancellation fee may only be waived in the event of a family bereavement or a crisis and not for general ill health or work commitments.

**ONLINE COUNSELLING**

Online counselling sessions will be conducted by video via the Zoom online platform which is secured by end-to-end encryption. It is free and easy to use. A meeting invite will be sent to you via email just prior to the agreed session time and you will need to be ready to connect at the agreed time. No audio or video recordings of session will be made without the express consent of the client.

**Technology Failure**

If technical difficulties are experienced with the online platform, your therapist will contact you to continue the session by phone. If technical difficulties persist the session will be rescheduled.

**Protocol for Attending Sessions**

I work with all clients in a professional manner and I ask that you do not attend sessions under the influence of alcohol or drugs and that you dress appropriately for all video and in-person sessions.

**COMMITMENT TO YOUR THERAPEUTIC PROCESS**

Sessions take place on either a weekly, fortnightly, or possibly every three weeks basis unless otherwise agreed upon. Having made the decision to attend therapy it is important that you develop a routine of attending regular sessions. This is because, when you are dealing with personal issues, consistency in attendance will help you to process the issues you have come to explore and to achieve your therapeutic goals. When you decide to end therapy, it is best to discuss this with me in advance of the last session.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Your therapy is strictly confidential except where your life or the safety of others is threatened; where there are child protection concerns; or where any legal process supersedes the counselling arrangement. In these circumstances I will encourage and support you to seek help with a relevant agency. If it becomes clear that this will not happen, or if the danger is considered very serious, I may pass the information on directly. In such cases the client is encouraged to allow consent for the therapist to help and to provide the right level of support on their behalf. This may include making an onward referral. Please note that I am a mandated reporter under the Children First Act (2015).

If you are under medical supervision your permission may be requested to contact your doctor, however, no information about your counselling will be shared with any third party without your express consent. *(Note: I am required to attend regular supervision, but this does not involve revealing the identity of clients and is solely for the purpose of maintaining the highest professional standards.)*

**DATA PROTECTION**

I ensure that all information is kept safe and protected and I ask that you do the same. Sessions may not be recorded electronically. It is not appropriate to post or share on social networks or forums any written correspondence between us from our work together. In order to maintain the confidentiality and the boundaries of our work it is not appropriate to engage “socially” on any social network, social or professional forums. You may follow Comprehensive Counselling on social media, however, if you wish to discuss anything related to our work together, this needs to be done via email or in person. Clients are responsible for electronically stored or printed material either sent to or received from me.

**PRIVACY POLICY**

Comprehensive Counselling is compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). No audio or video recordings of sessions will be made without the express consent of the client. All records are kept securely for a period of seven years.

**REFERRAL POLICY**

Comprehensive Counselling caters to clients with a broad range of presenting issues, however, where appropriate clients will be referred to specialist therapy and/or agencies and support groups (as discussed and agreed on in a collaborative manner).

**CHANGES TO CONTRACT**

If there are changes made to this agreement, both parties will discuss the changes, and both must agree to going further with services by signing a new and updated agreement form.

**EMERGENCY CONTACTS**

If you feel you are in crisis or are in danger of harming yourself then is it imperative that you contact the Emergency Services, go to your nearest Emergency Department or call 000.