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**What is Counseling?**

The process of counseling may include, but is not limited to:

Helping you to resolve personal issues

Education concerning the root of personal difficulties

Learning and applying new skills

Rejecting destructive ways of thinking and behaving

Gaining knowledge and insight concerning personal motivations

Working through issues of woundedness and unforgiveness

Learning to develop healthy relationships with yourself or others

Counseling may also incorporate the use of techniques from a variety of therapeutic approaches such as Insight Oriented, Object Relations, Cognitive Behavioral, Psychoeducational, as well as the application of your personal faith principles.

No guarantee is made that the counseling you receive will produce the desired results. Individual success largely depends on the intentional application of the insights, skill and knowledge the client gains through the counseling process and their willingness to be active, open, honest and as consistent as possible with their therapist.

No one else can solve your problems for you, but through gaining knowledge, insight, understanding and wisdom you can experience increased success in your life and relationships. Counseling might open levels of awareness that could cause pain and anxiety; however, through gaining knowledge, insight, understanding and wisdom you can experience increased success in your life and relationships as well.

**What your therapist expects from you: ­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (initial)**

 Express concerns, ask questions

Complete assignments

 Come to counseling free from the influence of any substances

 Pay your fees upon arriving to your session

 Be on time for your appointments

 Cancel 24 hours in advance (by phone or email) unless you have a serious illness or emergency

 (No shows and cancellations made less than 24 hours in advance are billed at the per session rate)

**What is counseling like?**

A safe place where you will be accepted no matter what your struggle or difficulty
An opportunity to grow personally and spiritually

Personally challenging
Teaches responsibility for the things you have control over

Most sessions are 55 to 60 minutes in length

There is an assessment process that consist of questioning that may reveal areas of a client’s life that shed light on the presenting problem.

**Who is your therapist:**

Masters of Social Work Degree/Masters Degree

 LCSW/LSW/LMHC/LMHC-A/LMFT

 The following are beyond my clinical scope includes, but is not limited to; severely mentally ill,

substance abuse and substance dependence.

**What to expect from your therapist:**

Return your calls within 24 hours in most cases

 Continue to update her skills and obtain ongoing training for him/herself

 Treat you with kindness and respect

 Develop a plan with you to help you achieve your goals and objectives

 Discuss discharge planning with you as soon as clinically appropriate

 Seek confidential consultation with other professionals when appropriate

Help you to find an appropriate referral if necessary

**Discharge and Termination \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (initial)**

The client has the right to terminate the counseling relationship at any time. However, it is in the client’s best interest to discuss and plan for discharge with your counselor.

Counseling may be terminated for consistent failure to complete assignments, failure to pay fees, and failure to consistently show for scheduled appointments.

If there is a lapse in treatment for 1 month, unless arrangements have been made with your counselor, you will automatically be discharged from treatment.

Under a managed care system, clients are often limited to a specific amount of sessions per year.

**Couples Therapy \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (initial if applicable)**

Successful marriages are based on trust. Therefore openness and honesty is the best policy. For successful therapy there can be no secrets within couples counseling. However, sometimes there are issues that are disclosed during individual sessions that may be difficult for one spouse to disclose to the other. When that is the situation, you and your counselor will work together on the best way to share that information with your spouse.

**Records and Confidentiality\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (initial)**

The code of ethics for counselors and the state laws regulating most kinds of counseling consider personal information you discuss to be confidential. Except in a small number of situations, the helping professional may not reveal any information about you to another person without your explicit permission. Records of your treatment will be kept for seven years after your final session.

One exceptions to this rule includes if your fees are paid by a third party such as an insurance company, certain details of your treatment (e.g. dates of treatment, diagnosis, symptoms, progress) may be required to be revealed in order to obtain reimbursement. Most insurance companies allow you to file claims directly with them so that your employer will not see the information.

In cases where a court order has been issued and records have been subpoenaed the counselor has a legal responsibility to comply.

Experienced clinicians schedule consultation meetings with more experienced clinicians; when consulting with colleagues, the name of the client will not be disclosed.

**Social Media­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(initial)** It is the policy of Innovative Counseling Solutions, not to accept social networking invitations from past or current clients utilizing social media sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn or other similar sites. This policy is in keeping with ethical guidelines that prohibit the formation of dual relationships between therapist and client. A dual relationship occurs when a therapist and client form another type of relationship outside of the therapist-client relationship (i.e. mutual friendship, business associate, teacher, student, family member, etc.), or enter into a therapist-client relationship after another type of relationship has already been established. Such dual relationships have the potential for creating conflicts of interest, possible exploitation, and problems associated with unhealthy boundaries

**Technology Communication: ­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(initial)**

Utilizing technology, such as cell phone/email, to communicate with your counselor, poses a risk that your confidentiality will be breached. If you want to limit risk that your personal information will be exposed, do not utilize any technology as a means of communicating with this counselor.

**Client’s Right to Access their File:**­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**(initial)**

Client’s have a right to inspect and obtain copies of records kept on their behalf by professionals. There is a 1.00$ per page for copies as well as labor time to make these copies. The client will be billed in increments of 15 minutes at the hourly rate of 125.00$

**Diagnostic Classifying:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(initial)**

A diagnosis can be a permanent part of your file.

**Suicidality and Abuse \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (initial)**

Another exception where counselors are legally required to disregard confidentiality involves situations where there is a potential for suicide or homicide. For example, if you reveal information that indicates a clear danger of injury to yourself or others the counselor will need to contact the appropriate authorities or family members.

Another exception to confidentiality is that all helping professionals are required by law to report any knowledge of abuse or neglect of a child or an incompetent or disabled person including suspected abuse.

Your counselor will be happy to discuss any concerns you have about the protection of the information you provide.

**Conflict of Interest:­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(initial)**

Due to other professional obligations, I am unable to treat individuals who are involved with the Indiana Department of Child Services. If at any time during our course of treatment, the Indiana Department of Child Services becomes involved, I am required to terminate services immediately. It will be my priority to provide you with resources that could further assist you in your treatment.

**Recording Therapy Sessions:­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(initial)**

Clients must consent before a therapist or trainee may audiotape or videotape any session, and this consent must be documented

**Fees and insurance reimbursement: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (initial)**

Your insurance company may reimburse you for part of your fee; however, it is your responsibility to pay your fee upfront unless other arrangements are made.

You will be responsible for payment that is not covered by your health insurance. I.E. Copay/Deductible, Copies of Records, etc.

­\_\_\_\_\_ **(initial)**

Fees for phone sessions, telephone calls to attorneys/guardian ad litems/copies of records, letter writing, preparation for legal proceedings, etc. will be billed in quarter increments and based on the fee $125.00. Phone consults initiated by the client, that exceed 5 minutes will be billed in quarter hour increments based on the per session fee. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (initials).** If these fees are unpaid within 10 business days, termination of services may apply.

Two hours of court/legal appearance time will be collected prior to the actual court/legal appearance and must be paid 10 business days prior to the legal proceeding at a rate of $250.00 per hour. Any court appearance time; upon the 2 hours will be billed for $250.00 per hour must be paid within 10 business days.

**Your fee will be collected at the beginning of each session**. Credit/Debit Cards, checks and cash are accepted. There may be a small additional fee to use your credit or debit card and pay through PayPal.

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(Client’s signature/date) (Parent/guardian’s signature/date)

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(Client’s signature/date) (Parent/guardian’s signature/date)

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 (Witness signature/date)