

ELBA Christian Counseling Center

Ellie Hughes

Graduate Student in Clinical Training

Supervisor: Jarrod Hegwood

Supervisor's Contact: (225)-242-9434

Declaration of Practices & Procedures

Qualifications of your counselor: I have served in several different ministry settings since 2018. Including counseling and children's ministry. I have a B.A. from Southeastern Louisiana University, and am currently a graduate student at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program. I am a counseling intern under the supervision of Jarrod Hegwood. His contact information is on the heading of this document.

Areas of Focus: In the NOBTS Clinical Mental Health program, I have studied Solution Focused Brief Therapy. I've also been trained in play therapy and counseling foster and adoptive children and their parents. I have experience working with children and families through several different ministry positions I have held. I am excited to work with clients from all walks of life.

It is important that you understand that I am NOT a Licensed Professional Counselor at this point in my career. I am, however, working with a case supervisor who is an LPC. I meet with my supervisor weekly and discuss the various cases I am working within counseling. I also receive instruction on improving my counseling skills, which includes videotape recording or direct observation and review of treatment notes. Any questions may be addressed first to me, your counselor, and if necessary, to Jarrod Hegwood, Director of Clinical Counseling, ELBA Counseling Center at 225-664-0760.

Counselors who are graduate level or post-graduate level counselors work is overseen by a licensed mental health provider. You will be asked to sign and will be given a copy of a form indicating the name and credentials for the current supervisor. At any time the Supervisor is changed, you will be asked to sign a new form.

About the ELBA Christian Counseling Center

The Eastern Louisiana Baptist Association Christian Counseling Center was established in 2011 with the goal of making Christ centered clinical counseling available to members of our association and the population our associations serves. Our goal is to provide quality mental health care to clients in Livingston Parish and the surrounding area.

Counseling Relationship and Expectation of the Client

Counselors at ELBA Christian Counseling Center see counseling as a process in which the client and the counselor come to understand and trust one another, work as a team to explore and define present problem situations, develop future goals for an improved life, and work in a systemic fashion toward realizing those goals.

Clients must make their own decisions regarding things such as deciding to marry, separate, divorce, reconcile and how to set up custody and visitation. The counselor can assist the client in thinking through the possibilities and consequences of decisions, but the Code of Ethics for all mental health providers **does not** allow counselors to make any specific decisions for a client.

Attendance Policies

Consistent attendance in counseling plays a vital role in the process of change. For this reason, clients must inform their counselors at least 24 hours in advance if they need to reschedule or cancel a session. If a client informs his or her counselor of the need to reschedule or cancel a session less than 24 hours in advance, the session will be marked "late cancel." After 3 late cancellations, counseling may be terminated. If a client does not show up for a session and fails to inform the counselor, the session will be marked "no-show." After 2 no-shows, counseling may be terminated. Exceptions to these cancellations may be made in the event of an emergency, such as a medical emergency, death of a family member, or dangerous weather event. In the event that the client is late for a session, the client should inform their counselor. If the client is more than 15 minutes late for a session, then the session will be cancelled and deemed a "late cancel" appointment.

A client may discontinue counseling at any time, but it is best to accomplish this in consultation with the counselor.

Fees

Appointment fees are to be paid at the time of service, and can be made in cash or check or Square credit card service (payable to ELBA Christian Counseling Center). Each session with an intern counselor will cost \$50. Clients receiving counseling on Church Pay.

Fees for written treatment summaries, copies of records, court appearances, consultations, or special services will be outlined upon request. Please allow 10 business days for processing when records are requested. Phone calls to the counselor lasting over ten minutes (the time charged will be based on when the conversation began) will also be charged, based on time spent according to the client's current fee.

Without prior permission from the Director or Associate Director of Clinical Training, accounts with two or more sessions past due will result in the cessation of counseling until the outstanding balance has been resolved. If you experience a problem with this policy, please feel free to discuss it with your counselor.

If you are unable to pay your fee on the sliding fee scale, you may apply for a scholarship for an approved number of sessions, based upon the problem and the recommended number of sessions for that problem. You will need to complete a form with information about the number of children and dependents living in your home, and the annual household income.

Health insurance may cover the cost of the counseling. An invoice for services rendered will be provided in cases where the client desires to file an insurance claim. It is the responsibility of the client to check for insurance coverage for "outpatient psychotherapy."

A \$25.00 fee will be added for NSF bank charges. After one NSF check, it will be necessary for the client to pay with cash for future appointments.

No fee will be charged if you cancel your appointment at least 24 hours in advance. Appointments will be charged the set fee for any appointment canceled with less than twenty-four (24) hour notice, as the time

and space have been reserved for the client.

Types of Services

ELBA Christian Counseling Center Counselors work from a Christian worldview, but respect the religious beliefs of all persons. The theoretical base out of which ELBA CCC Counselors provide counseling services range from short term counseling and brief therapy models to more long term approaches. The nature of the issue presented by the client has a great deal to do with this. Individual, couple, family and group counseling are available at ELBA CCC. Clients who are in need of services not offered by ELBA CCC will be referred to appropriate services/agencies.

Telehealth Counseling

I have completed the required telehealth care training in addition to other qualifications as a student intern. This training covered the Law and Ethics and Clinical Skills specifically related to telehealth care. All teletherapy sessions will be conducted through Doxy.me which is encrypted to the federal standards.

Responsibilities of the Client

All clients should:

- Be appropriately dressed during sessions.
- Be located in a safe and private area appropriate for a teletherapy session.

Clients should NOT:

- Record sessions unless first obtaining the therapist's permission.
- Have anyone else in the room unless you first discuss it with your clinician.
- Conduct other activities while in session (such as texting, driving, etc.).

* If the client is a minor, a parent or guardian must be present at the location/building with the minor during their teletherapy session.

Potential Risks of Telehealth Counseling

When using technology to communicate on any level, there are some important risk factors of which to be aware. It is possible that information might be intercepted, forwarded, stored, sent out, or even changed from its original state. It is also possible that the security of the device used may be compromised. Best practice efforts are made to protect the security and overall privacy of all electronic communications with you. However, complete security of this information is not possible. Using methods of electronic communication with us outside of our recommendations creates a reasonable possibility that a third party may be able to intercept that communication. It is your responsibility to review the privacy sections and agreement forms of any application and technology you use. Please remember that depending on the device being used, others within your circle (i.e. family, friends, employers, & co-workers) and those not in your circle (i.e. criminals, scam artists) may have access to your device. Reviewing the privacy sections for your devices is essential. Please contact us with any questions that you may have on privacy measures.

Potential Limitations of Teletherapy

Teletherapy is an alternate form of counseling and should not be viewed as a substitution for taking

medication that has previously been prescribed by a medical doctor.

It has possible benefits and limitations. By signing, you agree that you understand that:

- Teletherapy may not be appropriate if you are having a crisis, acute psychosis, or suicidal/homicidal thoughts.
- Misunderstandings may occur due to a lack of visual and/or audio cues.
- Disruptions in the service and quality of the technology used may occur.

Additional Requirements

The client will inform the clinician of the physical location where he/she is will utilize consistently while participating in sessions and will inform the clinician if this location changes.

- In the first teletherapy session, the client will provide the name of a person the clinician is allowed to contact in the case he/she believes the client is at risk. The client will provide a release of information for this contact.
- In the first teletherapy session, the client will provide information about the make, model, color, and tag number of their automobile.
- In each session the client will provide information about the nearest emergency room or emergency services (such as fire station, police station, if there is not an emergency room nearby.)
- Depending on the assessment of risk and in the event of an emergency, the client or the clinician may be required to verify that the emergency contact person is able and willing to go to the client's location and, if the clinician deems necessary, call 911 and/or transport the client to a hospital. In addition to this, the clinician may assess, and therefore require that the client create a safe environment at his/her location during the entire time of treatment. If an assessment is made for the need of a "safe environment" a plan for this safe environment will be developed at the time of need and made clear by the clinician.

Backup Plan in the Event of Technology Failure

A phone is the most reliable backup option in case of technological failure. It is, therefore, highly recommended that the client always have a phone at his/her disposal and that the clinician knows the client's phone number. If disconnection from a video conference occurs, end the session and the counselor will attempt to restart the session. If reconnection does not occur within five minutes, call your counselor at the contact number they have provided. If, within 5 minutes, the clinician does not hear from the client, the client agrees (unless otherwise requested) that the clinician can call the provided phone number.

Professional Code of Ethics

All mental health professionals are required by state law to adhere to the code of ethics adopted by the Louisiana Professional Counselor Board of Examiners. Copies of these codes are available in the office and clients are free to examine them at any time.

Confidentiality

Following are the limits to confidentiality:

1. If you threaten grave bodily harm or death to another person, we are required to inform the intended victim and appropriate law enforcement agencies.
2. If you report to us your knowledge of past or continuing physical or sexual abuse of a minor child by an adult, the counselor is required to inform the appropriate child welfare or law enforcement agency. The elderly and dependent adults are covered under this type of disclosure as well.
3. Your safety always takes precedence over confidentiality. In the event that you become unable to care for yourself or there is good reason to suspect suicidal behavior, we are able to waive the right of confidentiality in order to help insure your safety.
4. In Louisiana, couples are given confidentiality as individuals. If one individual in the couple reveals a secret to the counselor, the counselor cannot communicate this secret without permission from the individual who revealed the secret. However, to maintain effective treatment, the counselor will work with the individual to come to a position of safety to share the information with their spouse.
5. Graduate-level student counselors are under both individual and group supervision. While no identifying information is revealed in the context of group supervision, identifying information will be revealed with an intern's individual supervisor for the purpose of treatment planning. Supervisors are required to observe student counselors in "live counseling" or to observe some videos of sessions of the counselor with the client. As part of the therapy experience, all sessions are video-taped and subject to live supervision by the assigned clinical supervisor and/or the Clinical Director. All tapes and information will be held in the strictest confidence and will be used only for the purposes of supervision and consultation. Video tapes are only maintained for a short time on the server, and any video tapes reviewed by the supervisor are erased after consultation with the supervisor. Video tapes are not a part of the permanent record kept of the sessions. If you have any questions, please ask your counselor.
6. Counseling records may be released if subpoenaed by a court of law.

Because we are professional counselors, we have to abide by certain ethical codes regarding dual relationships. Please talk to your counselor about special considerations if you attend church together. Our policy is that our counselors are not allowed to be "friends" with their clients on Face Book or any other form of social media.

Waiting Room

Out of respect to others, please help us to keep the noise down while waiting in this area. Please take cell phone calls outside to help with this. Children are not to be left unattended.

Emergencies

Counseling is best done in the office. If you need to talk to your counselor before your next session, call the center at 225-664-0760, or at the number your counselor has given you. Leave a message for your counselor. Your call will be returned by the next business day.

ELBA CCC is NOT a crisis center, and therefore, does not offer 24-hour availability. While messages can be left at 225-664-0760 and your call will be returned as soon as possible, in the event of an emergency, the client should go to the nearest emergency room or call 911, or call one of the following crisis intervention providers:

National Hopeline Network: 1-800-784-2433

Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center – Livingston: (225)-271-6000

Cope Line: 504-269-2673 or 1-800-749-2673

Youth Cope Line: 504-895-2550

Other Local Help Numbers: 211

Physical Health of Clients

Physical health can be an important factor in the emotional well-being of an individual. If you have not had a physical examination in the last year, it is recommended that you do so. As a routine part of the initial session, you will be asked the name of your physician, and to list any medications that you are now taking. Counselors should be informed of any future changes in medication.

Potential Risks of Counseling

Clients should be aware that counseling may carry certain risks:

1. The client may become aware that additional problems may surface of which they were not initially aware. Counseling may involve discussing relationship, spiritual, psychological and/or emotional issues that may at times be distressing. I also understand that this process is intended to help me personally and with relationships. I am aware that there are alternative treatment facilities available to me.
2. Studies suggest that marital counseling involving only one party may lead to the dissolution of the marriage.
3. Changes in relationship patterns that may result from family counseling may produce unpredicted and/or possibly adverse responses from other people in the client's social system.

Role of Client

The role of the client is

1. To be honest during counseling sessions, complete homework assignments, and demonstrate a willingness to change.
2. To refrain from the use of alcohol or drugs 12 hours prior to a counseling session.

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| Client Signature | Date | Counselor Signature | Date |
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