

INFORMED CONSENT TO COUPLE OR FAMILY PSYCHOTHERAPY

This form documents that we, _____,
_____, give our consent to _____
(the "psychotherapist") to provide psychotherapeutic treatment to us.

While we expect benefits from this treatment, we fully understand that no particular outcome can be guaranteed. We understand that we are free to discontinue treatment at any time but that it would be best to discuss with the psychotherapist any plans to end therapy before doing so.

We have fully discussed with the psychotherapist what is involved in psychotherapy and we understand and agree to the policies about scheduling, fees and missed appointments. Our discussion about therapy has included the psychotherapist's evaluation and diagnostic formulation of our problems, the method of treatment, goals and length of treatment, and information about record-keeping. We have been informed about and understand the extent of treatment, its foreseeable benefits and risks, and possible alternative methods of treatment. We understand that therapy can sometimes cause upsetting feelings to emerge, that we may feel worse temporarily before feeling better, and that we may experience distress caused by changes we may decide to make in our lives.

We understand that the psychotherapist cannot provide emergency service. The psychotherapist has told us whom to call if an emergency arises and the psychotherapist is unavailable.

We understand that information about psychotherapy is almost always kept confidential by the psychotherapist and not revealed to others unless we give our consent. There are a few exceptions as follows:

1. The psychotherapist is required by law to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities. The psychotherapist is also mandated to report to the authorities patients who are at imminent risk of harming themselves or others for the purpose of those authorities checking to see whether such patients are owners of firearms, and if they are, or apply to be, then limiting and possibly removing their ability to possess them.
2. If one of us tells the psychotherapist of an intention to harm another person, the psychotherapist must try to protect that person, including by telling the police or the person or other health care providers. Similarly, if one of us threatens to harm ourselves, or our life or health is in any immediate danger, the psychotherapist will try to protect us, including by telling others such as relatives or the police or other health care providers, who can assist in protecting us.

3. If we are involved in certain court proceedings the psychotherapist may be required by law to reveal information about our treatment. These situations include child custody disputes, cases where a patient's psychological condition is an issue, lawsuits or formal complaints against the psychotherapist, civil commitment hearings, and court-ordered treatment.

4. If our health insurance or managed care plan will be reimbursing us or paying the psychotherapist directly, they will require that we waive confidentiality and that the psychotherapist give them information about our treatment.

5. The psychotherapist may consult with other psychotherapists about our treatment, but in doing so will not reveal our names or other information that might identify us unless specific consent to do so is obtained. Further, when the psychotherapist is away or unavailable, another psychotherapist might answer calls and so will need to have some information about our treatment.

6. If our account with the psychotherapist becomes overdue and we do not work out a payment plan, the psychotherapist will have to reveal a limited amount of information about our treatment in taking legal measures to be paid. This would include our names, social security number, address, dates and type of treatment and the amount due.

In all of the situations described above we understand that the psychotherapist will try to discuss the situation with us before any confidential information is revealed, and will reveal only the least amount of information that is necessary.

We understand that, except in exceptional circumstances, the psychotherapist cannot keep secrets from other family members who are involved in the therapy because this might harm the person who does not know.

We agree that each of us has and shall continue to have the right to information about our individual and conjoint treatment sessions, and to the treatment records of the psychotherapist regarding our individual and conjoint treatment sessions. We each agree that the psychotherapist may release such information or records to either or all of us without any additional authorization(s) of the other(s). We understand that each of us will not, however, have any right of access to information or records regarding individual treatment sessions of other family members.

We agree that if marriage or parenting problems lead to legal disputes over child custody or visitation, neither of us will ask nor require that the psychotherapist testify regarding custody or visitation. If a custody or visitation proceeding does occur, we agree that the psychotherapist's role will be limited to providing to a mental health professional appointed to perform a forensic evaluation, and/or to the attorneys, law guardian, if any, and the judge involved in the legal proceeding, written information regarding, and/or the record of, our treatment; the psychotherapist will provide these either as required by law or upon our authorization.

If we are participating in a managed care plan, we have discussed with the psychotherapist our financial responsibility for any co-payment, and the plan's limits on the number of therapy sessions. We have discussed with the psychotherapist our options for continuation of treatment when our managed care benefits end. If we are not participating in a managed care program, we understand that we are fully financially responsible for treatment, including any portion of the fees not reimbursed by our health insurance.

We understand that we have a right to ask the psychotherapist about the psychotherapist's training and qualifications and about where to file complaints about the psychotherapist's professional conduct.

By signing below we are indicating that we have read and understood this form and that we give our consent to treatment.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Signature: _____