

Jennifer Snow, MS, PLLC
Licensed Professional Counselor
Phone: (512) 786-7466

Informed Consent

First of all, thank you for coming today, and I look forward to our work together. Today's appointment will take approximately 50-60 minutes. I realize that starting counseling is a major decision that comes with many questions. This document is intended to inform you of my policies and procedures, professional status and qualifications, legal regulations, and your rights as a client. Please read all of the information carefully. If you have other questions or concerns that are not addressed in this document, please ask and I will try my best to give you the information you need.

QUALIFICATIONS: My name is Jennifer Snow. I am a Licensed Professional Counselor, licensed by the state of Texas. I obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Education from Sam Houston State University and a Master's Degree in Counseling from University of Houston Clear Lake. My background includes working with children, adolescents and women for a variety of mental health issues, including anxiety, depression, parenting, grief and loss, behavior, and learning to cope and function with life stressors and change. My formal education and professional experience has prepared me to counsel individuals, couples, families, children and parents.

As your counselor, I will conduct myself in a manner consistent with the professional and ethical standards. In the event you are dissatisfied with something I am doing you should immediately discuss your concerns with me.

NATURE OF COUNSELING: I practice from a systems oriented theory, which believes in the importance of interconnected relationships. I believe that most of our behaviors can be seen to repeat themselves in our relationships, and appear to stem from our family of origin and/or our relationships and experiences we have endured up to this point in our lives. These previous experiences and relationships have formed who we are today, and have influenced why we operate the way we do today in our current situations.

Some clients may need only a few counseling sessions to achieve their goals; others may require months or possibly years of counseling. As a client, you are in complete control and may end our counseling relationship at any time, although I do ask that you participate in a termination session. You also have the right to refuse or negotiate modification of any of my suggestions you believe might be harmful. At any time, either you or I may initiate discussion of possible positive or negative effects of entering or not entering into counseling, continuing or not continuing counseling, and/or using or not using certain techniques.

Sessions can be held weekly, bi-weekly or monthly, depending on the present needs presented by the client. Although our session may be very intimate psychologically, ours is a professional relationship rather than a social one. Our contact will be limited to counseling sessions you arrange with me except in the case of emergency or appointment planning when you may contact me at the above number. Please do not invite me to social gatherings, offer me gifts, ask me to write a reference for

you, or ask me to relate to you in any other way than the professional context of our counseling sessions. You will learn a great deal about me as we work together during your counseling experience. However, it is important for you to remember that you are experiencing me in my professional role only.

CANCELLATION: In the event that you will not be able to keep an appointment please email me at least 24 hours in advance. If you do not cancel at **least 24 hours** before the scheduled appointment you will be assessed a **fee of \$25.00 for the first missed session and a full session fee for any following missed appointments**. Please remember that missing appointments disrupts the healing process. Also, please know that insurance companies do not pay for missed or canceled appointments; you will be responsible for the *full* fee associated with any missed or cancelled appointments. Payment is due for any missed appointment at the beginning of the next session

CONFIDENTIALITY: To facilitate the counseling process, what you say to your counselor will be held in the strictest confidence. However, there are certain circumstances and conditions under which the content of your counseling session may no longer be confidential. Below is a list of some, but not all, of the circumstances where your counselor may be legally or ethically obligated to disclose information about you:

- ❖ **Diagnosis and dates of service shared with the client's insurance company to collect payments. If you are planning on using insurance for our counseling sessions, please initial to acknowledge that you understand a diagnosis is REQUIRED to ensure insurance coverage.**
- ❖ When there is reasonable suspicion of child abuse or abuse to a dependent or elderly person.
- ❖ If I believe a client may harm her/himself or others.
- ❖ Cases where the client signs a release of information.
- ❖ Information necessary for supervision or consultation.
- ❖ Information released as outlined in the HIPPA Notice of Privacy Practice.
- ❖ Those required by law.

Please discuss with me any concerns you may have regarding confidentiality.

MINOR CLIENTS: Parents have a right to receive progress reports on their child's counseling. However, personal information shared by a child during an individual session will be kept confidential unless it involves imminent danger to the child or someone else. Young people will not confide in a counselor if they believe that personal information will be revealed to their parents. If applicable, I must receive a copy of the most recent divorce decree or custody order at our first session; this is to ensure proper consent, confidentiality and disclosure of information. *All parent/guardian parties must at least be informed of treatment, and all with custody rights must consent to treatment of minor at or prior to the first session.* Exceptions to parental consent may apply to minors 16 years or older who present for emergency counseling regarding sexually transmitted diseases, substance abuse, pregnancy issues, and/or are emancipated.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS: In the case of an emergency, please call 911 and/or go to your nearest emergency room. The Austin Hot Line to Help is also available 24 hours/day at 472-HELP (472-4357). This is a confidential crisis counseling line, which includes services for suicide prevention.

Should the use of these services occur, please call my confidential phone at (512) 786-7466 within 24 hours and leave a voicemail. I will receive your call within the next business day and reply as needed. If possible and/or if deemed necessary, I will schedule you an appointment before your next previously scheduled session.

CONSULTATION: For educational and professional purposes, I consult regularly with other professionals regarding clients in order to ensure quality of my service; however, a client's name or other identifying information is never mentioned. The client's identity remains completely anonymous, and confidentiality is fully maintained.

FINANCIAL: The following are my current session fees:

- Initial Session (50-60 minutes): \$150
- 50 minute sessions with beginning times from 9am-4:30pm: \$125.00
- Phone calls lasting more than 10 minutes will be billed \$1.00/minute of entire phone call
- Emails requiring an in-depth response or opinion from myself: \$5.00 each
- Any extra paperwork requested by patient or other provider for patient will be billed at an hourly rate of \$125
- My presence being subpoenaed by court for appearance and testimony is \$200/hr. with a retainer of \$500 payable **prior** to court date. Travel time is included in billing.

Quotes received from insurance companies may not be exact. Client is responsible for any portion that the insurance company does not pay.

I accept cash, check, or credit card. Please make checks payable to Jennifer Snow. A fee of \$35 will be assessed for any returned checks. I also accept major credit cards, FSA and HSA cards.

If you have any questions or are not sure that you understand these policies, please discuss these issues with your therapist.

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