



CONCORDIUM

Understanding Psychotherapy and Consent to Treatment

The success of psychotherapy depends upon a high degree of trust between you and your therapist. This document has been prepared to inform you about what to expect from therapy and from your therapist.

About Us

Did you know that the word, "Concordium," is Latin for, "harmonious life?" At the Concordium, that is exactly what our mission statement is, to help individuals live a harmonious life. The Concordium was established in 2020 by Barbara Thomason, Owner, RMCHI, and is comprised of a group of independent practitioners, overseen by Clinical Director, Stephanie Coberly, MHC., MCAP. All therapists at the Concordium are independent contractors licensed in the state of Florida. The team at the Concordium is committed to providing concierge style therapy, by providing you tools and resources that traditional therapy does not offer. These tools can help you when you feel overwhelmed and hopeless and can help you get on the road to harmony.

Understanding Psychotherapy

Psychotherapy is a process of meeting with a trained mental health professional to help understand your concerns more clearly and work towards accomplishing your goals. You will learn valuable tools and techniques to help you learn more about yourself, better understand your personal values, improve how you relate to others, and gain greater self-confidence, self-respect, and self-acceptance.

Solution Focused / Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Services at The Concordium are provided utilizing underpinnings of Solution Focused, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) techniques. The focus of CBT is to create positive change in your thinking and in your life. Each therapist at The Concordium offers a unique specialty and may differ slightly in his or her approach to therapy. Techniques utilized as part of your therapy are empirically supported, meaning they are based in evidence from scientific study to show effectiveness. Your therapy will be positive, active, and educational, centered on an emotionally supportive and caring relationship.

What to expect in your therapy sessions

During initial visits the emphasis will be on understanding the nature of your concerns and creating a plan of action. We believe it is important to begin therapy by providing you with relief from the symptoms that are negatively impacting your life. Your therapist will work in partnership with you to develop realistic goals and plan a course of action to achieve them.

Because life happens outside of the therapy room, you may be offered 'homework' projects to help carry on your work between sessions. These projects may include reading, tracking behaviors, feelings and attitudes, or practicing new techniques. You are encouraged to discuss any difficulties in accomplishing



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these projects with your therapist. To ensure that therapy is delivered in the most helpful way, most of the "homework" resources can be found on the Concordium's concierge portal, located on our website. The more deeply you understand the process of therapy, the more effectively you will be able to grasp concepts and incorporate positive changes into your life. Additionally, you may find it helpful to take notes during your therapy session or keep a journal of the skills and tools you gain.

It is important to recognize that therapy is not magic, and change does not occur overnight. Your consistency in carrying out homework assignments, your willingness to be invested in your treatment plan, and the extent to which you are open and honest with yourself and your therapist will play a large role in how quickly you accomplish your goals.

There can be discomfort involved in participating in psychotherapy. You may remember unpleasant events, or experience uncomfortable feelings such as anger, fear, anxiety, depression, frustration, loneliness, or helplessness. If you are in couple's therapy, you and your partner may have difficult conversations as you work towards finding resolution to your problems. In some cases, couples may decide during the course of therapy that they no longer wish to remain united. In these situations, the goal of therapy may change to working towards a harmonious and cooperative separation. If distressful emotions arise during your therapy, talk to your therapist about your feelings. He or she will help you effectively manage these feelings and identify support systems to assist you during these transitions.

Child and Adolescent Therapy

Like adults, children and adolescents can benefit from therapy. Throughout therapy, your child's strengths will be highlighted, and a nurturing approach will be taken to encourage positive change. Child and adolescent therapy will begin with a family consultation to more thoroughly understand the nature of the concern and gather relevant background information. Depending on the child's age and nature of the concern, this session will either include the child or will involve a private conversation between the parent/guardian and your therapist. At this session, consent for treatment will be required from all parent(s)/legal guardian(s). Therapy will not begin without applicable consents. If any question exists regarding the authority of the representative to give consent for therapy, your therapist will request supporting legal documentation, such as a custody order, prior to the commencement of services.

Following this initial session, children are invited to meet with the therapist on a one-to-one basis. However, parental involvement is a crucial component to therapy. Parents provide information concerning their child's behavior and are relied upon when outlining goals for therapy. Throughout the course of therapy, parents frequently receive consultation from the therapist regarding positive parenting techniques, as well as ways to manage disruptive behaviors. In such cases, time devoted to family sessions, either in person, virtually or over the phone is charged at the full session fee.

Privilege

In order for therapy to be effective for children and adolescents, a safe and confidential environment must be created. As a result, it is crucial to the therapy process that parent/guardian consent and child agreement supports a confidential therapist and client relationship. Thus, the dialogue and the content of the sessions between child and therapist will remain private. Limitations include any instances of safety concerns which will be determined by the therapist. If such situations arise, both the therapist and the child will discuss these issues with the child's parent or legal guardian. Feedback is provided to parents



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and legal guardians regarding the progress of therapy for the child. This information is typically delivered in family meetings, or parent/guardian consultations. Information shared in these sessions will be first discussed with the child.

Pickup and drop-off policies

The Concordium office is not able to accommodate children outside of a scheduled appointment time. Unattended children in the waiting room can represent a safety issue, as no supervision is available during this time. Parents and guardians are asked to arrive no earlier than five minutes before their child's appointment. Parents and guardians are encouraged to wait for their child in the office for the first one or two sessions in case the therapist has a question or if your child would benefit from your presence. After the first one or two sessions most parents/guardians feel comfortable leaving the office. In such cases, we ask for a timely pickup and that during this time parents/guardians are available via cell phone.

The Therapeutic Relationship

The relationship between you and your therapist is very special and unique. You will be sharing information with your therapist that may be sensitive and intimate. It is not your therapist's role to make judgments or give advice. Rather, the therapist's role is to help you find the best course of action taking into account your values, beliefs, culture, lifestyle, and particular circumstances.

You can always count on your therapist for professional help. With time, you may come to feel close to your therapist and may wish to spend time with him or her in a social environment. In order to protect your confidentiality and maintain professionalism, therapists and clients do not socialize together. One of the biggest violations of the therapist's role is if a therapist has a romantic or sexual relationship with his or her client.

While talking about sexual thoughts or feelings is a part of therapy for many people, sexual relations between a therapist and client is never appropriate.

In therapy, the focus is always on you. This is a luxury that everyday life doesn't often give us. At first this luxury may seem a little awkward; you may not be used to talking about yourself to someone who doesn't tell you much about themselves in return. After a while this uneasiness usually goes away and you may find yourself enjoying the time that is devoted solely to you.

You are encouraged to be honest with your therapist about your feelings, not only about others, but also about your therapist. This is the best and safest way to cultivate a stronger sense of self and an effective working relationship.

Additional Interventions and Medications

Many different life problems can bring people to therapy. Research shows that for some particular problems such as eating disorders, alcoholism, and severe anxieties and depression, additional interventions are necessary for treatment success. Examples of additional interventions may include support group attendance, referral to a Psychiatrist or other physician, participation in an Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP), or hospitalization in the case of serious risk to self or others. Psychologists are not physicians, and do not prescribe medication or perform medical procedures. As a part of your time in



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therapy, you are encouraged to see a medical physician for any physical or medical concerns that could be related to emotional difficulties.

Other Office Policies

Consistent attendance

It is very important that you consistently attend scheduled therapy sessions. Although illness, unexpected events, or vacations may occasionally interrupt your therapy, consistent attendance plays a large role in helping you achieve your desired goals. Please be aware that your absences may negatively influence the progress of your therapy and make it difficult for your therapist to provide services. In some cases, your therapist may invite you to a conversation about your readiness for therapy at this time. Please talk with your therapist about finding a day and time when you can meet routinely, or if the day and time selected for your appointments is not working for you.

Animals in the office

In order to ensure the comfort and safety of our clients and staff, we ask that you refrain from bringing any animals or pets into The Concordium common and office areas. This will allow us to provide a more comfortable space for clients. Thank you for your understanding.

The Concordium adheres to the requirements set forth by the U.S. Department of Justice and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for the allowance of Certified Service Animals. For those clients who currently have a Certified Service Animal, we ask that you speak with your therapist individually to discuss your treatment goals and determine whether it would be clinically appropriate and beneficial to bring your Service Animal to your session.

Arriving on time for your appointment

Please make effort to arrive to your appointment on time. If you arrive early, you are welcome to wait in our comfortable waiting area and relax before your meeting. You will benefit the most from participating in a full session. We understand that some things are out of your control such as traffic. In the case that you know you will be late for your appointment, please call ahead. If you are more than twenty minutes late your therapist may decide that it is not in your best interest to hold the session. In such cases, you may incur a missed session fee. If arriving late to your appointments becomes a pattern and it interferes with your treatment plan, you and your therapist can discuss alternative solutions such as meeting at another time or location or receiving care from another therapist.

Conclusion of therapy

There are many different levels of care that Psychologists provide. Although therapy is a very helpful tool for many people, the level of care offered at The Concordium may sometimes not be the best match to a client's needs. In addition, your therapist may not be fully prepared to manage certain concerns that are outside of his or her scope of competence. In such cases, alternative care with a clinician offering



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specialty care may be necessary. If at any point during therapy your therapist assesses that he or she is not effective in helping you reach your therapeutic goals, you will be given a number of referrals that may be of help to you. With your request and written permission, your therapist is available to consult with your new provider in order to help with the transition. If you are no longer able to participate in therapy due to financial concerns, your therapist will work with you to establish a payment plan or offer personal referrals to help you establish care with another qualified professional who offers services at a lower fee.

In the event that your therapist is suddenly unable to continue to provide professional services or maintain client records due to incapacitation or death, he or she has designated a trusted professional colleague to be his or her professional executor. Your therapist's professional executor will be given access to your file and may contact you directly if such a circumstance should occur. Your therapist's professional executor may offer to meet with you to help cope with the transition or assist you in accessing care with another qualified mental health professional.

Please sign below to indicate that you understand and agree to the above, and consent to treatment. You are encouraged to keep a copy of this form and refer to it from time to time during your therapy.

Signature of Client

Date

Printed Name of Client

If client is a minor, all legal guardians must sign below.

Signature of Legal Guardian

Date

Printed Name of Legal Guardian

Signature of Legal Guardian

Date

Printed Name of Legal Guardian