

Informed Consent Agreement for Counselling Services

with Paul Parker BSc(Nurs), MClincoun. Australian Counselling Association Registration: 3620

Welcome to Paul Parker Counselling. This document contains important information about Paul Parker Counselling services and policies. When you sign this document, it will represent an agreement between you and Paul Parker. We can discuss any questions you have now or at any time in the future. Please visit www.paulparkercounselling.com.au for more details about Paul's approach. Throughout the document the use of the word 'client' will denote the person receiving counselling and the counsellor will denote the person administering the counselling (Paul Parker).

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- 1.1 PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIP:** Individual counselling requires an environment where the person receiving counselling is provided with an environment where they feel heard, feel safe and feel understood with their individuality respected. It is the commitment of the counsellor (Paul Parker) to provide:
- i) A non-judgmental, professional service, free from discrimination which honours the individuality of the client.
 - ii) Establish a helping relationship which maintains the integrity and empowerment of the client without offering advice.
 - iii) Ensure the client understands the purpose, process and boundaries of the counselling relationship.
 - iv) Provide a promise of confidentiality and explain the limits of confidentiality in relationship to the counsellor's duty of care.
 - v) For the purpose of advocacy, receive written permission from the client before divulging any information or contacting other parties, within the limits of confidentiality listed in 1.1.iv & 1.4 of this document.
 - vi) Endeavour to make suitable referrals if required.
 - vii) Ensure that all records pertaining to the client remain confidential and secured.

As a member of the Australian Counselling Association Inc. I follow the Australian Counselling Association Inc. "Code of Ethics and Practice".

The full code can be reviewed on my website www.paulparkercounselling.com.au or at:

<https://www.theaca.net.au/documents/ACA%20Code%20of%20Ethics%20and%20Practice%20Ver%2013.pdf>



1.2 RISKS AND BENEFITS: Counselling has both benefits and risks. Risks may include uncomfortable feelings, such as sadness, guilt, anxiety, anger, frustration, loneliness, and helplessness as the process of counselling requires discussions that deal with unpleasant or painful aspects of your life. However, counselling has been shown to have benefits such as substantially reducing distress, increased satisfaction, developing greater personal awareness and insight, increasing skills for managing stress, resolving personal and relationship problems, substantially improved decision-making and communication skills, increased relationship intimacy and satisfaction, and improved ability to respond to challenging situations that occur in your life.

1.3 YOUR WORK: There are no guarantees about what will happen in counselling and there are no 'magic wands'. Counselling requires an active effort on your part, including the willingness to try new approaches or view issues brought to counselling from a different view point. You will be most successful if you work on things we discuss during our sessions in the world outside the therapy space. Try to apply the insights you gain from our therapeutic sessions in your everyday situations and interactions. It is equally important that you raise any issues you may be experiencing during the counselling session when they occur as these are moments that are often pivotal for change to occur. I (the counsellor) commit to honouring the issues you raise and will do my utmost to address your issues or concerns.

1.4 CONFIDENTIALITY: You have the right to complete privacy and confidentiality of all information you share during counselling, with 4 exceptions. I am legally required to break confidentiality when:

1. Subpoena: The information you have given to me is subpoenaed (officially requested) by a court of law,

2. Duty of Care/Duty to Warn: Failure to disclose information you bring to the session that would place you or another person at serious risk of harm, including risk to me or other practitioners,

3. Risk of Serious Harm to a Child: I suspect on reasonable grounds that a child is at risk of serious harm, defined as follows under NSW mandatory reporting legislation:

A child or young person "is at risk of significant harm if current concerns exist for the safety, welfare or wellbeing of the child or young person because of the presence, to a significant extent, of ... basic physical or psychological needs are not being met or at risk of not being met ... not receiving necessary medical care ... not receiving an education in accordance with the Education Act 1990 ... physical or sexual abuse or ill-treatment ...



serious physical or psychological harm as a consequence of living in a household where there have been incidents of domestic violence ... serious psychological harm ... the child was the subject of a prenatal report under section 25 and the birth mother did not engage successfully with support services to eliminate, or minimise to the lowest level reasonably practical the risk factors that gave rise to that report.”

4. Your prior approval has been obtained to: a) Provide a written report to another professional or agency (e.g., a GP, court, or lawyer); or b) discuss the material with another person, (e.g., a parent or employer)

1.5 CANCELLATION FEES:

In an effort to ensure that all clients have adequate access to the counselling services, cancellation fees have been put in place. It is very difficult to fill the counselling vacancy left when a client cancels at short notice. I do however understand that “life happens” and late cancellations may be unavoidable at times and so this will be taken into consideration before a cancellation fee is charged. The counsellor will discuss your individual circumstances with you before applying the cancellation fee.

- **You give more than 48 hours’ notice of cancellation:** no cancellation fee
- **You give less than 48 hours’ notice of cancellation:** 15% of the consultation fee.
- **You cancel your appointment less than 24 hours or you miss an appointment without prior cancellation:** 50% of the consultation fee.



INFORMED CONSENT TO COUNSELLING AGREEMENT:

Your signature(s) below indicates that you have read and understood sections 1.1-1.5 of this Agreement, that you have had the opportunity to ask questions, that you are aware of your right to refuse to sign this document or to request edits, and that you agree to all of the terms above.

_____ / /

Client Name (Print)

Date

Client Signature

_____ / /

Client Name (Print)

Date

Client Signature

_____ / /

Counsellor Signature (Paul Parker)

Date

Witness To Signature