

MINDING YOU

DUI Services  Mental Health  Addiction Recovery  Evaluations

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Treatment Disclosure Statement

Welcome to Minding you Therapeutic Counseling Services, founded and led by Stephanie Higdon, LCSW, CAADC. In effort to facilitate our work together, please review this document carefully and keep the copy you will be given. This document contains important information about Minding You and the scope services available and being provided. This document includes specific details about the counseling services that will be provided to you as well as covers client rights and responsibilities, reviews ethical and legal privileges to confidentiality, and lastly includes your consent for treatment while further establishing your commitment to a treatment schedule and upholding all financial obligations. Please be sure to ask any questions or express concerns before signing this agreement.

Approach to Treatment

As a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, I provide evaluations, therapeutic counseling and addiction recovery services to older adolescents and adults. The approach I take to delivering services is designed around your unique and individual mental health needs while we focus on solution exploration and problem-solving achievement. Counseling, as I practice it, is a partnership between you and therapist with the purpose of supporting and empowering you to resolve problems with your own skills, either already present or newly learned as we work together. Although you have my support and guidance on this journey, it is important to remember you are working as an individual towards overall self-improvement and self-sufficiency is important. In general, I guide session discussions centered around a treatment plan goal or step and which involves exploring your feelings, thoughts and perceptions as well as your behaviors. I assist you in generating problem to solution awareness, offer clarification and teach resolution ideas. I will help you develop the skills needed to resolve life's struggles based on rebuilding and restructuring the values, ideals and beliefs that may have fallen short in your life.

Through this process, it is important to understand that treatment effectiveness and outcomes vary for everyone. It is your responsibility to stay focused on the progression of your personal growth and life changes being made through the course of our work together. To clarify, if you are not emotionally and mentally growing, if you are not changing behaviors then likely what we are doing is not working to its fullest potential and we might need to adjust or re-assess your treatment goals and needs.

Risks

Counseling has potential emotional risks including the possibilities of worsening symptoms (temporarily) and causing what may seem like disruptive life changes. Exploring and rediscovering thoughts and feelings that you have not reflected on often, or possibly not even be aware of existing within you, may be hard to understand and process. The general nature of progressing through counseling is that you are on a personal exploration and working through a self-reflective process that won't always feel good, but it should feel productive. It is important that you carefully consider whether risks are worth the benefits of personal growth and making healthy changes in your life. Most people find that counseling is beneficial and external factors are manageable as well as worth the personal gains and overall life-rewards.

Consulting & Referrals

There may be occasions where I need to seek consultation to gain greater insight and feedback for my work with you. Should I consult another colleague, I will not use your name or any personally identifying information. Should I need to refer you to an outside resource, I will discuss this with you prior to taking action. If certain resources are necessary for your overall wellbeing, you will have the option of

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accepting the referral and being an active part of the process. You have the right to refuse any outside services at any time however, this could result in a termination of my services with you, if they are deemed to be necessary. As a licensed clinician, I have the obligation and ethical responsibility to practice only within the scope of my professional ability. I also am charged to continually assess your safety, wellbeing and stability and ensure that your needs are being comprehensively and adequately met.

Mandated Reporting

Just as most teachers and public service professionals are, I am a mandated reporter. Being a mandated reporter means that if I believe an instance or situation of child or adult abuse or neglect is taking place, or has taken place, I must refer this to the proper authorities. With consideration to the safety of all involved, when and if possible, I will bring my concerns to your attention prior to taking this (legally required) reporting action.

Office Hours / Appointments / “No Shows”

The Minding You office is open by appointment only. To schedule, reschedule or cancel an appointment, please text, call or leave a message, a minimum of 24 hrs. in advance, at 706-206-5627. Under certain insurance agreements and cash-paying clients, after the first “no show”, you will be billed \$45. Upon three “no shows”, you may be terminated from services. Sessions are generally scheduled weekly but may be scheduled more or less frequently depending on your circumstances, insurance allowances and treatment considerations. Please note that when you schedule an appointment, that time is specifically reserved for you. In the event that you will be late, please call! If you are going to be more than 10 minutes late, we may need to reschedule.

Fee Schedules

➤ Individual Counseling

Counseling fees are based on a **55 minute counseling session**. The fee for individual counseling can fluctuate based on each person’s financial situation and potential for future insurance reimbursement. This will be further discussed during your intake.

➤ Other Services

Rapid Urine Drug Screening (6 or 9 panel)	\$10.00 / \$15.00
(substance specific, Preg, Alcohol, etc.)	\$5- \$25
Letters, Consultations, Reports (cost per time prorated)	\$60.00/hour
Travel time (to and from court or other client- related meetings)	\$50.00/ 1 st hr; then .65/ mile
Court Testimony (4 hours paid in advanced; unused fees returned)	\$75.00/hour
DFCS Consulting and Liaison Support	1 st session Free/ varies
Notary	FREE

Payment Policies

Payment is due at the time of your individual session or evaluation being completed. Please refer to financial policy completed at the time of intake.

Insurance

Minding You accepts a number of private company insurances as well as Tri-Care Military, Medicare and all Georgia Medicaid CMO’s. If we currently accept the insurance you have, the company will be billed at the in-network rate and you will be responsible for any co-pay. If you have an insurance plan not accepted by Minding You, we will attempt to file an out of network claim for you; however, you are expected to pay for each session at the time of services and will then be reimbursed once we receive payment from your insurance company. All fees, late charges and copays are due at the time services are provided.

Please take note that any evaluations completed as a result of a court order, punitive action or legal proceedings are normally not covered by insurance companies.

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Ethics and Standards

Two Codes of Ethics as demarcated by the NASW (National Association of Social Workers and NAADAC (National Association for Alcoholism and *Drug Abuse* Counselors,) along with oversight from the licensing division under Georgia's Secretary of State and the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Certification Board of Georgia, an affiliate of International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium, Inc, are strictly adhered to in all functions and actions of Minding You staff. Each Code includes expectations and necessitates adherence of best practice standards as well as mandates competency requirements of Clinical Social Workers and Addiction Professionals. For more information on each entity's Code of Ethics, please visit the respective websites for NAADAC and NASW. For information on clinical licensure please visit <http://sos.georgia.gov/pbl/counselors/>.

Records Release/ Review of Records

Basic client information located in client records is secured in individual file folders in a locked / secure location. All client records and documentation are held for a minimum of 7 years once services have ended. Clients have the right to view parts of their records, the right to receive a copy of these parts of records and the right to request corrections, if necessary. You may also request that a copy of your file be made available to any other health care provider upon a proper release being executed. No second-hand information will be released per confidentiality and privacy laws. You will be charged a reasonable fee for photocopying or mailing expenses as needed.

Confidentiality and Informed Consent

As a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Certified Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor, I am bound by policies, laws and client rights which are all instilled to protect your confidentiality and uphold the integrity of protected health information. If you wish Minding You to release information about any part of your client record, you will need to sign a release of confidential information. Below is an explanation of the specific limits to said confidentiality. This is also called "Informed Consent", in that you are being made aware of these limitations prior to engaging in services.

Informed Consent

Your right to confidentiality has the following exceptions, as provided by law:

1. In the event of a medical emergency, your name, DOB/ age, allergies and/ or the name and phone number of your emergency contact may be provided;
2. In the event of a perceived serious threat to harm to someone else, the contemplation or commission of a serious crime or intentional, malicious harmful act, proper individuals must be contacted. This may include law enforcement and the individual against whom the threat is made.
3. In the event of a verbalized threat and plan with intentional and accessible means to harm oneself, proper assessments will be completed, safety planning engaged, and further consideration for involuntary confinement considered (1013). Immediate referrals to community supports may also be necessary.
4. In the event of suspected child or elder abuse, the proper authorities will be contacted. The actions or events do not have to be witnessed to be reported. All Minding You Staff are mandated reporters.
5. If ordered by a judge or other judicial officers, information regarding your treatment may be disclosed in an open court room, or privately to a Judge and other legal parties.
6. If you bring a complaint against Minding You / Stephanie Higdon with the Board or Secretary of State, information of your treatment, diagnosis, progress and related issues may be required to be released without your legal permission or a release of information.
7. If an attorney or Judge in the State of Georgia subpoenas records, I will notify you if you are still a current client; I will NOT notify you if you are no longer a client. The records being requested will be released (redacted where possible) unless you file a protection order within the designated time frame of the subpoena.

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8. In the event of your death or disability, counseling information may be released if your personal representative or the beneficiary of an insurance policy legally acting on your behalf signs a release authorizing disclosure.
9. In the case of a minor client, any information indicating that the minor client was a victim of a crime will be released to authorities.

Social Media Policy

Unfortunately, I will not be able to become “friends” with any client via social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and others. Ethical guidelines state that therapists should refrain from developing “dual relationships” with clients to protect the therapeutic relationship. Therefore, in order to provide you with the best possible care, we will focus on the relationship that is built within the confines of the therapeutic environment. You are free to like my professional Minding You Facebook page to follow and share the mental health blogs and articles posted there. Keep in mind, however, that your association with a Mental Health Private Practice will be visible to your friends and family. Of course, I will never confirm or deny any professional relationship with any of my clients.

Termination of Treatment

Counseling is a joint process between you and a therapist with the goal of empowering you to resolve problems independently after successful termination of counseling. Termination of counseling is a natural close of the therapeutic relationship and usually will be decided upon jointly. However, termination of counseling services can also happen for various other reasons and the client may end the therapeutic relationship at any time as may the therapist under certain conditions and with appropriate and feasible reasoning.

Complaints

Through the establishing of a therapeutic relationship, I hope you will be comfortable expressing concerns if any were to arise. If you develop concerns, I will do my best to understand your grievance and find a solution acceptable and appropriate to you. In the event you have an ethical concern or complaint or if you feel your previously mentioned concerns are not being addressed satisfactorily or properly, it is your right to file a grievance with the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists. You may file this complaint online at http://sos.ga.gov/index.php/licensing/plb/43/contact_the_board by clicking the “online complaint” button. Or, you may contact the call center for the Professional Licensing Boards Division at 478-207-2440. Additionally, you may mail your concerns to: The Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists, at: 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia 31217.

Last Words

My primary approach behind all services I deliver is staying realistic to you and fitting to your life. It is my privilege to serve you I intend to always support you in the best ways possible and that I am professionally capable of. Through our work together, I hope you will re-discover yourself, your life, nurture genuine values and find solace in your deepest beliefs ideals that fit you best, that you can be proud of and that you feel good about. I hope that on this journey of discovery and healing you will find resolve and peace with the issues and life-struggles you are seeking to mend. Thank you for allowing me to touch your life and I pray that you will learn the skills necessary to secure lasting happiness and completeness.

Warmest Regards,

Stephanie Higdon, LCSW, CAADC

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Acknowledgement of Receipt of Treatment Disclosure Statement

(this page to kept in client record)

I, _____ have been provided a copy of the Minding You Disclosure Statement. I understand that this signed page will be placed in my client record to confirm my awareness and acknowledgement of receiving this document and understanding of the material it contains. I also understand and agree that by signing this page and accepting the terms and guidelines of this document, that I am fully consenting to be treated by Stephanie Higdon, LCSW, CAADC until further notice. I understand and agree to the information included in this document and I have read it in its entirety. **Specifically**, I understand the following:

- This is my consent to receive mental health services voluntarily and on my own accord.
- Informed Consent & Confidentiality limitations.
- Have been given the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification.
- Have the correct contact information for Stephanie Higdon, LCSW.
- I will uphold my commitment to receiving the help I requested.

Client / Guarantor Signature

Date

Therapist,
Stephanie Higdon, LCSW, CAADC

Date