

Consent for Therapy and Confidentiality Agreement

Thank you for the opportunity to help you reach your goals. Please read the following pages carefully, and ask about anything that is unclear. Your signature at the end will indicate that you have read and understood the information, and that you agree to the terms of payment and service.

I am a Licensed Psychologist, license number 20-0585299. I have an MCAT in Art Therapy and am a CSAT. My practice is guided by the Ethical Codes of the American Psychological Association and am a member of the Pennsylvania Psychological Association. I consult regularly with colleagues and other therapists, attend conferences and seminars to discuss cases confidentially and anonymously, and ensure that my skills are current.

I am hoping that we will work together as a team. You have knowledge about your own life, and I have knowledge and expertise about the therapeutic process. I expect you to be actively involved in this process as you work toward your goals. I have found that clients benefit most from the therapy process if they engage in some form of self-help between their sessions. For this reason, I may assign homework in order to maximize the effectiveness of the therapy. I will invite your input to determine what would be the most useful things for you to do between sessions. We may correspond by email/phone between sessions for brief updates and confirm appointments. Sessions are normally 50 minutes long.

YOUR RIGHTS

You have the right to ask questions about my treatment methods so you can make informed decisions about what methods are most suitable for you. You have the right to stop therapy if something about it is not working for you. If this should happen, I would appreciate your feedback about what is not working for you. I may be able to suggest alternate resources. You have the right to ask for a referral if that would be in your best interests.

RISKS OF PSYCHOTHERAPY

Psychotherapy involves a degree of risk. You may experience uncomfortable emotions as you talk about the issues that are concerning you. Sometimes therapy involves talking about unpleasant aspects of your history. Psychotherapy is focused on facilitating change according to the goals you set. Any change (even good change) can affect a person's established system. You may meet with some resistance from other people in your life as a result of the changes you make.

CONFIDENTIALITY

What you disclose during the therapy sessions is kept in strict confidence. I keep session notes in a locked filing cabinet and only I have access to them. Digital files and electronic client data are kept in secure password safe locations. There are, however, limitations to the full extent that emails and electronic mediums can be completely confidential and clients are advised to be aware of this when using these means of communication.

If you and I determine that it would be helpful for me to share information about your therapy with someone else (e.g., your physician), then I will ask you to sign a form that gives me permission to release and/or request information.

EXCEPTIONS TO CONFIDENTIALITY

- If you threaten to harm or kill yourself or someone else and I believe your threat to be serious, I am ethically bound to warn your family or the person you have threatened.
- According to the Child Welfare Act, I am ethically and legally bound to report to the appropriate authorities any abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, or neglect) of a child currently under the age

Mary Ellen Goetz, PsyD

of 18 years. This law is designed to protect children from harm, and requires that all persons report confirmed or suspected cases of child abuse to the proper authorities.

- If you are involved in litigation of any kind and you inform the Court that you are in therapy, you may be waiving your right to keep your records confidential. If the Court subpoenas my files, or me, I am obligated to appear and to answer questions.

Communication between a client and a therapist is not considered privileged communication. If you disclose to me that you have done something illegal, I am not legally obligated to report this unless it involves child abuse or direct threat to an individual.

On rare occasions, if a client fails to pay their therapy fees in a reasonable length of time, I may choose to use a collection agency to pursue the outstanding account. In this case, I would release information relevant only to locating the person (i.e., name, address, telephone numbers).

FEES

The standard fee for a face-to-face 50-minute session is \$165.00. If you wish to schedule a longer session, the fee will be adjusted accordingly. My experience has been that couples often prefer to schedule 1&1/2 or 2-hour sessions especially for the initial session and I attempt to offer that for a first session. Please provide payment at the beginning of the session including having checks completed to allow for your full time of your session.

Payment is accepted by VISA, MC cheque or cash at the end of each session. I use Square and there is a \$5. transaction fee. I am currently looking for other alternatives. There is a \$25.00 charge for NSF cheques.

If your therapy is covered by an insurance policy, clients pay the fee and then seek reimbursement from the insurance company, except in the case of in-network insurance companies. I am in network for Penn Behavioral Health and Highmark which often includes local Blue Cross Networks.

If a written attendance report or report of progress in therapy is requested, the agreed- upon fee per hour is charged for preparation of these reports and will be calculated based on time spent.

OUT OF TOWN

If I am out of town, I will indicate that on my voice mail or provide the name of a colleague. If you experience an emergency and you are not able to reach me, you may call 911 or go to a hospital emergency room.

CANCELLATIONS AND MISSED SESSIONS

If you need to re-schedule an appointment, please phone ahead (610-306-4908), giving at least 24 hours notice. If you miss an appointment without notice, or cancel a session with less than 24 hours notice, you will be charged the full fee for that session.

STOPPING THERAPY

In starting therapy, you begin a goal-focused process that has a beginning, middle, and end. It is recommended that stopping therapy be planned for and discussed with the therapist.

AGREEMENT

By signing this form I understand that at least 24 hour notice needs to be given to change or cancel an appointment. I agree to participate in the therapy process with Mary Ellen Goetz, PsyD. and understand that the therapy process is collaborative. I understand that information about me is confidential and I understand the limits to confidentiality.

I agree to pay for missed sessions and short-notice cancellations plus any applicable fees, and understand that my if my credit card is on file, I will be charged for the service fee plus any additional fees.

I have read, understand and agree to the information on this form.

Client(s):

Mary Ellen Goetz, PsyD

_____ (signature) _____
(print name)

(signature)

(print name)
Child's Name _____ (if under 18)

Name(s) of Legal Parent(s) or Guardian(s):

Counsellor Signature: _____

Date:

Date:
