**Counselling Agreement**

**What you agree to as a counselling client:**

* Attend all appointments on time and understand that we won’t be able to make up any time if you’re late
* Give as much notice as possible of any cancellations. If you cancel less than 24 hours before we meet, you will still have to pay for the session
* Tell me of any changes to your address or telephone number
* Consent to me holding information about you for up to 6 months after we’ve finished working together. This is in case you get in touch with me again. It will then be permanently deleted. Your data is held in line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
* Pay for sessions before we meet
* If you want to end sessions with me, you will give one session’s notice

**What I agree to as a counsellor:**

* Give you a safe and secure place for counselling to take place
* Treat you with respect and involve you where I can with decisions about the journey of your counselling
* Give you as much notice of holidays or cancellations
* Maintain competence and the standards required for a registered member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)
* Follow the BACP Ethical Framework for Counselling Professionals. The principles of which are being trustworthy, respecting your autonomy, committing to non-maleficence and promoting beneficence, justice and self-respect.

**How to contact me**

Email is the best way to contact me. If it’s urgent you can call me. If I don’t answer, please leave a message.

Usually, I will only be able to respond to phone calls between 9am and 6pm, Monday to Friday. There may exceptions when I’ll be in touch outside these hours.

**Continuity**

It’s unlikely I’ll be able to keep your counselling space if you do not attend a counselling session without contacting me or you can’t come to three or more sessions in a row.

**Confidentiality - your information**

I’m required to be in supervision. This is where I talk about our work together with a professional supervisor. It’s to make sure I’m putting your interests and wellbeing at the heart of what I do. I will take relevant issues from our work into supervision and your details are anonymised.

In some circumstances I may have to take what we discuss out of the room (break confidentiality). These are:

1. Where you give consent to break confidence
2. Where statutory law, including Safeguarding, requires me to inform the relevant authorities. For example, terrorist activities, drug trafficking or the abuse of a child or an adult at risk
3. Where I believe it’s appropriate to consult or involve other professionals. This could be where if there’s a risk of harm to you or someone else. I’ll aim to discuss any action with you first and ask you to work with me.
4. Where I am legally compelled by a court of law

**Complaints – if you’re concerned**

If you have concerns, please share them with me. If you are not comfortable talking to me about them, the BACP have a service: call 01455 883300 and select option 3 or email ask@bacp.co.uk

***If we’re meeting over an online platform like Zoom – additional considerations***

Please consider having tissues and a drink near you for the session. Please check your bandwidth (how much information can be sent and received through your device) and internet settings. WIFI is likely to provide a better connection than mobile data (also known as 3G or 4G). You can check your bandwidth or broadband speed online to see it will be OK for video calling. Try to disconnect all your other devices from your WIFI network.

**Confidentiality**

* You agree to find a quiet and private place where you won’t be interrupted and try to use the same space each time we meet. This helps to keep privacy and confidentiality.

**Connectivity & power**

* We agree to use devices that can manage a 50-minute video session and have enough battery life.
* We accept there may be times when it cuts out of freezes and that this time cannot be made back.

**Communicating online**

* You agree to give yourself time to set up the video connection before we’re due to meet.
* You agree to give the same commitment as you would for face-to-face sessions. Punctuality and consistency are just as important.
* A lot of communication is done through body language. Online will be different. We may need to use more words to express ourselves and be mindful of distractions in our spaces.
* You may also be distracted by your own face on the device screen. It may help to hide this or move it to a place that won’t distract you from communicating with me.

**Client – I understand and will follow the contents of this agreement**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Print name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_­­­­­\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Counsellor - I understand and will follow the contents of this agreement**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Print name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_