

Comprehensive Counseling Connections, PLLC

INFORMED CONSENT FOR COUPLES THERAPY

This document addresses specific privacy issues for couples engaged in therapy together. It is essential to read and discuss this document with your practitioner in order to fully understand the protection specific to your rights as an individual within the context of couple's therapy. The following will serve as a contract and an acknowledgement that you understand and consent to the terms set forth herein.

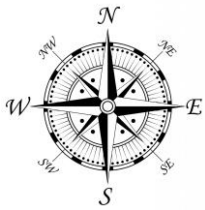
Confidentiality:

Couple's therapy begins with an assessment of the relationship, past and present, followed by a discussion of the issues and objectives for therapy. It is understood that this type of work must occur within a setting where each individual in the dyad is comfortable with the knowledge that his or her thoughts and feelings will remain protected and secure. Records will not be released to either member of the couple's therapy or to an outside source without written permission from both members of the dyad. Authorization by one member of the couple is insufficient to release medical records or to engage in discourse or consultation with outside parties. These rules apply except where disclosure is permitted or required by law. Those situations include the following: (a) when there is reasonable suspicion of abuse to a child or to a disabled dependent adult or elder adult; (b) when the patient communicates a threat harm to self or others; (c) when disclosure is required pursuant to court order; (d) when insurance providers request billing records or request information to conduct a clinical review pursuant to "medical necessity".

Issues concerning personal privacy and professional confidentiality are more complicated when working with couples. In addition to the limits to confidentiality discussed above, work with couples sometimes requires additional compromises. On occasion during the therapeutic process, individual partners may be seen for an individual counseling session. In this case, the individual is still considered as part of the couple's counseling relationship. Information disclosed during the individual session may be relevant or even essential to the treatment of the couple. If an individual partner chooses to share information when seen alone, but still within the context of couple's therapy, the practitioner may determine that the information needs to be shared during a joint session. In such cases, the practitioner will offer the individual every opportunity to disclose the relevant information and will assist in this therapeutic process. If the individual chooses not to disclose this relevant information within the couple's session, the practitioner may determine that it is necessary to discontinue the couple's counseling and will discuss this decision with each partner in a couple's session or in an individual session. The practitioner and/or CCC will provide other referral sources, so that the couple may continue within the context of either couple's therapy and/or individual therapy. This policy is intended to maintain the integrity of the couple's counseling relationship.

Court Proceedings/Subpoena of Records:

It is understood that the purpose of couple's therapy is for the amelioration of distress within the relationship. Information discussed in couple's therapy is for therapeutic purposes and it is not intended for use in any legal proceedings involving the partners. Therefore, both parties acknowledge by their individual signature that neither party will attempt to use information from



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the therapy process against the other party in a judicial setting of any kind, be it civil, criminal, or circuit. Likewise, neither party shall for any reason attempt to subpoena testimony or records to be presented in a deposition or court hearing of any kind for any reason, such as a divorce case.

Release of Records:

Both parties must provide their consent to release marital/couple counseling records. If one partner does not provide consent, records *will not be released*.

Course of Treatment:

The continued participation by each party is voluntary. Either participant may suspend or terminate the therapy at his or her individual request. Each participant has been given the opportunity to ask questions and discuss confidentiality and disclosure policies specific to couples counseling. The focus in couple's therapy is on preserving and enhancing the *relationship*, or if remaining together is harmful to one or both partners, the focus will be on facilitating an amicable separation.

Payment for Services:

Each member of the couple's therapy acknowledge that copayments are due at the time of the session. Statements will be mailed monthly, and due at the time services are delivered. The individual under whom the insurance is billed will ultimately carry the responsibility for payment of services. Your signature is an acknowledgement and agreement of financial responsibility for services denied or unpaid by the carrier. It is also understood that sessions cancelled less than 24 hours will be charged at the amount of \$60.00, and this amount will be charged to the credit card on file unless you have made arrangements to pay at the next scheduled appointment. It is also understood that payment will be made within 30 days of the date of the statement, which we will receive in session, or if needed will be mailed to the address on record.

By signing below, we agree to the terms set forth herein and we acknowledge that we have been informed, understand, and agree to abide by the stated CCC policies.

Patient

Date:

Patient

Date:

Witness

Date: