

Consent for Counselling Therapy Services

Mindful Healing
Paula Arndt, RPC, RCT, nd
2 Bluewater Rd., #238 Bedford, NS. B4B 1G8
(902) 669-0387 paula@mindfulhealing.ca

Consent

Consent for counselling therapy refers to your right to decide whether to receive counselling services and to participate in the general direction of your therapy. Signing this consent form represents the beginning of an on-going collaborative process that will require your continued agreement. Consenting to counselling therapy needs to be based on an understanding of the services I provide, the risks and potential benefits of therapy, and your rights as a client. You have the right to ask questions at any time and to have them answered to your satisfaction. Importantly, you also have the right to withdraw your consent or to end therapy at any time.

Counselling Therapy

Counselling therapy is a relational process based upon the ethical use of specific professional competencies to facilitate human change. It can be useful in addressing issues of wellness, relationships, personal growth, career development, mental health and psychological illness or distress. The counselling process uses recognised cognitive, affective, expressive, somatic, spiritual, developmental, behavioural, learning and systemic principles.

What I Can Do to Assist You

- Help remedy or treat disorders in cognitive (thinking), behavioural, interpersonal and emotional functioning
- Use specific standardised tools to assess, monitor and record your symptoms (e.g., level of anxiety or depression)
- Help your mental health by developing and enhancing personal, relational, sexual, and career growth and well-being (including dealing with grief or loss).
- Help enhance your personal awareness and coping strategies
- Help improve your decision-making and problem-solving skills

What I Can't Do to Assist You

- I cannot provide you with a diagnosis of a psychological illness or disorder
- I cannot prescribe medication or advise you on the dosage of a

medication

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Risks and Potential Benefits of Counselling Therapy

Potential benefits of counselling therapy include an increased ability to live more effectively by improving your ability to cope with a variety of stressors and life challenges. You may also gain a better understanding of yourself, your goals, and your values, which may assist you in your personal and career growth. You may also experience relief or resolution, develop useful life-skills, increased resiliency and a healthier relationship with yourself and others.

Counselling therapy may also involve risks of remembering unpleasant events, and experiencing unfamiliar or unanticipated feelings and memories. You may face issues or aspects of yourself that are uncomfortable to confront. Counselling therapy may also lead to unforeseen changes in your relationships or take you outside of your comfort zone as you move forward in therapy.

In rare cases it is possible that a client could be harmed by the actions or inactions of a counselling therapist. As a licensed Registered Counselling Therapist, I am required to adhere to a Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice which govern my interactions with clients. If you feel that I have harmed you in any way or breached these standards, I hope that you will speak to me directly about your concern. You are also free to take your concerns directly to the Nova Scotia College of Counselling Therapy (NSCCT). *Information on the NSCCT complaints process is attached here as part of this consent.*

Confidentiality

For counselling to be effective, it is important that you feel comfortable openly and honestly sharing your thoughts and feelings. I have a legal and ethical duty to keep all information that I receive from you or about you confidential. This means not sharing your information with anyone without your consent *except* in the following specific legal circumstances:

- If I become concerned that you might harm yourself or another person
- If I discover that a child or elderly person is being harmed or in danger
- If you are under 16 years old and indicate that you are (or have been) abused or neglected
- If I am ordered by subpoena or 'Order to Produce' to release records or appear in court or at a professional conduct hearing

In each of these situations I will continue to protect your privacy to the full extent permitted by law.

Confidentiality and Minors

If you are signing this as a parent or legal guardian for a minor to receive counselling therapy services, you should be aware that the child's privacy will be protected to ensure that they feel comfortable sharing sensitive information (e.g., drug use, lying, sexual behaviour, etc.) and that this information will not be shared with parents or guardians unless a significant risk of harm to themselves or others is revealed or identified.

Privacy and Protection of Counselling Records

All counselling therapists are required to keep records of each contact and therapy session with a client. All information contained in these records must be kept in compliance with the *Personal Health Information Protection Act* (PHIPA). This Act requires that all of your personal information is stored in locked cabinets or electronically in password protected files.

Transfer of Records to a Third Party

I can share information with any person or entity you ask me to. At the time you make the request, you will be asked to fill out a separate *Counselling Records Disclosure and Release of Information Form* indicating what information you give authority to release and to whom.

Fees and Payment

My standard rate for an individual 60-90-minute counselling therapy session is \$150.00. All fees are due following each session by cash, or preferably by e-transfer to paula@mindfulhealing.ca. A receipt for services will be issued upon payment. Additional administration fees may apply to the preparation of requested reports or transfer of records.

Appointments and Cancellations

Appointment times are reserved for you and it is your responsibility to provide at least 24-hour notice if you wish to cancel. If you cancel with less than 24-hour notice or fail to arrive for a scheduled appointment, you will be invoiced for the full session fee. Late cancellation or missed session fees will only be waived on compassionate grounds for reasons such as a medical emergency, death in the family, dangerous weather conditions or in the event of an accident of natural disaster.

A Final Note

When people come to counselling for the first time or when they begin seeing a new counsellor, they often feel nervous, upset or under stress. This is natural and expected. These feelings can make it difficult to focus on and fully absorb the material presented in this document and our discussions about consent. Please feel free to keep a copy of this document to refer to and ask questions about at any time.

Remember that informed consent is a process that continues throughout our work together and that I will always welcome questions and feedback about the direction and progress of our conversations. People get more out of counselling therapy when we work together in a spirit of collaboration.

Statement of Informed Consent:

- q I have reviewed and understand the information presented in this document.
- q I have been provided with information about the NSCCT complaints process
- q I have had the opportunity to ask questions and to discuss the above with my counselling therapist.
- q I hereby consent to counselling therapy services provided by Paula Arndt, RCT,RPC, nd.

Client Name (please type your name and sign. Signing can be done in the office at your appointment)_____

Date_____

Contact Number_____

Email_____

Home Address_____

Client (or parent/guardian) Signature_____

Permission to leave Messages Yes No

