



Telephone/Online Counselling Agreement

In this current COVID-19 crisis it has been necessary to move my practice online for the safety of my clients and myself. I am therefore providing counselling via telephone or the video call platform Zoom. I have completed a virtual online course by my regulatory body the BACP appropriate for this unprecedented situation. BACP approve Zoom as a confidential platform to use for counselling.

About Online Counselling

Although different to face to face interactions counselling by telephone or online video has shown to be an effective and confidential means of forming a therapeutic relationship with clients. I will be working in a private space and will use a headset so that whatever you say cannot be overheard. I would advise you to similarly find a quiet and confidential place for your counselling session where you will not be interrupted, and your phone and notifications are turned off.

Confidentiality

Everything you share with me in the course of our work together will be treated as confidential, however, there are exceptions to this confidentiality of which you need to be made aware. I may have to break confidentiality:

- o When I am required to do so by law.
- o When medical attention is required.
- o When there is a clear risk to life.
- o When there is risk of abuse of a child or vulnerable adult, or when allegations of such abuse are made.
- o When required to do so under the Prevention of Terrorism Act.
- o When I consider disclosure to be in the client's best interest, and only with their permission.

Wherever possible, I will consult with you before breaching confidentiality. If at any point during our counselling arrangement I felt that you needed emergency support I may ask for your consent to contact your GP.

As a member of the BACP (British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists), I follow their Ethical Framework for Good Practice and I am, therefore, required to have clinical supervision. In supervision I may disclose details of our work together to ensure that I am working in an appropriate and ethical manner. I take 'our work' to these sessions and not your identity.



Note Keeping

I will keep brief written records which I will store confidentially in a locked filing cabinet. At the end of our work together my notes will be stored securely for a period of 5 years after which they will be shredded.

Telephone Counselling

If we have decided to use the telephone for our sessions, then I will call you on the number provided at the agreed time. It may come up on your phone as a withheld number. If there are any problems I will continue to try make contact. Please ensure that you are in a quiet, confidential place to take the call.

Telephone counselling can feel more tiring than face to face counselling as we make more effort in focusing and listening as we make up for the lack of body language. Please be mindful of this and take some time out after the call to maybe have a glass of water or cup of tea before resuming normal activity.

Video Counselling

Zoom is a safe secure internet platform on which we can see each other and talk in a face to face way. I recommend when using on-line Zoom face to face sessions you use headphones for confidentiality if necessary. You will need to download Zoom to your laptop, PC, tablet or smart phone. To have face to face your pc/laptop will need to have a camera.

When we book your session this way, I will send you a secure link for you to join me at the agreed time. www.zoom.us

Please see their privacy policy. <https://zoom.us/legal>

Please note that during a video call I will be able to see your surroundings so please be mindful about what you want to share. I recommend that after ending the session which may leave you feeling drained and tired, you give yourself some time to reflect and refresh before resuming your normal activity.

Online Security

Please ensure that you secure your computer and emails against unauthorised viewing by third parties. It is recommended that you only use a private computer and not a work or public computer. Ensure you are in a quiet, comfortable space where no-one can disturb or hear you. Please ensure you keep your anti-viral protection up-to-date and I will undertake to do the same.

Frequency and Length of Sessions

To get the full benefit of counselling, it is important to attend regularly, and we will normally have a weekly appointment at an agreed time. Each session will last 50 minutes. If we lose internet connection I will try and phone you on the contact number that you have given me or you can call or text me. I offer time-limited or open-ended counselling which we will review on a regular basis. We will discuss this in our initial assessment.



Fees

The fee for each of your telephone counselling sessions is £40.00. This amount is payable 48 hours before the session via bank transfer.

Late cancellations

Please try to give me as much notice as possible if you are unable to attend a session. If you fail to answer the phone or join the Zoom session or cancel with less than 48 hours' notice I will have to charge the full session fee unless we can reschedule for another time in the same week

Wherever possible I will give you at least 48 hours' notice if I need to change the appointment or am unable to attend and there will be no fee payable.

Alcohol and Drugs

I will not be able to conduct a counselling session if you are under the influence of drugs or alcohol. I will ask you to reschedule for the following week for our session as usual and will expect you to pay the full fee.

Contact outside sessions

The telephone number and email address I have provided you with is for use in the case of cancellation, any alterations to appointment or in case of emergency. I will not respond to either between sessions except by prior arrangement. Our Counselling relationship is a professional one with boundaries in place to keep us both safe which we will agree to enforce. If I do see you outside our counselling sessions, I will not instigate any conversation.

Ending Counselling

Normally the end of our counselling contract will have been reached and agreed mutually in our sessions together. However, you do have the right to end counselling at any time, but I would appreciate you letting me know if you decide not to return by giving me at least 48 hours' notice

Emergency procedure

I am unable provide an emergency service for clients outside our appointed sessions. If you find yourself in a major crisis and were considering serious self-harm it would be vital to get immediate help. This could include contacting your GP or going to your nearest accident and emergency department. You could also call the Samaritans on 08457 909090, email them jo@samaritans.org or visit their website www.samaritans.org

Please read this contract carefully and check it is what we agreed together. If you wish to negotiate any changes, then I am happy to do so before you sign.

Signed Client.....

Date

Signed Counsellor.....

Date



MAPLE TREE THERAPY

