



4101 Parkstone Heights Drive • Suite 370 • Austin • TX • 78746 • Phone: 512-585-9017

INFORMATION ABOUT MY PRACTICE

This information describes the ground rules under which I can work with you effectively, ethically and legally. It is followed by a signature page that amounts to an agreement between us to accept these rules as the basis of our working relationship and that permits you to provide me with the information I must keep in my files (See Informed Consent).

Nature of Services. I provide long-term and short-term counseling and psychotherapy for adults. Many of the more specific aspects of my services, such as the philosophy of the therapist, your role as the client, your goals for therapy, and duration of services, will be discussed with you individually. In general, however, you will determine your goals and you will decide on the duration of your therapy. Your treatment will be unique to your needs and is likely to change as those needs change.

Appointments. I am available for individual appointments Monday through Thursday beginning at 7:00 a.m. through 2:00 p.m.. Since I may plan to be away from the office unless there is an appointment, it is very important that appointments be kept. **You will be charged full fee for no shows and appointments that are cancelled with less than 24 hours notice. In these instances, insurance will NOT be billed and you are personally responsible for the full balance. Additionally, if 2 appointments are rescheduled/cancelled with more than 24 hours notice, there will be a full session fee charged.** This is due to the limited number of slots available in this practice and difficulty filling these openings when there is a pattern of cancellations and only 24-hours notice is given.

Fees. The fee for a 50-minute office visit is \$160. Clients who use BlueCross/Blue Shield insurance are responsible for knowing their benefits, co-pay, deductible amount and what fees they are responsible for each session. Telephone consultation will be charged in 15-minute increments at the rate the caller would be charged for an office visit.

It is very important you pay the agreed-upon fee prior to leaving the office after *each* individual session, in the form of cash, check or credit card. Fees that are unpaid, or that appear likely to be unpaid, will be discussed with you individually. Accounts are considered delinquent after one session is unpaid. At this point, if payment arrangements have not been made, routine appointments will cease until the situation is addressed.

Insurance. I currently accept Blue Cross/ Blue Shield insurance. If you have an out-of-network plan, I will provide you with a superbill so that you can file for insurance reimbursement on your own. It is important you know your benefits and what to expect in terms of out-of-pocket expenses for therapy services. And, you agree to allow Dr. John to release relevant information (e.g., diagnosis, treatment plan, demographic information, and cost of sessions) to your insurance company for reimbursement.

Confidentiality. I treat all information shared with me with great care. You are generally entitled to access your record, but I certainly will not discuss you or anything identifiable about your situation with anyone other than you and the people who are, with your knowledge, members of the team of professionals who are a part of, affiliated with, or consultants to my practice. There are several exceptions to confidentiality mandated by Texas State law. Some examples: I must break confidentiality if the client is a danger to self or others, if child abuse, **even if it occurred long ago**, is suspected or confirmed, or if my records are subpoenaed by a court, and in situations in which governmental agencies require information for audit or administrative purposes. Finally, while I certainly hope not to encounter this situation, Texas law authorizes us to provide information as necessary to collection agencies if other efforts to collect payment have failed. In addition, it is legally and clinically necessary that I keep notes regarding my work with you. If you decide to come in, it will be necessary for you to see my HIPAA Privacy Notice before I start our work together. Also, under the Federal PATRIOT Act, I may be required to grant FBI access to your records if they view you as being able to assist in an investigation relating to terrorism. In the extremely unlikely event that this occurs, the law prohibits me from notifying you in any way. If you are filing insurance claims, information regarding diagnosis, treatment plan, demographics, duration of treatment and financial details will be disclosed in order to receive payment for services.

Potential Side Effects. It is important you realize that working with a psychologist may sometimes lead to unexpected consequences. For example, you might learn enough about yourself that you would come to recognize a job or relationship you were convinced was right for you has in fact contributed heavily to negative feelings; you might then decide to give up that job or that relationship rather than continue to endure the emotional consequences of keeping it. In general, exploring problems may uncover painful feelings and it is important to know that this is a normal part of the growth process. One aim of therapy is to work through and resolve these underlying hurts and this requires your ongoing commitment to therapy.

Complaints. I very much hope that I can resolve any misunderstandings that may arise by discussing them with you. Indeed, working through such difficulties is one of the most effective ways to grow psychologically and emotionally. Nonetheless, you are entitled to know that, should you have a complaint that you cannot resolve by talking with me, or that you do not care to discuss with me, you have the right to call the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists at (512) 305-7709.

Alternative Services. You should know that there are many forms of mental health assistance available in and around Austin and that it is perfectly appropriate to ask your therapist about such alternatives. You also should know that you have the right to withdraw from my services at any time and that I will assist you, if you desire, with finding an appropriate referral.

Emergencies. I have confidential voice mail that can only be accessed by me (512) 585-9017. It will be checked frequently if I cannot answer the phone personally. Email will be used only to communicate basic information such as scheduling of appointments or other non-clinical information. **Email is not to be used in instances of an emergency or for clinical purposes.** If you have an emergency and you do not hear from me (in what you consider to be a timely manner) please call 911 for more immediate assistance. Or, go to an emergency room.