

Counselling agreement

Welcome to All In: Mental Wellbeing Services. This counselling agreement outlines how we will work together.

My approach

My core counselling qualification is in person-centred and experiential therapy (PCET). Person-centred therapies believe that clients are experts in their own lives and that as therapists we should provide empathy, authenticity and non-judgment to help clients tap into their own potential for change and growth. This type of therapy is led by you, the client.

I have completed additional training in 'third-wave' cognitive behavioural therapies, primarily Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT). ACT is a relatively new type of therapy that helps to shift how you experience your thoughts and feelings, so that you can live a life that feels more meaningful. Take a look at my website for more information on how ACT works.

I also have an MEd in Inclusion and Special Educational needs and have completed training in working therapeutically with ASD and ADHD. This informs the neuro-affirming aspect of my work and my specialism in supporting neurodivergence.

Whatever type of therapy we use in a session, it will always be purposeful and collaborative.

What to expect

Our session will take place online by a platform of your choice - Microsoft Teams, Google Meet, or Doxy.me. I will send you a link at least 24 hours before our session. Sessions will be 50 to 60 minutes long. You can bring any therapeutic work that you want to the session but we'll use the first session to come up with some goals for therapy. When we're working together in counselling, we're agreeing to work towards change. These changes can be big or small but they'll always be decided by you.

Whilst the therapeutic skills I use might offer you different perspectives, I'm not able to give you advice or tell you how you should be living your life. I'm also not qualified to diagnose you, although we can explore any thoughts, intuitions or worries you have.

If we're working on specific skills and techniques, I can provide digital resources for you to use in between sessions.

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Confidentiality

It's very important that you're able to come to a counselling session knowing that what you decide to share is kept confidential. Having said that there are some reasons why I, and any counsellor, would need to break confidentiality and it's important you understand what they are. These are mainly around safeguarding and some statutory responsibilities. In some circumstances, the court may also compel a therapist to break client confidentiality.

Our work together might bring up material that we feel would be helpful to be passed onto your GP or other health care professional. Out of respect to your autonomy, I will aim to support you to pass on this information yourself. However, I also have a duty of care for your wellbeing, which may lead me to need to contact your GP or emergency contact myself. If I have a serious reason to think that you may harm yourself in a significant way, I will pass these concerns onto the emergency services so they can support your welfare.

There may be occasions when you would like me to share information from our sessions with a third party. In these circumstances, you will be asked to complete a consent form specifying what information may be shared and with whom.

Have a good read through the confidentiality policy to make sure you understand the details around the limits of confidentiality. This is on my website and will also have been emailed to you.

Data protection

I understand how important your privacy is. I take care to maintain your confidentiality in accordance with current data protection laws (Data Protection Act, 2018) and the ethical guidelines of my professional body (BACP). These guidelines have been set up to protect your confidential material and ensure that your therapist always conducts themselves with professionalism and integrity.

In order to provide you with the best service possible, I will hold your personal contact details and records of your therapy sessions. I will also keep notes of each session. These notes are for my use only and help to keep a track of everything that is being discussed. These will be securely stored and protected in line with security best practices.

Please read my privacy policy about how this information will be held and used. This is on my website and will also have been emailed to you.

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Payment and cancellations

Payment is via BACS transfer to:

All In: Mental Wellbeing Services

Sort Code 04-06-05

Account number 24408927

Payment must be made before the session and you'll get a reminder by text or email to prompt you. I understand that life happens and sometimes you might need to cancel a session. If you are able to give at least 12-hours notice, you will not be charged for the session. When less than 12-hours notice is given, you will still need to pay for the session.

If you don't attend a scheduled online session and I haven't heard from you in advance, I will first email you to check everything is OK. I will then stay on the call until twenty minutes past the scheduled start time. If you haven't joined at that point I will leave the call.

If you have already paid for the session and I need to cancel, you will get a full refund.

Technology

I can use Microsoft Teams, Google meet or doxy.me for video calls and WhatsApp for voice calls.

Technical issues can arise during video calls. If we come up against technical problems during the session, we can discuss whether moving the session to a voice call is possible or we could decide to re-arrange for another time.

For therapy to work, it's important you have a quiet location where you're able to talk openly without worrying about confidentiality. If I feel like you're not able to take the session somewhere suitable, I might need to end the session.

I will ensure that I'm working in a quiet, private and confidential setting. I have selected video calling platforms that offer end to end encryption to ensure maximum privacy. However, I can't be held responsible for any breaches that happen because of failures in this technology.

Crisis

It's important that you know that counselling isn't a crisis service. Other than arranging/cancelling sessions, I'm not able to offer support or reply to calls/emails between sessions. I am able to provide you with contact details for services that offer

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crisis support. Please have a look at the emergency contact sheet that can be found on my website and will also have been emailed to you.

Ethical practice

I discuss my clinical work with a supervisor. This is to ensure that I'm offering you the best service possible. These conversations are bound by confidentiality and you will only be referred to by your first name.

I'm also a member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). As a member of this professional body I follow their ethical framework. You can read more about it at <https://www.bacp.co.uk/events-and-resources/ethics-and-standards/ethical-framework-for-the-counselling-professions/>. If you ever feel like my practice is going against this framework you can raise it directly with me and/or raise a complaint with the BACP. You can find out more at <https://www.bacp.co.uk/about-us/protecting-the-public/professional-conduct/how-to-complain-about-a-bacp-member/>. My registration number is 411341.

I am fully insured by Holistic Insurance Services.

Although online working means there's likely to be a geographical distance between us, there's still a possibility we may run into each other in 'real life'. If this happens, I'll treat you like any other member of the public. If you want to acknowledge me, I'm happy for you to say 'hi' and to have a quick chat. You're welcome to follow me on any of my business social media accounts, which can be found on my website. I'm not able to accept requests from clients on my personal social media accounts.

Termination

When we feel that you've achieved the change/s you want, we'll have a chat about whether it's time to stop therapy. We might also feel that change just isn't happening, for whatever reason. If this happens, we would need an honest conversation about whether therapy is working for you.

It's important that you feel free able to bring all of your 'stuff' to therapy and that might include anger. Having said that verbal abuse, threats or intimidation are not acceptable in any space and would most likely lead to terminating our work together.

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You are able to end our work together at any time and for any reason.