

COUPLE'S COUNSELING & PSYCHOTHERAPY INFORMED CONSENT

Client 1 Name: _____ Date: _____

Client 2 Name: _____ Date: _____

Name of Your Counselor: _____

INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR THERAPIST:

Each of our mental health providers is highly educated, credentialed, and licensed in his/her specific fields. You may find information about your therapist in our waiting room or by visiting Calm and Clear Mind's website at www.CalmandClearMind.com.

CLIENT/THERAPIST RELATIONSHIP:

You and your Therapist have a professional relationship existing exclusively for therapeutic treatment. This relationship functions most effectively when it remains strictly professional and involves only therapeutic aspects. Your Therapist can best serve your needs by focusing solely on therapy and avoiding any type of social or business relationship. Gifts are not appropriate, nor is any sort of trade for service.

FEE SCHEDULE:

In addition to this informed consent you have been provided with a separate, detailed, and comprehensive service agreement which covers all the procedures and policies of Calm and Clear Mind Center. Per required disclosure rules and regulations of the State of Texas, the following **private pay fee schedule** for our center has been disclosed for your information.

Regular Office Visits (Follow-ups) (45-55 minutes) (Individuals, Couples & Play Therapy)	\$ 160
Written Reports (Forms, Letters, and Report Requests)	\$ 100
No-show/ Less than 24 hr. advance cancellation (considered 12pm the day before)	\$ 75
Records Fees (First 20 pages of records) each sheet after that will be .50 cents per page	\$ 30
Returned check fee per check	\$ 35
Credit Card dispute processing and justification fee (for previously agreed upon services)	\$ 300
Legal Proceedings and Services provided by mental health professional (see service agreement)	\$ 325/hr.

Please also note and be informed that in the event payments for services rendered have not been collected, Calm and Clear Mind Center, its management, and its providers reserve the right to report any and all uncollected balances to a collections agency, attorney, and/or legal authority. Also, please be informed that any fees incurred by the center on your behalf, for ANY collection, legal services, or otherwise, are your direct responsibility.

TREATMENT AND LIMITS OF CONFIDENTIALITY:

Whatever the concern that brings you to our center, your provider will spend time getting to know you and how you view yourself as well as how you developed through your family of origin, and your current patterns of interaction with other people. In order for us to discover, explore, and help you change, you will need to be very open and honest with your provider. Please familiarize yourself with the section below titled 'What Therapy Is and What It Is Not'

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The things you and your partner share with your provider are protected under the confidentiality laws of the State of Texas and by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) promulgated by the United States

Department of Health and Human Services. Neither verbal information nor written records about a client can be shared with another party without the written consent of the client or the client's legal guardian. In this case, since you are engaging in a therapeutic relationship with your provider as a couple, you understand and acknowledge that your "relationship" will be seen by the provider as his or her "client". Your "relationship" records will be filed in a single folder, therefore, in order for any of the records to be disclosed to a third party both of you, as members of this "relationship", will have to consent to such disclosure. If either party is unwilling to disclose any or all parts of the "relationship" file, you understand that it is the policy of Calm and Clear Mind Center and its providers not to release ANY information on your behalf.

There are however limits to confidentiality that you should know about before we begin therapy. Those exceptions include:

- Signed authorization from you each of you to release information to a specific individual or organization
- Therapist determination that you may harm yourself or someone else
- Disclosure of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a child, the elderly, or the disabled
- Disclosure of professional misconduct of another mental health professional
- Court order or requirement by law to disclose information
- Pre-natal exposure to controlled substances
- In the event of a client's death (the spouse or parents of a deceased client may have the right to access their child's or spouse's records)
- Minors/Guardianship (parents or legal guardians of non-emancipated minor clients have the right to access the client's records)
- Insurance Companies (only information required for billing purposes)

We will devote our sessions, usually 45-50 minutes, once a week, to helping you find new ways to help yourself or your relationship. Our efforts will always be legal, ethical, and relevant. They might be carried out within our sessions as well as without, in the form of homework. It's hard to predict how many sessions will be needed to bring about the changes you are seeking. If you like, your provider can discuss further with you how many sessions they think it will take to reach your goals after they become more familiar with your background. The counseling relationship is a professional relationship rather than a social one. Please do not invite your provider to social gatherings, offer them gifts, and/or ask them to join you in way other than in the professional context of our therapy sessions.

If your provider sees you in public, they will protect your confidentiality by not approaching you first, nor will they discuss your case with you in public. Please feel free not to acknowledge them, if you so choose. They will not feel disrespected. Please note that it is not possible for our providers to guarantee any specific result or outcome regarding your counseling goals. That will depend on your progress and willingness to make changes in your life and behavior. We will however, work closely with you to achieve the best possible results.

WHAT THERAPY IS AND WHAT IT IS NOT

The couple's counseling or psychotherapy process is a relationship between you, your partner, and your therapist, which is devoted to your relationships wellbeing and growth. Relieving your pains, reducing your symptoms, or changing your behaviors or lifestyles may be part of that goal. Typically during the course of a couple's therapy process, new expectations, standards, and communication pathways will be built. The only direct benefit to the therapist is the fee, which you will pay. It is never your responsibility to take care of your therapist's needs, health, or well-being, other than to pay the fee.

The main way we achieve the goals of counseling or psychotherapy is talking together. Sometimes other kinds of "expression," such as doing art, playing (most often used with children) or writing a journal can be used. Other methods (such as, relaxation training, meditation, and so on) may be suggested, but your therapist will use only approaches to which you agree. You have a right to be informed and to understand the purposes, activities, risks, and reasonable chances of success of any approach.

Counseling or psychotherapy (or "therapy") is not physical, that is, we do not ordinarily touch one another. It is not directly spiritual, that is, as therapists we do not advocate particular brands or approaches to spirituality, although we do consider spirituality important. It is not necessarily about past memories, although it can be.

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Basically, therapy is about you striving to know yourself better and finding ways to solve your problems and live more happily in the world. In the case of couple's therapy, getting to know your partner, their philosophical beliefs and views about your relationship can also help you and your relationship grow.

We think of counseling as present and future-oriented, although some forays into understanding the past may be needed and beneficial in which case we consider it psychotherapy. Although nothing can undo the past, we agree that those who are unaware of their past are condemned to repeat it. Therapy cannot protect you from real-life dangers, oppressive circumstances, and threats. It can assist you in evaluating and problem-solving them. Therapy cannot rescue you from danger or evil persons. It can help you learn to recognize them and to avoid them. Therapy cannot simply end your unhappy story, but it can strengthen you to compose a new story.

Therapy is often hard work. You will learn to pay attention to your thoughts, your feelings, and your relationships; to honestly acknowledge them (including feelings you wish you never had); to work with unwanted aspects of yourself; to learn to feel painful things and to face ugly realities; to talk candidly and respectfully with people you'd rather avoid; to accept impossible but inevitable situations; to change frightening but changeable ones; to face your inner monsters and to learn to love the outer ones - or to name and run away from them! The therapist does not do this work.

The therapist's job is to listen carefully, to point out strengths that have been unnoticed and weaknesses that have been ignored, to look for hope when you are hopeless and danger when you are naive, to allow you to be seek support when you fear asking for help and to challenge you to grow up when you would love to stay little. In short, the therapist's job is to assist you to learn to meet your needs, satisfy your desires, and live more freely in this world.

GOALS OF THERAPY

The chief overall goal of therapy is to help you to become better able to meet your needs, satisfy your desires, and live more freely in this world. This could mean for you to be happier either with yourself or within your relationship. Happiness, "feeling better," or similar states are not necessarily the goal, although they may be appropriate by-products.

Some health insurance companies may insist that "problem reduction" or "symptom relief" are the only appropriate therapy goals. These are minimum goals. Authentic counseling and psychotherapy can be more than that. We will help you in achieving symptom relief, but it is not our only interest. However, as the client, your interests are the main focus of psychotherapy. You and your partner need to discuss what you would like to set as your goals for your couple's therapy and clarify them with your therapist so that you all develop a plan conducive to reaching your goals.

Counseling or psychotherapy cannot reverse history. If you were abused or hurt in the past, it cannot be undone. We believe it is the current effects of past experiences which can be changed. This comes from our belief that counseling and psychotherapy aims to help you do two major things:

To change, primarily your ways of meeting your needs and seeking your pleasure in the world.

To Modify, behavioral reactions in your relationship, and to understand your partner better.

To strengthen, primarily yourself (that is, your capacity for choice, resilience, and adaptation to the demands of the real world).

Some problems and sufferings are physical, or are made worse by physical pain. Therapy can be greatly assisted by medication, by exercise, and by bodily self-care.

Some problems and sufferings are beyond therapy. Therapy can help you identify its own limits, and support you in the search for greater meaning and resources.

KNOWN BENEFITS OF COUNSELING AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

Research has shown that most of the common approaches to therapy are about equally successful. In general, the typical counseling and psychotherapy clients are better off after therapy than they were before it, and they are better off after therapy than 80% of untreated persons. This means, in other words, that you may have about a 20% chance of feeling better if you simply wait a few months or couple of years. Of course, statistics are usually more complicated than that. You should know that there is about a 5% chance that therapy may make you feel worse. A study by Consumer Reports said that typical clients in typical kinds of therapy for long enough periods of time actually find significant improvement. And it shows that generally speaking, the longer one stays in therapy the more the improvement one experiences.

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Therapy is very helpful when the client is depressed, anxious, unhappy, a survivor of trauma of many kinds, couple's issues, communication patterns or suffering from a life-problem which requires careful thinking and involves lots of emotional energy. People who can talk and listen reasonably well, who are reasonably comfortable being alone with another person, and who are willing to pay attention to their own feelings, thoughts, and motivations probably will do well in a counseling or psychotherapy relationship. Often, counseling or psychotherapy can be enhanced by medications designed to decrease depression or anxiety symptoms. If so your therapist will discuss this with you.

Counseling and psychotherapy has been shown to help people who are passive to become more assertive, and to feel better because more of their needs are met. It has been shown to help people with high anxiety to feel calmer and to become more able to calm themselves down. People who are depressed often are helped a great deal, especially to identify and change the ideas and beliefs which may contribute to their depression. Most successful therapy clients change behaviors and lifestyles which keep them unhappy or stuck. Of course, none of these people are helped if they do not pay attention to their actual feelings and thoughts and talk them over candidly with the therapist. Nor are they helped if they refuse to change anything in their attitudes or their behaviors.

People who are helped by counseling or psychotherapy typically report that they feel less unhappy, that their physical sense of well-being is improved (for example, their appetites improve, their sleep habits improve, they have more satisfying sexual lives, and often their general health improves). People with chronic pain problems may not have less pain, but they often report feeling more able to live productively despite the pain and to not be so distracted by it. Sometimes, especially when they use additional tools such as hypnosis, they find that even their level of pain might decrease at least some.

COMMON RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH COUNSELING AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

There are risks to psychotherapy. The first and most important one is that people often feel worse as the therapy progresses. Sometimes this is natural; after all, talking about problems breaks down our usual avoidance of them, and the pain associated with them can then be felt more vividly. In some cases, however, the worsening is due to mistakes on the therapist's part, such as moving into painful material before the client is actually ready. In this case, recognizing the problem and "slowing down" usually takes care of the worsening. If the therapist does not "slow things down," however, the worsening can sometimes be serious.

It is very important to let your therapist know how you are experiencing the therapy. If it seems to be making you feel worse, maybe it is. Telling your therapist allows exploration of what is happening, so you can decide whether the worsening is to be expected or whether the therapy is moving too fast.

Some clients develop strong feelings about their therapists. This, especially in longer therapies, is normal, even if it is sometimes uncomfortable. Any feelings are possible, and the rule for them all is to talk them over with the therapist. You should never feel shamed or humiliated by your therapist for anything that you discuss in therapy. If you do, inform your therapist; perhaps the feeling comes from you, but therapists must take great care not to intentionally shame or humiliate their clients. If your therapist continues to humiliate you intentionally, find a different therapist.

Therapy can complicate your life. After all, you may discover that you have feelings about people which you never realized you had. You may want or need things you had overlooked, and may not have access to them yet. You may have had experiences in the past which must be reconciled, and sometimes that is cumbersome.

Of course, the fee you must pay for therapy can pose a risk to you financially. You should carefully consider the fee and your ability to pay it over the entire estimated course of therapy before you begin, lest you find halfway through that you can neither stop nor pay the fee. Usually, health insurance or managed cost companies (HMOs) will pay some portion of the fee; but they may stop payment at certain limits, after which you will be responsible for the entire fee. Will that pose an unacceptable financial burden? If you need to continue therapy at that time, this will cause significant distress to you.

When clients cannot stay in conscious connection with their feelings, thoughts, or behavior, psychotherapy is not as helpful. The risk is that it might make them feel worse, or cause anxiety. In general, if the requirements of psychotherapy (such as talking, listening, being able to feel reasonably safe with the therapist, being able to learn from discussion with someone, and so on) cannot be met, psychotherapy poses a risk of, at the least, making the client waste time and money, and at the most, making the client become worse.

Counseling or psychotherapy can also help with marriage and relationship problems. However, you should know that some research suggests that when one spouse or partner meets alone with a therapist to discuss problems involving the other partner, although it may help the person in therapy, the chances of separation may go up.

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When you are seeking counseling or therapy as a couple, you should also be advised, that while studies show couple's therapy to be effective in helping couples resolve their communication, behavioral, sexual, or other issues, it can also create a setting where they may get the opportunity to hear their partners' views about their relationship which may ultimately encourage them to separate or terminate their relationship than to stay together. This is also true for Pre-marital counseling sessions.

The therapist can also offer suggestions and advice when they are appropriate, but you must know that research shows that a therapist's advice about life problems is often no more helpful than that of other persons. Helping you find your own solutions is far more important a job of the therapist than telling you what the therapist's solutions is.

RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH MEMORIES

Since therapy depends on talking about your experiences, even in the past, your memory is involved, and memory is not always completely dependable. Your therapist can help you learn more about how memory works, if you are interested in that. But there are two main risks in therapy regarding memories: First is to take memories as being too dependable (as if all memories were always accurate); and second is to take memories as being too fallible (as if *no* memories from the distant past are reliable). In fact, the truth is in between.

If you assume your memories are always accurate, therapy can be risky. For instance, if you perhaps remember an abuse by someone in your past, and without any proof that it actually happened as you think it did, you accuse them, this may needlessly harm another human being, which in our opinion is never acceptable. A further risk is that the accused may retaliate and sue you or your therapist. This happens with increasing frequency. This, of course, will jeopardize your therapy, and may require that it be terminated prematurely.

The other large risk associated with memory, especially memory of abuse, is to assume that it is never reliable, especially if the memory is unclear, vague, fragmented, or seemingly absurd. There is strong evidence that extremely traumatic memory is not stored like normal memories, and may be recalled in fragments, images, and sensations without logical stories attached. So just because a memory seems hard to put together does not automatically mean it is false, any more than it is automatically true. The risk is that we can miss the truth either way.

RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH DIAGNOSIS

Every good therapist makes some kind of "diagnosis" of your problems. This means that there is a "summing up" which describes in shorthand what is wrong and what is going to be the target of therapy. Even saying, "You are unhappy because you lost your job" is a form of diagnosis. Psychiatric diagnoses are condensed phrases which tell what your symptoms are and what the therapist assumes to be the cause(s) of your difficulties. The risk of making a wrong diagnosis is that the wrong treatment will follow.

The benefit of making any diagnosis is that therapy has a much better chance to succeed when it has a reasonable focus, which a good diagnosis can provide.

To avoid the risks of misdiagnosis, be sure that the therapist knows the whole story. Tell the truth as well as you can, and if something occurs to you, tell the therapist. Therapists are supposed to take complete histories, and to consider carefully what medical problems might be causing your symptoms. Sometimes they will ask you to see a physician to make sure some medical problem is not causing your symptoms. All this is to help them make the proper diagnosis. If you have any concern that the therapist does not sufficiently know or understand your situation, don't hesitate to stop the process and say so. In this way, you can help avoid a misdiagnosis and the wrong decisions about treatment.

Another risk associated with diagnosis is that your diagnosis, if you use medical insurance of any form, becomes quasi- public knowledge. Insurance companies insist that you be given a psychiatric diagnosis and this diagnosis will be a permanent part of your medical records. These records are available to any insurance company you apply to in the future. It is difficult to guarantee your privacy under such conditions. Additionally, the information that is made quasi-public knowledge (in cases of severe mental health diagnosis, i.e. schizophrenia) may prevent you from securing future jobs.

We strongly recommend that you not discuss your diagnosis with anyone except your therapist and your most trusted associates. Employers or people who do not have your best interests at heart are not appropriate persons with whom to share your diagnosis. The risk is that they may take as a "permanent truth" something, which is in reality only a therapeutic shorthand description of something you hope to change.

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Another risk associated with diagnosis is that some persons are upset by it. Some people do not understand it and some people even feel ashamed of their diagnoses. Please ask anything and everything you need to in order to understand and accept your diagnosis. If you feel ashamed or belittled by it, talk this over until the feelings become manageable. No diagnosis needs to be a permanent, life-long prison sentence. One of the early hurdles in therapy is arriving at an accurate and helpful diagnosis and then helping the client become educated and reasonably comfortable about it.

OTHER RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THERAPY

Unexpressed feelings about any of the "rules" of therapy can derail your progress. If you resent paying the fee or wish for longer sessions, please tell your therapist of these feelings. Even if nothing can be done to change the situation, the feelings can change if they are discussed.

Therapists are required by ethics codes and by law never to have an outside relationship with their clients, including any form of sexual relationship. Even semi-sexual touching is forbidden. The privacy, intimacy, and personal nature of therapy sometimes can make feelings quite strong between a therapist and a client. If this happens, tell your therapist immediately. If your therapist does not respond in a way you can be comfortable with, you can stop therapy and notify the proper authorities.

Sometimes problems that were not apparent to you at the start emerge during the therapy. When this happens, it is discussed between therapist and client and a new treatment plan is developed to solve them, so that they are addressed. Sometimes, present problems which seem minor become larger and must be addressed. Again, a new treatment plan will be developed if that should happen, and nothing will be done without your full consent.

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

This is just a reminder and verification of the acknowledgment that you signed in your "Couple's Service Agreement and Office Policies" document. The relationship that you are entering into with your therapist is considered a therapeutic relationship with a provider at Calm and Clear Mind Center. What this means is that the provider is here to simply help you or your relationships' concerns and help you find better coping mechanism in addressing the stressors present in your life. Because of the nature of this therapeutic relationship, it is not the general practice of The Center or its providers to provide legal or forensic services.

As such, you hereby acknowledge, understand, and agree that in the event that any provider or staff member of The Center is subpoenaed, summoned, noticed, or in any way requested or commanded to give testimony, produce records, appear, or in any way be involved in any type of legal proceeding, that the therapeutic relationship will be considered immediately terminated. At that time, The Center will no longer provide counseling or related therapeutic services, but will fulfill court mandated legal obligations on a factual or forensic basis.

You further acknowledge and agree that The Center will charge \$325 per hour for: actual time in court (including giving depositions), time spent waiting to testify, time spent preparing to testify including reviewing records, time spent traveling to and from the location of my legal proceedings, and any time spent by staff of The Center at a rate of \$75 per hour for coordinating schedules, compiling and assembling records, filing any notices, motions, etc. You understand and agree that you must retain The Center and/or its provider(s) for at least an 8-hour period for \$2,600 (customary work-day) by arranging for the payment to be paid to The Center before any subpoena is honored. You acknowledge that you have been provided the opportunity to set-up such arrangement with your credit card on The Center's Credit Card Authorization Form. You understand that The Center will refund any remaining balance of the retainer after all court proceedings have concluded.

You additionally agree that if you, or any person that was present during any counseling or therapy session, subpoenas, summons, notices, or in any way requests or commands any provider or staff member of The Center to give testimony, produce records, appear, or in any way be involved in any type of legal proceeding, that such subpoena, summons, notice, or other request will be deemed invalid and void until, unless: (1) the retainer fees for The Center's Provider have been secured and (2) a HIPAA authorization to release information form has been filled out and signed by ALL parties that have been present during any counseling or therapy sessions.

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You agree that unless both of these conditions have been satisfied, The Center will engage an attorney to file appropriate legal responses, including, but not limited to, an Objection and Motion to Quash citing that this contractual agreement with the Center has not been satisfied.

You agree, that if The Center or any of its providers or staff members incurs any financial expense for legal representation as a result of any legal proceeding as that you, or any person that was present during any counseling or therapy session, is involved with, that you will be fully responsible for the re-payment of such expenses. You further agree that in the event that The Center incurs any financial expenses for legal representation as a result of your actions, you authorize The Center to immediately charge all such expenses to your credit card on file (see Credit Card Authorization Form). Alternatively, those expenses can be deducted from the retainer you have placed with The Center.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

This section outlines Calm and Clear Mind Center's policies related to use of social media. Please read it to understand how our providers conduct themselves on the Internet as a mental health professional and how you can expect your provider to respond to interactions that may occur between you and them on the Internet. Please discuss any questions or concerns you may have with your provider.

Separate Accounts

Our providers may hold separate and isolated accounts to be used for the sole purpose of professional matters not relating to Calm and Clear Mind Center interactions. These accounts are separate from any personal accounts held by the provider as an individual and maybe for the purposes of providing resources about each provider's specialty area. You hereby acknowledge and agree that such content are not the professional recommendations of Calm and Clear Mind Center or its providers and are for informational purposes only. You further agree that you may not subscribe, friend, or follow any of the provider's individual/personal accounts.

Email

Please use email to contact Calm and Clear Mind Center front office staff for administrative reasons only (modifying appointments, billing information, etc.). Please remember that if you email content related to your counseling sessions, it is not completely secure or confidential. Any emails we receive from you and any responses we send to you may become a part of your mental health record.

Text Messages

Please do not send text messages to any providers. Any text message a provider receives from you becomes a part of your mental health record. Additionally, text messaging is NOT a confidential or secure means for communication and may create the potential for a breach of confidentiality.

Friending

Calm and Clear Mind Center providers do not accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking site (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.). Adding clients as friends on these sites can compromise your confidentiality and your therapeutic relationship.

Following

Please know that Calm and Clear Mind Center providers do not follow any client on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, or other apps/websites. If there is content you wish to share from your online life with your provider, please bring it into your sessions where you and your provider can explore it together. Additionally, if you wish to follow any of the providers on their PROFESSIONAL accounts, you are solely responsible for any risks associated with such interaction and agree that Calm and Clear Mind Center and its providers are not responsible for any breach of confidentiality that may ensue as a result of your choice for engagement.

Search Engines

Please be aware that Calm and Clear Mind Center providers do not search for clients on Google, Facebook, or other searchable sites.

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Location-Based Services

To protect your privacy, please do not check-in at our office on Facebook, Foursquare, Google+, or any other location-based service. If you have enabled location services on your mobile phone, check-ins on such services could make it possible for others to surmise you are a client at Calm and Clear Mind Center, which may ultimately compromise your confidentiality. Please realize if you choose to utilize this feature, Calm and Clear Mind Center or its providers are not responsible for any issues or hardships that arise as a result of usage.

EMERGENCIES: You may encounter a personal crisis or emergency which will require prompt attention. Please note, that Calm and Clear Mind Center is NOT an emergency service provider or equipped to have an emergency stabilization unit or resources. If you are experiencing a life-threatening emergency, call 911 or have someone take you to the nearest emergency room so that they can offer you the best path of emergency treatment. On the other hand, if the services you require seem urgent but are not considered an emergency, please contact our office, and we will make every attempt to schedule you as soon as possible or to offer other options. Because clients may be scheduled back-to-back, or have standing appointments, it is not always be possible to offer an appointment immediately. When and if your Therapist is out of town, sick, or incapacitated to provide services, you will be advised and given the name of an on-call Therapist or one that has been placed as the custodian of record for your therapist's files during their absence.

CLIENT RIGHTS

It is your right at any time to inquire about the process and procedures being used during our counseling relationship. You have the right to refuse or negotiate modifications of any of our suggestions.

We assure you that our services are rendered in a professional manner consistent with ethical standards set forth by the below listed boards of examiners. If for any reason you believe our services are unethical, please let us know. If we are unable to resolve these concerns, you may report your complaints to the below regulatory agencies: (Please note the first four boards have the same mailing address).

Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors - Telephone: (512) 834-6658
Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists - Telephone: (512) 834-6657
Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners - Telephone: (512) 719-352
Texas Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor Program - (512) 834-6605

Texas Department of State Health Services
Mail Code 1982
P.O. Box 149347
Austin, Texas 78714-9347

Texas Medical Board (Psychiatry) - (512) 305-7010 333
Guadalupe, Tower 3, Suite 610, Austin, TX 78701

Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists - (512) 305-7700
333 Guadalupe, Tower 2, Room 450, Austin, Texas 78701

Once you begin treatment with our center, there is no obligation to continue. You have the right to discontinue at any time, though we may ask that you participate in a termination session.

You may or may not have been to a therapist before. If this is your first experience with therapy, you may feel a bit nervous or apprehensive. That's normal!

Therapy is a process that allows you the freedom and privacy to discuss issues that are often painful or difficult to discuss with family and/or friends.

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The following are a few suggestions to help make your counseling experience most effective:

1. Before your scheduled appointment, write down questions, topics, or issues you would like to focus on in your session.
2. Communicate your expectations to our providers so that we are working together toward your goals.
3. Provide ongoing feedback to your provider so that they know how you are doing (example, "I want to focus on my anger more" or "I like doing relaxation exercises").
4. If you feel a need to increase or decrease the frequency of your sessions, or to end counseling, feel free to communicate that to your counselor/ therapist.
5. If you feel a need to bring a partner, relative, or friend in with you for your session in order to work on interpersonal issues, feel free to do so. Please discuss it with your provider prior to their arrival.
6. If you have another professional involved in your care (i.e. physician, chiropractor, attorney, etc.), we would be happy to coordinate with him/her if you wish. It is not advisable to have more than one mental health counselor involved in your treatment at one time.
7. Try to make a commitment to yourself to remain in therapy and attend regular sessions for as long as you feel necessary. If you wait until you have a crisis, it will be more difficult to build long-lasting coping skills.
8. If for any reason you would like to see a different therapist, please feel free to tell our office. We can either provide you with another provider within our facility, or recommend to you other therapists in the area.

INCAPACITY OR DEATH: I understand that, in the event of the death or incapacitation of the undersigned Therapist, it will be necessary to assign my case to another Therapist and for that Therapist to have possession of my treatment records. By my signature on this form, I hereby consent to another licensed mental health professional, selected by the undersigned Therapist, to take possession of my records and provide me copies at my request, and/or to deliver those records to another therapist of my choosing

NO ABSOLUTE GUARANTEES

Based on experimental research, there are no guarantees that therapy will help you or your relationship get better. But based on over a century of consistent clinical experience, we know that therapy helps many people achieve meaningful improvement in their lives. We have found five variables to be predictive of success: (1) When the therapist is comfortable with and believes in what he or she is doing; (2) When therapist and client share a collaborative relationship in which they respect each other and feel a positive bond; (3) When the client is allowed to talk freely and to feel emotions fully; (4) When the therapist is well-trained, has experience, and competently uses skills known to be helpful; (5) When there is enough empathy between the couple and the therapist that the clients feels safe and supported taking risks and accepting the therapist's challenges or confrontations.

Some people claim that there is little "scientific evidence" that therapy is beneficial. This is not actually true. Furthermore, "scientific research" has serious limitations when studying real-world situations like therapy. Many things known to be important and useful in life are not "proven" scientifically. Aspirin is a simple yet useful example.

Though we cannot guarantee that therapy will help you or your partner, and would remind you that there is a slight chance (5% or less) that it might make you or your relationship worse, we believe that it is quite likely to help you at least to overcome your immediate problems or symptoms and to feel well enough to live more productively. We will gladly share the research studies which address these matters.

At times therapy will be difficult and uncomfortable. We cannot say how long it will last, but we will share our best estimate with you, once we know what the problems are. If anything changes as we go along, we will talk it over with you and will never do anything without your consent

Client 1 Initials: _____ Client 2 Initials: _____

My signature below affirms that I am satisfied with the explanations above and conversations that I have had with my therapist or Calm and Clear Mind's staff about the process of therapy. All my questions have been fully answered, and I understand that if more questions arise, I have the right to have them answered as well. Further, I acknowledge that I have been given information regarding informed consent for counseling, psychotherapy, and other mental health services, that I am signing this (Couples Counseling & Psychotherapy Informed Consent), and that the disclosed information has been made available to me in a simple non-technical language. Additionally I have been made aware of the nature of the therapy including the risks and benefits.

I understand that I must be dedicated to attend sessions on a consistent basis in order to receive the greatest benefit from therapy. Although I may stop therapy at any time, I agree to inform my counselor/therapist of my decision ***prior*** to my last visit. If my therapist believes that I can receive more effective treatment elsewhere, I will be given referrals. ***I understand that I may not attend a session if I am under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or if I am in possession of a dangerous weapon.*** I understand this disclosure and I voluntarily agreed to the treatment. I also understand that I may cancel this consent with a written request at any time without any penalty. I understand that this informed consent form will become a part of my records and that a copy will be provided to me upon request.

My signature below indicates my desire and consent to receive mental health services from Calm and Clear Mind Center and its providers.

_____	_____	____/____/____
Client 1 – Name	Client 1 – Signature	Dat
_____	_____	____/____/____
Client 2 – Name	Client 2 – Signature	Date

I have discussed this memo with the client(s), named above, and I have no reason to believe that the client was unable to fully understand the material we discussed.

Provider's Name and Credentials: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Provider's Signature: _____