

COUNSELLING AGREEMENT

This is a mutual agreement negotiated between the Counsellor, Caron Zar and the Client prior to the commencement of counselling. It sets out the responsibilities of the Counsellor towards her clients, and also the client's responsibilities in the counselling relationship.

Confidentiality: What is shared in the session will be treated as confidential. It will not be discussed outside the sessions except in the context of professional supervision and professional training. As such any references will always be anonymous and you could not be identified through them. As an accredited member of the BACP (British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy) my work is bound within its Code of Ethics and Good Practice. As part of good practice, a counsellor is required to have some supervision of their work. I do not give my supervisor anything that might identify you. Supervision helps me to give you the best service that I can.

I have a policy of taking your GP details at the start of counselling but only share information in the following circumstances. If there is convincing evidence that you intend to harm yourself or others, I might need to break confidentiality by informing your doctor, or in serious cases the police, or if I were legally impelled to impart information. If I had concerns in this area, I would try to talk to you as fully as possible before deciding to take any action. I aim to maintain the highest standards of good practice and safety.

I might keep brief notes after a session, which will be anonymised and securely stored, and there is no way you would be able to be identified from the notes.

Sessions: Sessions last 50 minutes and occur weekly or twice weekly at the same time and day although this can be negotiated to suit specific requirements.

As I do not have a waiting room please arrive at the time of the appointment. If you do arrive early there is a nice area to take a walk before your session.

The whole session time belongs to you, whether you choose to attend or not, and I will be present for the entire time of the session. If you arrive part way through your allotted time, I will see you for the remainder of the time but please expect the session to finish at the appointed time.

Fees: Fees are agreed at the initial session. There will be a small increase in fees annually.

Payment: Payment options Payment for each session is to be received via cash at the beginning of each session or in advance by bank transfer, 48 hours in advance.

Cancellations: Cancellation of a booked appointment or failure to show for an appointment, will incur the **full** agreed fee. If you give me more than 2 full working days notice, I will try to find another session time that week although that isn't always possible. Eg if your appointment is on Monday, you will need to let me know the by the close of business on Wednesday, if you want to rearrange your session.

Less than 2 full working days notice, the **full fee** is still payable. I would always suggest that you ask for an appointment to be rescheduled first, before making a cancellation.

If you book a session for an evening slot at the higher fee rate and wish to reschedule outside the 2 days notice period, to a day session, the difference in the fee will not be refunded.

If I cancel a session, you will **not** be expected to pay for it and, if possible, I will offer you another time but due to waiting list pressures, there isn't always scope to rearrange sessions.

For therapy to be effective the expectation will be that clients commit to attending their regular weekly sessions. Taking too many breaks can negatively impact the continuity of the therapy and the slot can only be held if the client regularly attends.

If a client wishes to have ad hoc sessions, where possible this can be arranged however having a weekly, set space, is the most effective way for therapy to work.

Breaks and Holidays: I will notify you of my holiday dates at least a month in advance and you won't be charged for my breaks. I will try to give good notice of any forthcoming training workshops, conferences or illness that might prevent me from being available at the time/day of the scheduled session. In such cases I will always aim to offer an alternative appointment.

If you take a holiday or break at a different time, please give me at least 1 month's notice so that I can manage my time around those slots. If you take a break for longer than 2 consecutive weeks, unfortunately with waiting list demands, I can't guarantee that I can hold your specific time slot. However, I will always try to offer an alternative time that works for both of us.

Illness: Sessions will not take place if the client is under the influence of any misuse of alcohol or substances or is ill e.g., with Covid symptoms. Online sessions will be offered as an alternative via Zoom if we are unable to meet in person.

Duration of Counselling: You will be offered a counselling contract at the start of our work together. The duration of the therapeutic process will depend on the type of difficulty or problem you are facing. Some people prefer to work with an open contract, whereas other people prefer to work with a fixed number of sessions followed by a review.

Contact outside the sessions: The phone number and email address provided are to be used for cancellations, changes or in case of emergency only. Please note that messages will be monitored regularly but not continuously and not on weekends or Bank Holidays. Therefore, in case of an emergency you are advised to call the appropriate emergency services, such as the hospital. Dial for an ambulance and/or if appropriate contact the local GP. I will endeavour to reply to all messages as soon as possible.