

Informed Consent & Professional Statement of Disclosure

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MFT Ethics, Family Law, and Professional Issues, Fall, 2020

INFORMED CONSENT & PROFESSIONAL DISCLOSURE PAPER

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SERVICES:

- Free initial phone consult
- Couple's therapy
- Depression & Anxiety
- Tailored therapy treatment
- Individual therapy
- Addiction help
- Goals achievement
- Family therapy
- Safety from abuse

Welcome to therapy: Hello, (client's name here). Thank you for choosing therapy as a way to wellness in your life. As a practicing intern working to become a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, I offer you my heart, my knowledge, my experience and my attentiveness to understanding your therapeutic concerns. It is truly my pleasure to have this opportunity to meet with you and help you attain a better way of living by offering you therapy that will be tailored to your needs. In addition to my services, I work with a team of professional therapists which allows for a larger pool of collaborative knowledge and support. We each have areas of expertise in the field of therapy and can offer you specialized treatment that you may not find from an individual therapist. If you decide to work with me and The Way to Wellness Systemic Therapy Center, you may also be given the option to join group therapy that will support you in conjunction with your regular therapy sessions. Please call me at (516) 301-7756 and together we can schedule a free telephone session in order to set up future in-person or telehealth therapy sessions.

My credentials: My background includes working towards a Masters' degree in Marriage and Family Therapy at Nyack College in New York city, which is highly recognized in the field, accredited, and dedicated to promoting the best practices in Marriage and Family Therapy education. In addition, I have a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree as an Advertising major from the School of Visual Arts in New York City. Recently, I've been working with couples, adolescents, families, and individuals and I've helped them define some of their goals and achieve many positive outcomes. Some of the theoretical approaches I've employed with clients are cognitive- behavioral, solution-focused, narrative, and emotion focused

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therapy. I'm happily married to my first and only wife for almost three decades and we have two wonderful, full-grown, independent children. I also have past experience in volunteer work for over ten years with adolescents where I helped them with spiritual, social and ethical growth as a small group leader at Saint Luke Lutheran Church in Dix Hills, New York. Whether you have individual needs, couples needs, or family needs, I will strive to help you make positive changes in your life.

Sessions and fees: Each therapy session will run for fifty minutes. Normally I will charge \$100.00 per session. I also can offer sliding scales based on your financial means. Additionally, if you should decide on choosing a determined minimum amount of sessions in advance, the cost per session will be reduced, i.e. fifteen sessions for \$80.00 each, with five sessions at a time paid up front. Some free group sessions may also be offered to you during the period of time you are in sessions with me, depending on the group session availability and relevancy to your therapeutic needs. Please make your session payments by check or cash, preferably by the end of each session unless we've already agreed to another payment schedule.

Respecting our appointments: Whether it's in the office or online, please give our appointments the respect of being there on time and at the agreed upon date. If, for any reason, you can't make a scheduled appointment please give advance notice of twenty-four hours in order for us to reschedule. If you should miss a session without twenty-four-hour advance notice, my policy is to charge you seventy-five dollars for missing the session. That said, life happens and there are emergencies and unexpected circumstances where I can be understanding. In turn, If something happens on my end where I need to cancel any of our sessions, I expect to give you the same level of courtesy and respect in rescheduling.

Insurance: I do not accept insurance at this time but, if needed, I will be happy to write a letter for you to submit to your insurance company stating that you are seeing me for therapy. I can give you formal receipts of services or help fill out other documentation your insurance company might request.

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Informed Consent:

Confidentiality: Please know that I consider our confidential time together to be a sacred privilege. My goal is to keep our therapy sessions completely confidential between us. You can be assured that all of my records of your case will be protected electronically under HIPAA approved encryption software. In most cases, your written consent will be needed if your records are requested to be shared with anyone. What you tell me in our sessions stays within the participants in our sessions, for the most part. As your therapist, you also need to know that I am certified as a mandated reporter within New York State. That means I am required by law to identify and report any suspected issues of child abuse and/or maltreatment. Some other exceptions to confidentiality, in addition to child abuse or maltreatment are if I find that you are causing harm to yourself, or seriously thinking about it, or appear to be in danger of harming yourself or others. That would be another example when I must report these types of issues for the safety of all individuals who could be affected. Criminal activity may also be reported. Depending on the circumstance, I would have to notify the proper channels. These channels could include a local hospital, police, child protective services, your family members, etc. Finally, I may share information about our sessions when I am in discussion with my own supervision and/or with professional therapy colleagues.

What to expect - risks and benefits: Marriage and Family Therapy is grounded in a systemic therapeutic process. Simply put, no one is an island. We are all connected in a system that influences who we have become. You were likely raised by parents, grandparents or other caregivers. Who you are today may have been influenced by siblings, other family, friends, coworkers, teachers, classmates, pets, etc. In therapy, we may explore how some of the people in your life have affected you both positively and negatively. As your therapist, I will collaborate with you to help you discover and hopefully make changes for your wellness in some of the following - your ways of thinking, your emotional activity and/or your current learned behaviors. We may uncover things that are unpleasant for you. There are no guarantees as to when or how long therapy will take or even if things will get better. I can only guarantee

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that I will do my best to help facilitate positive change in whatever your situation may be. In the event that I don't specialize in an area of your specific needs, I will be more than happy to refer you to another professional who might be better suited. Sometimes, therapy can be quick and other times it can take a long time. As your therapist it is my job to see that you will be treated for your betterment, you will never be discriminated against for any reason, and that I will be honest with you in all of our discussions (Murphy & Hecker, 2017, p. 4). Just remember that we will work together and I'm here to help you on your therapeutic journey.

Your Rights: Therapy is a mutual process. You have the right to inquire about your treatment and ask me about anything you don't understand or wish to change. You have the right to keep your private information from being disclosed in a court, which is your privilege. You also have the right to waive that privilege in writing (Murphy & Hecker, 2017, p. 39). You have the right to cancel or ask me for a referral if, for whatever reason, you feel it's time to move on. I will initiate a discussion with you in advance about ending our therapy sessions when I believe you've made enough progress and achieved your goals in order to continue on without therapy. This will hopefully be a celebration of your success!

PLEASE SIGN THE NEXT PAGE

Please print, sign, and date the following and return:

I, (Print your name): _____, have read and agree to what is written in this entire document. Further, I understand the confidential nature of therapeutic treatment and that my private information will not be disclosed unless there are legal requirements which may include abuse or maltreatment of children or elderly persons. I further understand that information may be disclosed if I appear to be harmful or dangerous to myself or others. Additionally, I understand that information from my therapy sessions may be revealed between my therapist, their supervisors, and/or other professional colleagues. I also agree to make timely payments as will be discussed with my therapist prior to our sessions and will pay a fee of \$75.00 if I should fail to cancel any set appointment later than twenty-four hours before our set date and time. Sign here X _____ Date: _____

References

Murphy, M.,Hecker, L. (2017). *Ethics and Professional Issues in Couple and Family Therapy*
(2nd ed., p.39).