



Cornerstone Counselling (South West) LLP
Wellington Baptist Church
South Street
Wellington
Somerset
TA21 8NS

Dear

This therapeutic contract is between you, and Cornerstone Counselling (South West) LLP (referred to in this agreement as Cornerstone).

Please read and sign the following contract prior to engaging in a counselling relationship with a Cornerstone counsellor. Our counsellors are registered with the British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists (BACP), and as such have to adhere to a specific ethical framework in order to ensure the wellbeing of both you the client(s), and the Cornerstone counsellor. This contract is designed with you in mind and underpins the therapeutic relationship between yourself and your counsellor. Your Cornerstone counsellor for the duration of this therapeutic contract is (Counsellor).

Commitment

This process involves your commitment, your honesty both with yourself and your counsellor, and a genuine desire to engage. On our part, we have a genuine healing intent and provide commitment, honesty and utmost respect for yourself as an individual as well as our therapeutic skills. It is important that counselling is taken seriously.

Drugs and Alcohol

It is requested that you remain free of drugs and alcohol for the duration of each appointment in order that your counsellor can work with you in an authentic manner.

The Benefits of Counselling

One major benefit that may be gained from participating in counselling is the resolution of the concerns brought to therapy. Other possible benefits may be a better ability to cope with marital, family and other interpersonal relationships, and /or a greater understanding of personal goals and values.

The Risks of Counselling

There are certain risks involved in counselling. You may experience a variety of negative emotions during therapy as you remember and therapeutically resolve unpleasant events. Seeking to resolve concerns between family members, marital partners, and other persons can similarly lead to discomfort as well as relationship changes that may not be originally intended. The greatest risk of counselling is that it may not by itself resolve your concerns. Your Cornerstone counsellor will do their best to assess progress and provide referral to other sources if that is deemed necessary and appropriate. Counselling is a collaborative process and the progress you make will depend in large measure upon your investment in the process.

Confidentiality online

Your counsellor will take all reasonable steps to ensure that your online counselling takes place in a confidential space, and your Cornerstone counsellor will not discuss what is talked about in sessions outside of your time together. There are however some legal, ethical, and safety-related exceptions to this over which your counsellor is bound to notify external agencies, as relevant. The following list whilst extensive, is not exhaustive – and should matters of confidentiality arise in sessions, your counsellor will discuss these with you.

- Your Cornerstone counsellor is required to attend supervision as part of their continuing professional development, and in order to ensure that you receive the best possible service, but any information discussed under supervision would be **anonymous**.
- If, in exceptional circumstances it is felt that either you or someone else were in danger or at risk of harm, then your counsellor may choose to break confidentiality in order to safeguard the individual concerned. You will be aware that this is taking place, but your permission is not required by law.
- If you are involved in money laundering, acts of terrorism, or admit to having committed a crime (or clear intent to do so).
- As BACP registered counsellors, we are duty bound to have a method of informing you of our inability to attend a session, or even continue with your treatment in the event of serious accident or death. In such circumstances, we operate a Therapeutic Executor system, where a nominated person (also BACP registered) will be able to inform you via your chosen method of communication, of the aforementioned situation, and advise you accordingly.

Online therapy requires the use of external third party agencies in order to provide our service. These include but are not limited to Skype, FaceTime, Zoom and telephony providers. Cornerstone accepts no liability for how these technology providers will use any data provided by you, and by signing this contract you are providing your consent for our sessions to use a technological platform. **When returning this contract to your therapist please nominate your chosen method of counselling provision.**

Your data

In line with GDPR regulation, Cornerstone has a robust data protection policy to safeguard our client's information when held in house. If you have any questions over what we do with your data, please refer to the data protection policy on our website. As your counsellor we have a legitimate interest in holding data relating to you, and we are happy to answer any questions you may have. We cannot accept liability for any third party data breaches where consent has been provided by you as client to use that service.

Counselling Credentials and Ethical Standards

As a minimum, your Cornerstone counsellor has undertaken two formal counselling qualifications, and has applied to take, and passed, the rigorous qualification process as defined by the BACP. You can have peace of mind knowing that your counsellor is a UK registered counsellor, and their credentials can be viewed on the BACP Therapy register (www.itsgoodtotalk.org.uk). As members of the BACP we are bound by their code of ethics, copies of which can be provided to you. We take your individual boundaries seriously and seek to work in the most ethical way.

Sessions

Sessions are for 60 minutes and will be every week at a day and time suitable to you and your counsellor. You may however mutually decide to change the interval of time between sessions.

Record Keeping

Your Cornerstone counsellor may keep brief written or typed notes, and you are welcome to see these at any time. These notes are anonymous, kept confidentially and no personal details will be kept on computer or passed to other agencies. At the end of your work together, your notes will be stored securely for a period of 5 years, mainly to aid future work should you wish to return to counselling. After that time they will be destroyed by secure shredding. No electronic records will be stored after the end of the aforementioned five year period.

Insurance

Cornerstone holds both public liability and professional indemnity insurance. Copies of this documentation are available upon request.

Holidays

Your counsellor will give a minimum of 2 weeks' notice of any planned holiday dates when they will be unavailable. Cornerstone requires (where possible) at least 2 weeks' notice from you of the same. Obviously sometimes cancellations are unavoidable, but we respectfully ask for as much notice as possible.

Complaints

Should you wish to make a complaint about the service you have been offered, please in the first instance discuss this with your counsellor. If after this you feel that you would like to escalate your complaint further, please contact the BACP under whose ethics we work (available upon request).

Cost of Service and Payment of Fees

The agreed cost of service is £40 per session. All fees should be paid at the time the service is rendered. We currently accept payment via card or BACS transfer.

Session Cancellations

Cancellations must be made 24 hours in advance to avoid charge. Missed appointments will be charged the regular fee.

Written Acknowledgement and Consent to Counselling

I have read and accept this agreement and herewith consent to counselling with my Cornerstone counsellor.

Client Signature

Date

Signed by **Chris Wallwork (MBACP)**

on behalf of Cornerstone Counselling (South West) LLP

Date