

LIMITS OF CONFIDENTIALITY

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Contents of all therapy sessions are considered to be confidential. Both verbal information and written records about a client cannot be shared with another party without the written consent of the client or the client's legal guardian. There are however, limits to confidentiality, some of which are mandated by state law. It is vital to your therapeutic experience and contract that you carefully read and understand the following limits of confidentiality:

Duty to Warn and Protect

When a client discloses intentions or a plan to harm another person, the mental health professional is required to warn the intended victim and report this information to legal authorities. In cases in which the client discloses or implies a plan for suicide, the health care professional is required to notify legal authorities and make reasonable attempts to notify the family of the client.

Abuse of Children

California state law mandates the reporting of incidence or suspected incidence of child abuse including physical abuse, sexual abuse, unlawful sexual intercourse, neglect, emotional and psychological abuse. All actual or suspected acts of child abuse will need to be reported to the appropriate agencies. (Article 2.5 Penal Code 11165 and 11166)

“Dependent Adult” and Elderly Abuse

California law requires the incidence of “dependent adult” or elderly abuse reported to your counselor must also be reported to California authorities. (Welfare and Institution Code, Sec. 15630)

Therapeutic Criminal Involvement

The State Law in the Evidence Code 1018 reads that “There is no privilege under this article if the services of the psychotherapist were sought or obtained to enable or aid anyone to commit or plan to commit a crime or a tort to escape detection or apprehension after the commission of a crime or a tort”. (Evidence Code 1024, 1965. Chp 299)

Prenatal Exposure to Controlled Substances

Mental Health care professionals are required to report admitted prenatal exposure to controlled substances that are potentially harmful.

Family and Couples Therapy

Family members and couples may be seen at times individually or conjointly. Information shared during these sessions or in related settings (e.g., telephone calls) is considered part of the overall family or couple therapy process and is not confidential from the other participating family members or partners. Your therapist will use his or her discretion in handling these matters. This is a “no secrets policy”. It is important that you fully understand this policy before

treatment begins. It supports the belief that healthy relationships are built on openness and truth.

Insurance Providers (when applicable)

Insurance companies and other third-party payers are given information that they request regarding services to clients. Information that may be requested includes type of services, dates/times of services, diagnosis, treatment plan, and description of impairment, progress of therapy, case notes, and summaries.

Neglect of Outstanding Debt

In the event that a client fails to honor, after reasonable efforts to collect, his/her debt, your therapist may place the account in the hands of an agency or attorney for collection or legal fractionalisms will necessitate the release of pertinent demographic information as well as accounting information. No therapeutic information will be released.

Please be sure that you have read the above carefully and in its entirety. If you are not fully certain that you understand any of the above limitations to confidentiality, please ask your therapist prior to signing below.

I agree to the above limits of confidentiality and understand their meanings and ramifications. I further agree to abide by the policy set out above. I have had an opportunity to ask my therapist for additional clarification regarding the limits of confidentiality.

Client Signature (Client's Parent/Guardian if under 18)

Date