

INFORMATION FOR CLIENTS

Welcome to my practice. I appreciate your giving me the opportunity to be of help to you.

This brochure answers questions that clients often ask about therapy. I believe our work will be most helpful to you when you have a clear idea of what we are trying to do.

This brochure talks about the following:

- _ • What the risks and benefits of therapy are.
- _ • What the goals of therapy are, and what my methods of treatment are like.
- _ • How much my services cost, and how I handle money matters.
- _ • Other important areas of our relationship.

After you read this brochure, we can talk in person about how these issues apply to you.

This brochure is yours to keep. Please read all of it. Mark any parts that are not clear to you. Write down any questions you have, and we will discuss them at our next meeting. When you have read and fully understood this brochure, I will ask you to sign it at the end. I will sign it as well and make a copy, so we each have one.

About Psychotherapy

I strongly believe you should feel comfortable with the therapist you choose, and hopeful about the therapy. When you feel this way, therapy is more likely to be very helpful to you. Let me describe how I see therapy.

My theoretical approach is based on a variety of methods, techniques and philosophies based upon both research and my clinical experience. I believe that no one method of therapy can meet everyone's needs, so I employ a variety of behavioral, cognitive and interpersonal interventions based upon your individual needs and goals. I also believe that the most empathetic thing I can do for you is to help bring you closer to your own goals. You can expect us examining in some detail what you are hoping to get out of therapy during our initial sessions. Sometimes people aren't sure what they are wanting to change but feel their lives are not going as they have hoped. That's ok, we can work towards bringing a greater understanding of what you want.

You can also expect that we will regularly examine your progress in therapy together and actively deal with any concerns you have about our work or our therapeutic relationship. Finally, most people

benefit from therapy and often feel more hopeful about their ability to lead a more fulfilling life.

By the end of our first or second session, I will tell you how I see your case at this point and how I think we should proceed. I view therapy as a partnership between us. You define the problem areas to be worked on; I use some special knowledge to help you make the changes you want to make.

Psychotherapy is not like visiting a medical doctor. It requires your very active involvement. It requires your best efforts to change thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. For example, I want you to tell me about important experiences, what they mean to you, and what strong feelings are involved. This is one of the ways you are an active partner in therapy.

An important part of your therapy will be practicing new skills that you will learn in our sessions. I will ask you to practice outside our meetings, and we will work together to set up homework assignments for you. I might ask you to do exercises, keep records, and read to deepen your learning. You will probably have to work on relationships in your life and make long-term efforts to get the best results. These are important parts of personal change. Change will sometimes be easy and quick, but more often it will be slow and frustrating, and you will need to keep trying. There are no instant, painless cures and no “magic pills.” However, you can learn new ways of looking at your problems that will be very helpful for changing your feelings and reactions.

The Benefits and Risks of Therapy

As with any powerful treatment, there are some risks as well as many benefits with therapy. You should think about both the benefits and risks when making any treatment decisions. For example, in therapy, there is a risk that clients will, for a time, have uncomfortable levels of sadness, guilt, anxiety, anger, frustration, loneliness, helplessness, or other negative feelings. Clients may recall unpleasant memories.

While you consider these risks, you should know also that the benefits of therapy have been shown by scientists in hundreds of well-designed research studies. People who are depressed may find their mood lifting. Others may no longer feel afraid, angry, or anxious. In therapy, people have a chance to talk things out fully until their feelings are relieved or the problems are solved. Clients’ relationships and coping skills may improve greatly. They may get more satisfaction out of social and family relationships. Their personal goals and values may become clearer. They may grow in many directions—as persons, in their close relationships, in their work or schooling, and in the ability to enjoy their lives. I do not take on clients I do not think I can help. Therefore, I will enter our relationship with optimism about our progress.

Consultations

If you could benefit from a treatment I cannot provide, I will help you to get it. You have a right to ask me about such other treatments, their risks, and their benefits. Based on what I learn about your problems, I may recommend a medical exam or use of medication. If I do this, I will fully discuss my reasons with you, so that you can decide what is best. If you are treated by another professional, I will coordinate my services with them and with your own medical doctor.

If for some reason treatment is not going well, I might suggest you see another therapist or another professional for an evaluation. As a responsible person and ethical therapist, I cannot continue to treat you if my treatment is not working for you. If you wish for another professional's opinion at any time, or wish to talk with another therapist, I will help you find a qualified person and will provide him or her with the information needed.

What to Expect from Our Relationship

As a professional, I will use my best knowledge and skills to help you. This includes following the standards of the American Psychological Association, or APA. In your best interests, the APA puts limits on the relationship between a therapist and a client, and I will abide by these. Let me explain these limits, so you will not think they are personal responses to you.

First, I am licensed and trained to practice psychology—not law, medicine, finance, or any other profession. I am not able to give you good advice from these other professional viewpoints.

Second, state laws and the rules of the APA require me to keep what you tell me confidential (that is, just between us). You can trust me not to tell anyone else what you tell me, except in certain limited situations. I explain what those are in the “About Confidentiality” section of this brochure. Here I want to explain that I try not to reveal who my clients are.

Third, in your best interest, and following the APA's standards, I can only be your therapist. I cannot have any other role in your life. I cannot, now or ever, be a close friend to or socialize with any of my clients. I cannot be a therapist to someone who is already a friend. I can never have a sexual or romantic relationship with any client during, or after, the course of therapy. I cannot have a business relationship with any of my clients, other than the therapy relationship.

About Confidentiality

I will treat with great care all the information you share with me. It is your legal right that our sessions and my records about you be kept private. That is why I ask you to sign a “release-of-records” form before I can talk about you or send my records about you to anyone else. In general, I will tell no one what you tell me. I will not even reveal that you are receiving treatment from me. In all but a few rare situations, your confidentiality (that is, our privacy) is protected by federal and state laws and by the rules of my profession. Here are the most common cases in which confidentiality is not protected:

1. If you were sent to me by a court or an employer for evaluation or treatment, the court or employer expects a report from me. If this is your situation, please talk with me before you tell me anything you do not want the court or your employer to know. You have a right to tell me only what you are comfortable with telling.
2. Are you suing someone or being sued? Are you being charged with a crime? If so, and you tell the court that you are seeing me, I may then be ordered to show the court my records. Please consult your lawyer about these issues.
3. If you make a serious threat to harm yourself or another person, the law requires me to try to protect you or that other person. This usually means telling others about the threat. I cannot promise never to tell others about threats you make.
4. If I believe a child or an elder adult has been or will be abused or neglected, I am legally required to report this to the authorities.

There are two situations in which I might talk about part of your case with another therapist. I ask now for your understanding and agreement to let me do so in these two situations.

It may be beneficial for me to confer with your primary care physician with regard to your psychological treatment or to discuss any medical problems for which you are receiving treatment. In addition, Medicare requires that I notify your physician by telephone or in writing, concerning services that are being provided by me unless you request that notification not be made.

Please check only ONE of the following:

- You are authorized to contact my primary care physician whose name and address are shown below to discuss the treatment that I am receiving while under your care and to obtain information concerning my medical diagnosis and treatment.
- I do not authorize you to contact my primary care physician with regard to the treatment that I

Kevin Brock, Ph.D.
Licensed Clinical Psychologist

am receiving while under your care or to obtain information concerning my medical diagnosis and treatment. I am providing you with the name and address of my primary care physician only for your records.

Please write below the name, address, and phone number of your primary physician:

Name

Phone

Address

If your records need to be seen by another professional, or anyone else, I will discuss it with you. If you agree to share these records, you will need to sign an authorization form. This form states exactly what information is to be shared, with whom, and why, and it also sets time limits. You may read this form at any time. If you have questions, please ask me.

It is my office policy to destroy clients' records 15 years after the end of our therapy. Until then, I will keep your case records in a safe place.

If I must discontinue our relationship because of illness, disability, or other presently unforeseen circumstances, I ask you to agree to my transferring your records to another therapist who will assure their confidentiality, preservation, and appropriate access.

As part of cost control efforts, an insurance company will sometimes ask for more information on symptoms, diagnoses, and my treatment methods. It will become part of your permanent medical record. I will let you know if this should occur and what the company has asked for. Please understand that I have no control over how these records are handled at the insurance company. My policy is to provide only as much information as the insurance company will need to pay your benefits.

You can review your own records in my files at any time. You may add to them or correct them, and you can have copies of them. I ask you to understand and agree that you may not examine records created by anyone else and then sent to me.

In some very rare situations, I may temporarily remove parts of your records before you see them. This would happen if I believe that the information will be harmful to you, but I will discuss this with you.

You have the right to ask that your information not be shared with family members or others, and I can

agree to that limitation. You can also tell me if you want me to send mail or phone you at a more private address or number than, say, your home or workplace. If this is of concern to you, please tell me so that we can make arrangements.

About Our Appointments

The very first time I meet with you, we will need to give each other much basic information. For this reason, I usually schedule 90 minutes for this first meeting. Following this, we will usually meet for a 50-minute session once a week, and perhaps less often when we both feel necessary. We can schedule meetings for both your and my convenience. I will tell you at least a month in advance of my vacations or any other times we cannot meet. Please ask about my schedule in making your own plans.

An appointment is a commitment to our work. We agree to meet here and to be on time. If I am ever unable to start on time, I ask your understanding. I also assure you that you will receive the full time agreed to. If you are late, we will probably be unable to meet for the full time, because it is likely that I will have another appointment after yours. A cancelled appointment delays our work. I will consider our meetings very important and ask you to do the same. Please try not to miss sessions if you can possibly help it. When you must cancel, please give me at least a week's notice. Your session time is reserved for you. I am rarely able to fill a cancelled session unless I know a week in advance. If you start to cancel sessions, I will have to charge you for the lost time unless I am able to fill it. Your insurance will not cover this charge.

I will reserve a regular appointment time for you into the foreseeable future. I also do this for my other patients. Therefore, I am rarely able to fill a cancelled session unless I have several weeks' notice. You will be charged the full fee for sessions cancelled with less than 24 hours' notice, for other than the most serious reasons.

You will be charged for any damage to, or theft of, property in this office by you or anyone for whom you are legally responsible.

I cannot be responsible for any personal property or valuables you bring into this office.

Fees, Payments, and Billing

Payment for services is an important part of any professional relationship. This is even more true in therapy; one treatment goal is to make relationships and the duties and obligations they involve clear.

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Licensed Clinical Psychologist

You are responsible for seeing that my services are paid for. Meeting this responsibility shows your commitment to our work together.

My current regular fees are as follows. You will be given advance notice if my fees should change.
Regular 50-minute therapy services:\$175.00

For the initial 90 minute session the fee is \$200.00

Psychological testing services: Fee varies. Psychological testing fees include the time spent with you, the time needed for scoring and studying the test results, and the time needed to write a report on the findings. The amount of time involved depends on the tests used and the questions the testing is intended to answer.

Reports: I will not charge you for my time spent making routine reports to your insurance company. However, I will have to bill you for any extra-long or complex reports the company might require. The company will not cover this fee.

Fees, Payments, and Billing; Addendum

If you are using your insurance to pay for our sessions and you miss a session without 24-hour notice, you will be responsible to pay the fee that your insurance would normally pay, including the co-payment you are responsible for. For example, if your insurance company pays \$100 for a 50-minute session and your co-payment is \$20, and you miss the session without providing a 24-hour notice, you will be personally billed for \$120. This arrangement does NOT include missing sessions for emergencies, however, you must notify me of you emergency as soon as possible.

Signature of client (or person acting for client)

Date

Signature of therapist

Kevin Brock, Ph.D.

Date

Copy accepted by client

Copy kept by therapist

Other services:

I realize that my fees involve a substantial amount of money, although they are well in line with similar professionals' charges. For you to get the best value for your money, we must work hard and well.

I will assume that our agreed-upon fee-paying relationship will continue as long as I provide services to you. I will assume this until you tell me in person, by telephone, or by certified mail that you wish to end it. You have a responsibility to pay for any services you receive before you end the relationship.

Because I expect all payment at the time of our meetings, I usually do not send bills. However, if we have agreed that I will bill you, I ask that the bill be paid within 10 days of when you get it.

Depending on your financial circumstances and total medical costs for any year, psychotherapy may be a deductible expense; consult your tax advisor. Cost of transportation to and from appointments and fees paid may be deductible from the client's personal income taxes as medical expenses.

If you think you may have trouble paying your bills on time, please discuss this with me. I will also raise the matter with you so we can arrive at a solution. If your unpaid balance reaches \$600.00, I will notify you by mail. Fees that continue unpaid after this will be turned over to small-claims court or a collection service.

Patients who owe money and fail to make arrangements to pay may be referred to a collection agency.

If there is any problem with my charges, my billing, your insurance, or any other money-related point, please bring it to my attention. I will do the same with you. Such problems can interfere greatly with our work. They must be worked out openly and quickly.

If You Have Traditional (or "Indemnity") Health Insurance Coverage

Because I am a licensed psychologist, many health insurance plans will help you pay for therapy and other services I offer. Because health insurance is written by many different companies, I cannot tell you what your plan covers. Please read your plan's booklet under coverage for "Outpatient Psychotherapy" or under "Treatment of Mental and Nervous Conditions." Or call your employer's benefits office to find out what you need to know.

If your health insurance will pay part of my fee, I will help you with your insurance claim forms.

However, please keep two things in mind:

1. I had no role in deciding what your insurance covers. Your employer decided which, if any, services will be covered and how much you have to pay. You are responsible for checking your insurance coverage, deductibles, payment rates, copayments, and so forth. Your insurance contract is between you and your company; it is not between me and the insurance company.
2. You—not your insurance company or any other person or company—are responsible for paying the fees we agree upon. If you ask me to bill a separated spouse, a relative, or an insurance company, and I do not receive payment on time, I will then expect this payment from you.

If You Have a Managed Care Contract

If you belong to a health maintenance organization (HMO) or preferred provider organization (PPO), or have another kind of health insurance with managed care, decisions about what kind of care you need and how much of it you can receive will be reviewed by the plan. The plan has rules, limits, and procedures that we should discuss. Please bring your health insurance plan's description of services to one of our early meetings, so that we can talk about it and decide what to do.

I will provide information about you to your insurance company only with your informed and written consent. I may send this information by mail or by fax. My office will try its best to maintain the privacy of your records, but I ask you not to hold me responsible for accidents or for anything that happens as a result.

I am not a member of any health insurance plans or panels. Health insurance is a contract between you (or your employer) and your insurer; I am not part of that contract. However, I will supply you with an invoice for my services with the standard diagnostic and procedure codes for billing purposes, the times we met, my charges, and your payments. You can use this to apply for reimbursement.

If You Need to Contact Me

I cannot promise that I will be available at all times. I usually do not take phone calls when I am with a client. You can always leave a message on my answering machine, and I will return your call as soon as I can. Generally, I will return messages daily.

If you have an emergency or crisis and cannot reach me, you may call 911 or visit your nearest Hospital emergency room.

If I Need to Contact Someone about You

If there is an emergency during our work together, or I become concerned about your personal safety, I am required by law and by the rules of my profession to contact someone close to you—perhaps a relative, spouse, or close friend. I am also required to contact this person, or the authorities, if I become concerned about your harming someone else. Please write down the name and information of your chosen contact person in the blanks provided:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Relationship to you: _____

Statement of Principles and Complaint Procedures

It is my intention to fully abide by all the rules of the American Psychological Association (APA) and by those of my state license.

Problems can arise in our relationship, just as in any other relationship. If you are not satisfied with any area of our work, please raise your concerns with me at once. Our work together will be slower and harder if your concerns with me are not worked out. I will make every effort to hear any complaints you have and to seek solutions to them. If you feel that I (or any other therapist) have treated you unfairly or have even broken a professional rule, please tell me. You can also contact the state or local psychological association and speak to the chairperson of the ethics committee. He or she can help clarify your concerns or tell you how to file a complaint. You may also contact the state board of psychologist examiners at www.psychboard.ca.gov, the organization that licenses those of us in the independent practice of psychology.

In my practice as a therapist, I do not discriminate against clients because of any of these factors: age, sex, marital/family status, race, color, religious beliefs, ethnic origin, place of residence, veteran status, physical disability, health status, sexual orientation, or criminal record unrelated to present dangerousness. This is a personal commitment, as well as being required by federal, state, and local laws and regulations. I will always take steps to advance and support the values of equal opportunity, human dignity, and racial/ethnic/ cultural diversity. If you believe you have been discriminated against, please bring this matter to my attention immediately.

Our Agreement

I, the client (or his or her parent or guardian), understand I have the right not to sign this form. My signature below indicates that I have read and discussed this agreement; it does not indicate that I am waiving any of my rights. I understand that any of the points mentioned above can be discussed and may be open to change. If at any time during the treatment I have questions about any of the subjects discussed in this brochure, I can talk with you about them, and you will do your best to answer them. I understand that after therapy begins I have the right to withdraw my consent to therapy at any time, for any reason. However, I will make every effort to discuss my concerns about my progress with you before ending therapy with you.

I understand that no specific promises have been made to me by this therapist about the results of treatment, the effectiveness of the procedures used by this therapist, or the number of sessions necessary for therapy to be effective.

GO TO NEXT PAGE

I have read, or have had read to me, the issues and points in this brochure. I have discussed those points I did not understand, and have had my questions, if any, fully answered. I agree to act according to the points covered in this brochure. I hereby agree to enter into therapy with this therapist (or to have the client enter therapy), and to cooperate fully and to the best of my ability, as shown by my signature here.

Signature of client (or person acting for client)

Date

Printed name

Relationship to client: Self _ Parent _ Legal guardian
 Health care custodial parent of a minor (less than 14 years of age)
_ Other person authorized to act on behalf of the client - specify

Initial here to show that you have read this page.

Kevin Brock, Ph.D.
Licensed Clinical Psychologist

I, the therapist, have met with this client (and/or his or her parent or guardian) for a suitable period of time, and have informed him or her of the issues and points raised in this brochure. I have responded to all of his or her questions. I believe this person fully understands the issues, and I find no reason to believe this person is not fully competent to give informed consent to treatment. I agree to enter into therapy with the client, as shown by my signature here.

Signature of therapist

Date

Kevin Brock, Ph.D.

I truly appreciate the chance you have given me to be of professional service to you, and look forward to a successful relationship with you. If you are satisfied with my services as we proceed, I (like any professional) would appreciate your referring other people to me who might also be able to make use of my services.

Copy accepted by client Copy kept by therapist