**

Client Agreement for Adult / Older Child Therapeutic Trainee Counsellor Sessions**

**Introduction**

Counselling is about understanding, support, choice and change. Your therapist will listen to you in a way that does not judge you. They will not take sides or tell you what to do. They can help you to explore your thoughts and feelings and enable you to make your own decisions.

 **Confidentiality**

An essential feature of the Counselling is that the information disclosed is treated confidentially. It enables you to open up and share feelings without fear of blame or reprisals. It is also a time when it is acceptable to talk about concerns without fear of them being discussed elsewhere. Should the Student/Trainee Counsellor see you outside of the counselling sessions (i.e in a public place) they will wait for you to acknowledge them first.

​Although the contents of the sessions will be confidential, we require the right to breach confidentiality in some specific circumstances:

* For the purpose of clinical supervision, which is a regular meeting to make sure that the therapist is working in a safe and effective manner.
* Circumstances where the therapist has sufficient grounds to believe that you are likely to suffer significant harm.
* If you disclose that you are aware of significant harm of another person.
* As a response to a court order instructing the disclosure of information.

Please note: We have a statutory duty to co-operate with local authorities and other agencies, in child protection and safeguarding vulnerable adults’ procedures including information sharing and inter-agency working. The therapist would seek advice from Time to Listen’s Designated Safeguarding Lead on such important matters should any such concerns arise through the course of your counselling sessions.

 **Counselling Sessions**

Each counselling session will last 50 minutes to one hour, usually weekly, and will be reviewed on a regular basis. You have the right to ask for a referral to another therapist or agency at any time and, after discussion and agreement with you, the therapist also has the right to suggest a referral, if this is thought to be more beneficial to you. We also ask that you do not come to any counselling session whilst under the influence of alcohol or non-prescribed drugs and that you respect both the therapist and the building.

 **Monitoring, Review and Evaluation**

If your sessions are being funded through a local organisation such as an educational placement or by an employer, we are usually required to provide information with regards to attendance and the effectiveness of the therapy provided. This is generally provided through a brief therapy review summary. The contents of which will be discussed and shared with yourself, so you are able to provide full consent to the sharing of this information. The confidential details of your sessions will not be disclosed unless this is something you specifically request.

If your sessions are being funded through the Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund (ASGSF) or another fund arranged through your family’s allocated Social Worker, Time to Listen are likely to be contractually committed to holding Planning and Review Meetings involving yourself and the Social Worker involved. The Social Worker will also expect Therapy Review Reports from your therapist at agreed points throughout the therapeutic process (often mid-way and end-points). Your therapist will explain and discuss this with you and ensure you are fully involved in this process. This is usual practice to ensure your needs are being adequately fulfilled.

If your therapy sessions are being funded through a charitable grant such as the National Lottery Community Fund or Children in Need, we are required to provide information with regard to attendance and the effectiveness of the therapy. This is provided through an anonymised project evaluation report. No identifiable details will be included.

You will be expected to complete a Client Evaluation Questionnaire at early, mid and end-points of your therapy sessions. This evaluation process will be explained to you by your therapist. The evaluations will determine how satisfied you feel about the help you are receiving from your therapist throughout all stages of your therapeutic experience and what you may feel our service needs to improve on. The evaluations are available as a paper and online evaluation forms. A paper copy can be provided by your therapist and the online version is available via https://www.timetolisten.co.uk.

All completed evaluations will be collated, analysed and reviewed in an anonymous way, to determine whether Time to Listen are meeting service standards and, where relevant, project objectives and what, if any areas may require further improvement. An anonymised summary of client evaluations will be used to inform project evaluation reports when therapy has been funded through a charitable grant such as the National Lottery Community Fund or Children in Need.

To provide a holistic evaluation of this intervention and to learn and improve upon our service as we go along the therapist or Project Administrator (for charitable funded intervention), with your consent, may ask others involved for feedback to help demonstrate how our work makes a difference to the lives of young people, parents / carers / guardians, adults and families. This may involve speaking to your educational provider, a worker from a statutory or charity organisation (such as a Family Support Worker, Social Worker, Early Help Worker, if involved) or another close family member such as a parent. This would involve asking any person/s identified between yourself and your therapist what difference they think the interventions being offered by Time to Listen are making.

 **Recording of Sessions**

Sometimes we need to record sessions and to use (anonymous) case material for the purposes of supervision, therapist’s training and research. All such material is treated with your confidentiality and respect. We will not do this without asking you and gaining your permission.

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Notes of the sessions are kept on an internal, secure electronic record keeping system, in line with current data protection regulations. Only the allocated therapist involved and Time to Listen’s organisational management (for supervision, safeguarding and auditing purposes) have access to these. This information will be held for seven years and then disposed of in an appropriate manner that ensures the preservation of confidentiality. All records and information remain the property of Time to Listen.

 **Complaints**

All counsellors and therapists within Time to Listen CIC are registered with a relevant professional body and adhere to their professional body’s code of practice, conduct and ethics such as the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and the UK Council for Psychotherapy’s (UKCP). If there is any cause for complaint, you are welcome to discuss this with your therapist or Time to Listen’s Chief Executive who will try to resolve any issues of concern. The Chief Executive can be contacted via Email: admin@timetolisten.co.uk or by telephone: 07377 979950 .Alternatively, you can access our compliments and complaints procedures on our website at https://www.timetolisten.co.uk.

 **Cancellation Policy**

* ​We request 24 hours’ notice for cancellation of sessions.
* Late cancellations (with less than 24 hours’ notice) or failure to attend an appointment will incur the full session fee.

Please note that sessions are still deducted in cases of late cancellations and missed appointments. If your sessions are being funded through a charitable grant such as the National Lottery Community Fund or Children in Need any late cancelled sessions and missed appointments are wasted charitable funded sessions.

Your therapist will contact you following a late cancellation or missed appointment to discuss and review your availability and your commitment to clarify if you are able to fulfil future, regular attendance. Repeated late cancellations and/or missed appointments will lead to discharge from our service due to the high demand upon our resources.

 **Remote/Online Sessions**

Some or all of your sessions may be delivered through remote, online sessions if this is more convenient or appropriate to your needs.

It might feel scary or uncertain to have some sessions online, but they can be as effective as meeting face to face. Our goal is to create a safe and contained space to work with you. We have carried out numerous sessions or meetings online with positive effect. If there are some materials/documents that we need to use for the sessions (e.g., handouts, practical exercises), the therapist will make sure that they have emailed this through to you before the session.

 **Different Services We Can Use**

If we are providing online video sessions you will be sent an email requesting that you join the session. Please make sure that the therapist has your correct email and mobile number before the session. If you click on the link it will connect you with the therapist. Please do not join the meeting until the agreed time.​ Another option is to connect with your therapist using your mobile phone and if you have iPhone, via FaceTime.

Please make sure that the therapist has the correct number to contact you on in advance of the session in case of any connection issues.

Here are some useful tips for remote / online sessions

Please make sure that:

1. You have your computer or mobile set up ready before the session commences. This includes having your microphone and video turned on.
2. Your computer or mobile is positioned at a sensible height so that the therapist can clearly see your face and that the camera is at eye level.
3. It is very easy to hear and be distracted by background noises such as pets, TV, radio, washing machines and kettles so please make sure you are in a quiet location.
4. You will not be disturbed for the duration of the session and that the door to the room you are sitting in is closed.
5. If you are using your computer, you have your mobile nearby just in case the sound on your computer is poor. In such cases it is possible to stay connected, with the microphone muted, whilst speaking through the mobile with the speaker switched on.
6. You do not have your back to a window or light – this can make it very hard for me to see you clearly.
7. That there is adequate lighting in the room you are in.
8. You have a box of tissues nearby.
9. You have a glass of water nearby.
10. You have not been drinking alcohol or taking drugs before any sessions where they may still be in your body.
11. You do NOT record the sessions. The therapist will not be recording any of the sessions UNLESS you have been asked and given prior consent and this has been mutually discussed and agreed and a consent form has been signed by you.
12. You will NOT let anyone else listen in to any part of the online session (via phone or any other technical device or in person) without prior agreement with Time to Listen and the therapist
13. Using headphones can increase your privacy and confidentiality as other people cannot overhear the two-way conversation.
14. You join the meeting at the agreed time.
15. If you are unable to find a private space in your home, some clients have found it appropriate to access their sessions from their car, parked in a private area away from their home.

 **Policy for Continuity of Therapy Support**

Time to Listen CIC requires a clear commitment to regular, scheduled and consistent counselling or therapy. We will not usually accept or agree to any extended interruptions in the counselling / therapy process above and beyond a two-week planned period (to allow for a family holiday, for example). When you are unable to attend sessions either face to face or remotely for a period beyond a two-week interruption in your regular and scheduled pattern of sessions, a clear plan will be agreed and documented between yourselves and your Counsellor with regard to maintaining an appropriate level and form of contact and a timescale for re-starting your sessions. Most often, you will be advised to submit re-referral into the service via our website at a future time but we would not be able to provide any guarantee that we could offer sessions with the same Counsellor or the same appointment day or time as your previous sessions due to the demands upon the service.

Should unexpected circumstances arise, and your therapeutic support needs to be discontinued for any reason, your Counsellor will discuss with you how best an ending to the therapeutic process can be facilitated. Abrupt endings can be very difficult to process alone. As our Counsellors all work within a relational approach, they regard endings to be an equally essential part of the therapeutic process to be worked through. The Counsellor will discuss with you any recommendations they may have for addressing any ongoing therapeutic needs you may have within the therapeutic ending process.

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**Adult / Older Child Therapeutic Trainee Counselling Support Agreement:**By signing below, I confirm that I have read, understand, and agree to the information above and that I have had any concerns explained to me. I confirm my consent to my information being held by Time to Listen CIC and I agree that I will NOT record any part of my sessions or let anyone else listen in to the sessions (via phone or any other device or means) without prior agreement with Time to Listen CIC.

If after reading this information, you have any more questions please contact your allocated Student / Trainee Counsellor.

Print Client Name:

Client Signature: Date:

I agree to provide counselling according to this counselling agreement signed above:

Print therapist name:

Therapist Signature: Date: