

## COUNSELLING AGREEMENT FOR CLIENTS U18 AND PARENTS/CARERS

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This agreement explains how we will work together. **Even if a parent or carer has arranged or is paying for these sessions, you (the young person) are my client.** This means this is your private space. We will go through this together in our first session so you can ask any questions.

### 1. The Parent/Child Boundary

You are my client, and your privacy matters. I will consider your understanding and ability to make decisions about counselling and your information. Parents and carers do not automatically receive session updates or access to your notes, even if they arrange or pay for counselling. Any request for information will be considered carefully, taking account of your wishes, understanding, safety and the law.

Before counselling begins, I will check who can give valid consent. Young people aged 16 or 17 are normally presumed able to consent. For under-16s, I assess whether they understand counselling sufficiently to consent themselves. Where they cannot, I will establish the appropriate consent arrangements with someone who has parental responsibility.

A note for parents/carers:

- **No Routine Updates:** To build trust, I do not provide parents or carers with session summaries, progress reports, or details of what is discussed, other than updates agreed directly with the young person.
- **Supporting Your Child:** Processing therapy takes time. To help your child feel safe and in control, we encourage parents/carers to give them space after sessions and allow them to take the lead on sharing what they feel comfortable to discuss.
- **The Safeguarding Exception:** If I am concerned about your safety, I may need to involve others. I will involve a parent/carers where appropriate and safe, but may contact safeguarding or emergency services instead.

### 2. Qualifications and Professional Ethics

I am a Registered Member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and work ethically following the **BACP Ethical Framework (2026)**.

- **Therapy Dog:** My dog, Merlin, usually works alongside me. He has been assessed as suitable for therapy work and is covered by my professional insurance. His presence, or any request for sessions without him, will be discussed and agreed before counselling begins.

### 3. Sessions and Fees

- **Session Details:** Sessions last 50 minutes and usually take place at the same time each week. If you arrive late, the session will still end at the scheduled time.
- **Fees & Payment:** My standard fee is £65 per session, payable by bank transfer before the session or by contactless payment at the start. If a parent/carer is the bill payer, payment remains their responsibility.
- **Fee Reviews:** My fees are reviewed annually in March, with at least two calendar months' notice given for any changes.

#### 4. Reduced Fees

I offer a limited number of reduced-fee places for young people or families on a low income. This arrangement must be agreed before our first session, and the reduced fee applies for a maximum of 12 weekly sessions.

#### 5. Cancellations, Absence, and Attendance

- **Cancellation Policy:** Notice of cancellation must be given at least 48 hours before your session, by you or your parent/carer. Cancellations with less than 48 hours' notice are charged at 50% of the fee; cancellations with less than 24 hours' notice are charged at the full fee.
- **Missed Sessions:** We will agree who I should contact if you miss a session without letting me know. If I do not hear from you within two weeks of a missed session, I will assume you no longer wish to continue counselling, and your session time may be offered to someone else.
- **Attending Safely:** I cannot provide counselling if you attend a session under the influence of alcohol, illegal substances, or anything that impairs your ability to engage safely.

#### 6. Duration, Reviews and Endings

The length of time we work together depends on your needs. In line with BACP recommendations, we will pause to review how therapy is going approximately every six sessions.

You can tell me at any time that you want to stop counselling. You do not have to continue because someone else wants you to. Where possible, I ask for two weeks' notice so we can plan an ending together. We will agree whether and how to involve your parent/carer. If I need to pause or end counselling, I will discuss this with you and give reasonable notice wherever safe and possible. I will consider suitable support or referral options and take reasonable steps to minimise distress and disruption.

#### 7. Confidentiality and Safeguarding (Keeping You Safe)

Everything you share in counselling is strictly confidential. I will not tell your parents, school, GP, or anyone else what you say, **except in the following circumstances:**

- **Serious Harm:** If I believe there is a serious risk of harm to yourself, to me, or to another person.
- **Legal Obligations:** If a disclosure is legally required to prevent or report serious crime, financial crime, or terrorism.
- **Safeguarding:** Where sharing information is necessary and lawful to protect a child or adult at risk from harm.
- **With your agreement:** Where you ask or agree for me to share particular information.

#### How Safeguarding Works in Devon:

Wherever safe and lawful, I will discuss my concerns with you before sharing information. I may need to act first if discussion would increase the risk to you or someone else, delay urgent protection, or compromise an investigation. If I need to pass on information to keep you safe, I may contact your parents/carers, your GP, or the **Devon Children's Front Door** in line with **Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership** procedures.

## 8. Supervision and Professional Support

I discuss my work with a qualified supervisor to help me support you safely. I do not normally use your name and remove or minimise identifying details as far as possible. My supervisor is also bound by confidentiality.

## 9. Digital Tools, AI, and Cloud Privacy

- **Intake Details:** Initial intake information is collected via JotForm and stored directly within password-protected **Google Workspace** folders. Forms are immediately deleted from JotForm after transfer to minimise data retention.
- **Clinical Notes:** Session notes are written on a **reMarkable Paper Pro** device. Notes are pseudonymised using a reference code instead of your name and synced via the reMarkable cloud.
- **AI Support Apps:** If you use external AI chat tools or apps for mental health support on your phone, please note these operate outside of our counselling agreement and may use or share your information in ways you do not expect and do not offer the same confidentiality arrangements as counselling. You are always welcome to discuss your use of them in our sessions, though I do not advise their use for mental health support.

Please also read my Under-18 Privacy Policy, which explains how I use, store and retain your information, your data protection rights and how to raise a concern.

## 10. Clinical Will (Unexpected Absence)

In line with BACP standards, I maintain a Clinical Will. If I die or become unable to contact you because of serious illness, incapacity or an emergency, a named Therapeutic Executor (a trusted, qualified colleague bound by strict confidentiality) will access your contact details solely to inform you and/or your parent/carer and support next steps.

## 11. Contact Between Sessions and Emergencies

You or your parent/carer can contact me between sessions by email or text for administrative matters (like rescheduling). I work Monday to Thursday and will reply during working hours.

**I do not provide crisis support.** If you need urgent help, please contact:

- **Immediate danger or a life-threatening emergency:** call 999.
- **Urgent mental health help:** call NHS 111 and select the mental health option.
- **Childline:** 0800 1111 (Free 24/7 support for under-19s)
- **Samaritans:** 116 123
- **Shout Text Line:** Text 'SHOUT' to 85258

## 12. Letters and Reports

If you request formal letters or reports (for school, college, or medical providers), this can be arranged with your written consent. A fee applies based on the preparation time required.

### 13. Feedback and Complaints

If you are unhappy with any part of our work, please talk to me first so we can try to fix it. If you feel unable to do so, you or your parent/carer can contact the **BACP Get Help with Counselling Concerns** service on 01455 883300 / [gethelp@bacp.co.uk](mailto:gethelp@bacp.co.uk). For data concerns, you can contact the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) at [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk).

#### DECLARATION

- I can confirm that I have read, understood and agree to the information provided in this agreement.
- I understand and agree to the arrangements we have discussed about Merlin's presence.
- The digital services used for my information, and their benefits and risks, have been explained to me in a way I understand. I agree to my information being entered into these systems and know I can ask questions or discuss alternatives.

Client Name: ..... Signature:..... Date: .....

Parent/carer name (if applicable):.....

Parent Signature (if applicable): ..... Date: .....

Counsellor Name: Tracey Langrill Signature: ..... Date: .....

Signed copies retained by client and Tracey Langrill