

COUNSELING PHILOSOPHY

Journeys Counseling Ministry's treatment philosophy embraces a distinctively Christian worldview. This all-encompassing framework provides a sense of shared mission and meaning regarding client change and treatment. Committed to the integration of Biblical faith and psychological theory and practice, this treatment model provides a broad framework within which physical, psychological, social, and spiritual needs of a person are viewed as a part of a unified whole. All aspects of treatment seek to create a therapeutic environment in which a person can begin to simultaneously reconstruct their relationship with others and God.

While traditional Christian beliefs and values under gird this philosophy, it is broad in its perspective and acknowledges individual differences regarding expressions of faith. Providing broad parameters, it is neither prescriptive regarding specific treatment techniques, nor intolerant of a person's unique spiritual quests. Please feel free to discuss this philosophy with your therapist.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT FROM COUNSELING?

It is Journeys Counseling Ministry's intention and desire that your therapeutic experience will not only be a blessing to you, but a time of growth as well. We encourage you to freely discuss any and all questions or concerns with your therapist.

Benefits from therapy often vary; therefore, no promises or guarantees can be made. Possible benefits might be that you would be better able to cope with problems and interact more effectively with your family, friends, and co-workers. Other possible benefits might be a better understanding of your personal goals and values that may ultimately lead to greater maturity and growth as an individual. However, you should be aware that psychotherapy might involve risk. Therapy may increase your level of pain and anxiety as your level of awareness increases. Often, such awareness may result in the arousal of intense emotions and feelings, i.e. feelings of helplessness, fear, anger, guilt, depression, or loneliness. These feelings are often part of the therapeutic healing process and should be discussed further with your therapist as you encounter them. When we experience "reality" (pain, fear, anger . . .), this gives opportunity for healing and for faith to grow.

As a consumer of psychotherapy, you should be aware that there are alternatives to traditional psychotherapy. Many communities offer resources for individuals in need of assistance and may be an alternative for you and/or your family. Other alternatives to psychotherapy include self-help programs and groups, twelve-step groups, crisis-intervention, bibliotherapy, and pastoral counseling to name a few. Please feel free to discuss options and alternatives with your therapist.

CLIENT RIGHTS AND INFORMED CONSENT

As a consumer of psychotherapy, you have certain rights you should be aware of. The following list is not exhaustive, and is only meant to provide you with an outline of what your rights are.

1. You have a right not to receive psychotherapy, and to end therapy at any time, without notice or further obligation, should you so deem.
2. You have a right to be informed of your therapist's education and qualifications.
3. You have a right to ask questions with regards to therapeutic techniques or procedure being used, and you have the right not to consent to any technique or procedure for any reason.
4. You have a right to ask questions concerning the length of therapy and termination of therapy. However, a therapist is not able to guarantee or promise a specific length of therapy necessary due to the personal nature of psychotherapy, as individual needs, desires, and growth greatly vary.
5. You have a right to a reasonable financial arrangement for services rendered. It is expected that the agreed upon fee will be paid at the conclusion of each session unless prior arrangements have been made. As part of your initial session, you will be advised of the hourly rate (50 minutes) charged for the therapist assigned to you. As Journeys Counseling Ministry is a ministry, we offer scholarships for those individuals who find that the cost of psychotherapy would otherwise be beyond their financial means. The financial arrangement is based on several factors such as the availability of funds, education and experience level of your therapist, your household's financial status, and number of dependents. Scholarships are granted on a 6-8 session basis and must be reapplied for at the conclusion of the sessions.
6. In the event that you must cancel or reschedule a session, it is important that you inform your therapist as soon as possible. Please be aware that if you do not cancel your appointment at least 24 hours in advance, you will be charged your regular session fee.
7. In the event that your therapist counsels your spouse, you must agree not to subpoena the therapist or records relative to counseling.
8. It is strongly recommended that you have a thorough physical examination from a medical practitioner on an annual basis. It is strongly recommended that you have a thorough medical examination within the first month of therapy to medically address any potential complaints or concerns, which may have an impact in your therapy.
9. **Confidentiality:** You have a right to expect that your therapist will keep the facts of your therapy private and confidential. This includes not disclosing, to anyone, the fact that you are in therapy, family information, discussions, appointments, or any information that is brought up in your

therapy, except under those circumstances where the therapist is mandated by law to report, or where permitted by law, unless the therapist has received your expressed written consent.

10. Your therapist is permitted by law to disclose confidential information for a valid purpose such as (1) if your therapist is a trainee or intern, they are required to report your progress and any potential concerns or problems to their supervisor; (2) to obtain appropriate professional consultation(s); (3) to obtain payment for services that may require releasing limited information necessary to achieve proper payment (i.e. insurance, court referred/ordered); (4) court ordered subpoena. Except in the above mentioned criteria, your therapist will not release any information outside of session (i.e. letters to attorneys, courts, or mediators, etc.).
11. Your therapist is the treating therapist and does not provide services in contemplation of legal proceedings. If your therapist responds to any subpoena on your behalf whether through document preparation, deposition, personal appearance or any other requested legal proceeding, you will be billed at the therapist's standard hourly fee.
12. If you initiate a lawsuit against someone, his or her right to the best defense supersedes your right to confidentiality. His or her attorney has the right to subpoena your records, take your therapist's deposition, have your therapist appear in court, or all of the preceding.
13. If you are in therapy or being tested by a court of law, test results and/or treatment may be disclosed to the court.
14. If a court of law issues a legitimate subpoena, your therapist must provide the information specifically requested. In releasing such information, the minimum amount of information necessary to accomplish the purpose of the communication will be followed.

Your therapist is a mandated reporter. As such the State of California requires:

15. Evidence which suspects child or elder abuse by neglect, assault and battery, or sexual abuse, sexual assault, or sexual exploitation may be disclosed to the state.
16. If there is cause or a reasonable belief that you may pose a serious, imminent or great likelihood of danger or an act of violence to another or another's property, your therapist has an obligation and responsibility to exercise reasonable care to protect the intended victim's from that danger, and must warn the intended victim(s) by taking reasonable steps necessary under such circumstances, and informing the appropriate law enforcement agency. However, your therapist's obligation require that they not disclose a confidence unless such disclosure is necessary to avert danger to others, and even then, that they do so discreetly and in a fashion that would preserve the privacy of the client to the fullest extent compatible with the prevention of the threatened danger.
17. If your therapist has a reasonable belief that you may potentially attempt suicide, your therapist may disclose this information to others (i.e. family member(s), friends) if such disclosure is deemed necessary in attempting to prevent the threatened danger, then your therapist will take

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reasonable steps to prevent such an attempt. In addition to seeking the assistance of appropriate family and friends, your therapist may inform or consult with an emergency medical team, local police, or law enforcement agency.