



Looking-Glass Counselling

3 Tabor Hill, Llandudno LL30 2QW
Victoria Martin MBACP (Accredited Register)

The Counselling Contract

The counselling contract is a mutual agreement negotiated between the counsellor and the client and which anticipates the rights and responsibilities of the counsellor towards the client, as well as the rights and responsibilities of the client towards the counsellor.

Contracting ensures that the counselling process will be performed in a good and safe manner. It is an important part of the counselling process and allows you to give your fully informed consent to the counselling. It establishes the parameters of the counselling relationship and avoids any misunderstandings or miscommunications of these parameters.

This contract is an agreement between the counsellor, *Victoria Martin*, and you, the client. By signing this document, you are agreeing to the terms below.

Counselling Aims and Objectives

The Aim of counselling is to provide you, the client, with the opportunity to talk about what has led you to seek counselling, any problems or difficulties you have that are bothering you and what you can do about them, any changes you would like to make to your life, and to explore your thoughts and feelings in safety and with the assurance of your privacy being protected.

My aim, as your counsellor, is to help you through this process to achieve the results you want from the counselling, without judgement or telling you what to do. I may on occasion give information or offer suggestions, always with the deepest respect for your autonomy and right to be self-determining.

The objectives of the counselling are determined by you and what you want to achieve. You will be asked what you would like the outcomes of counselling to be for you at the beginning of the process and these will become our counselling objectives. These will be regularly reviewed, with the expectation that objectives can and may change as the counselling progresses.

Data Protection

I am on the public register of data controllers and adhere to the Data Protection Act of 1998 see www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/29/contents.



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Confidentiality

I maintain client confidentiality in accordance with the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling & Psychotherapy (Code of Ethics) – see www.bacp.co.uk.

Under the same BACP Code of Ethics, I keep client records, brief summaries about what happens in our sessions, which act as an aid to memory and a record of the counselling process. These are kept separate from your personal and contact information, which is also kept in the locked filing cabinet.

Occasionally I might want to make a video or audio recording of our session for the purpose of monitoring my work, other educational or training purposes, or for marketing purposes, but this would only happen with your prior agreement and written consent. Again these data are securely stored and destroyed after their intended use.

The Counselling Context

The counselling will take place in a space in my home that is wholly dedicated to my practice. It's not used in any other way or for any other purpose. The space has been chosen because it affords my clients the privacy they expect and deserve. Having said this, the property is, first and foremost, my home, which I share with my family. While every effort is made to protect client confidentiality and to ensure that noise is not intrusive, I would ask you to understand that the normal day to day comings and goings of a family might on occasion be evident.

Supervision

Also in accordance with the BACP Code of Ethics, I attend regular supervision, which is important for my self-care, to protect client confidentiality and is part of best practice, to ensure I provide the best possible service to you, the client. My supervisor is an accredited member of the BACP and is therefore bound by the same standards for confidentiality as I am. All discussion of my work with clients in supervision is carried out respectfully and with the utmost concern for your privacy.

Sharing information and referrals

If you are being treated by your doctor for emotional difficulties, it is important that you inform him or her about me, and vice versa. I will not confer with your doctor without your prior knowledge and consent. However, if there is convincing evidence that you pose a risk of serious harm to yourself or others, I may need to break confidentiality by informing your doctor, or in extreme cases



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the police. Except in extreme and exceptional circumstances, this would only take place with your prior knowledge.

If, for whatever reason, I believe I can no longer be of useful service to you, or if I think it will be beneficial to you, I might, with your prior knowledge and agreement refer you to another service provider. In such instances, I will only share information with other services in accordance with your wishes and prior written consent.

Confidentiality for Couples, Families and Groups

When couples, families or groups meet with me for relationship counselling, sometimes the clients will meet all together for counselling and sometimes they may come to see me individually. When individuals attend counselling sessions the therapist will not reveal any confidential information shared in an individual session with partners, other family or group members involved in relationship counselling without the prior permission of that individual.

Breaking confidentiality

Confidentiality may be broken in the following exceptional circumstances:

- Where you give your consent for the confidence to be broken (as in the examples above).
- Where there is evidence of serious risk of harm to you or to a third party.
- Where in extreme cases I am legally compelled by a court of law.
- Where statutory law requires me to inform the relevant authorities (such as terrorist activities, drug trafficking or abuse of a child or vulnerable adult).

Contact between sessions

In instances where you need to contact me between sessions, calls can be made to 01492 440690, or you can call or text me on 07846484760. If I am unable to take your call, please leave a message. Calls and messages will be responded to as soon as possible within my normal operating hours. Looking-Glass Counselling is not a crisis or emergency service. If you need to speak to someone urgently, please contact your GP, NHS Direct Wales (0845 46 47) or the Samaritans (08457 909090).

Outside of the counselling context

Clients often do not disclose to others that they are attending counselling and, for this reason, if we should see or “bump into” each other outside of the counselling context, I will not greet or acknowledge you in any way, unless you initiate the interaction. I do not mean at all for this to



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appear rude; it is to avoid putting you “on the spot” or embarrassing you, in case someone you are with, for example, asks, “How do you know her?” This is another way in which I aim to protect client confidentiality.

Sessions

Sessions last between 60-90 minutes and can be arranged at a time suitable to you within my usual hours of operation. It is expected that the session will begin at the agreed time. Any session that begins after this time due to late client arrival for whatever reason cannot be extended beyond the agreed finish time. If you do not arrive or call within 20 minutes of the agreed appointment, this will be considered a cancellation and I will not be available for the remainder of the session.

Number of Sessions:

It is difficult to say how many sessions you will need, but I would encourage you to commit to 4 sessions before realistically evaluating the effectiveness of the counselling. Of course, it is entirely up to you and you might decide to see how you get on session by session. However, if you do choose to commit to the counselling, payment of £160 in advance for these 4 sessions reduces the per session rate from £45 to £40. I've reduced the rate to encourage you to make this commitment. After your first 4 sessions we will make a review of how you are progressing and you can decide where you want to take things from there.

If you think from the start you will need more than 4 sessions, other money-saving options for purchasing 6 or 8 sessions in advance are also available. £225 for 6 sessions reduces your per session rate to £37.50 and £280 for 8 sessions reduces the per session rate to £35.

Any fees paid in advance cannot be refunded for any reason other than if you have a serious complaint about the counselling under the terms of this contract or the BACP Ethical Framework and Code of Conduct. Paid for sessions will be held open for you to take at any time for up to 12 months and are also transferable to a third party.

Endings

Endings can be difficult, but it is important to aim to end the counselling so that there is a sense of completion, both for you, the client, and for me as your counsellor. Having experiences in life that we feel are incomplete can cause us to hold on to the past, creating an unnecessary burden on the psyche. I ask that you give at least one week's notice, if possible, so that we have the chance to discuss your decision, but there will be no pressure on you to continue with counselling.



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You will normally know when you are ready to finish counselling and we can address this together and come to an agreement about how the ending will be best managed. For example, some clients choose to reduce the frequency of sessions before discontinuing altogether.

Sometimes you may feel that the counselling is not helping you. In these circumstances it is best if you can come and discuss any difficulties or concerns, rather than abruptly ending the counselling. More often than not worries can be addressed and difficulties can be overcome.

Events happen in life that may influence a decision to discontinue the counselling. I would encourage you to use the counselling as an opportunity to address and process these kinds of events and their implications on you and your life. **It is important that you know, however, that the decision to continue or discontinue the counselling is entirely yours.**

Complaints

If you are not happy for whatever reason with me or the counselling, the premises, or anything to do with the service, I would ask that you bring this up with me in the first instance. It is my primary concern that the counselling is benefitting you and not causing you any harm, and I will do my best to address any dissatisfaction and make it right. However, if, under the terms of this contract and the BACP Ethical Framework, you feel your complaint is serious and you do not wish to discuss it with me, you should contact the BACP, the body responsible for issues of professional conduct (go to <http://www.bacp.co.uk/crs/contact.php>).

Feedback and Testimonials

For purposes of professional and personal development, improving the counselling service, promoting and marketing the service, I sometimes collect data on counselling outcomes. At the end of the counselling I would ask you to complete a survey, which you can do online by clicking on the link on my website: www.looking-glasscounselling.co.uk/outcomesurvey. Surveys are submitted anonymously and can be taken at any time.

The feedback survey seeks to discover whether your hopes and expectations for the counselling were met, or if you were in any way disappointed, and I would ask that you please write a few words to sum up your experience. In order to continue to develop my counselling practice and provide the best service for my clients, I need and very much appreciate your feedback.

- Please tick here if you do not wish to give your permission for me to use your comments, either from the online survey or sent to me via email or text correspondence to be published as a "testimonial" on my website (please visit my website www.looking-glasscounselling.co.uk to see the format in which testimonials appear).



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Marketing

How did you hear about Looking-Glass Counselling?

- Counselling-Directory BACP Internet search GP Personal Recommendation
- Other

Cancellations

If for any reason I have to cancel a session, I will aim to provide you with at least 24 hours' notice and I will try to offer you an alternative time. Likewise I ask that you give me at least 24 hours' notice if you are unable to attend an appointment. In the event of a serious accident, emergency, or other similar situation outside your control, please deal with your situation first and notify me at the earliest convenient time, or I will follow up with you typically within 24 to 48 hours of the missed appointment.

To help avoid missed appointments I will send you a free text reminder the day before your appointment.

- Please tick here if you do not wish to receive text reminders.

Session Fees

Individual or couples counselling - £45 per 90 minute session (60 minutes for children and young people).

Family therapy - £60 per 90 minute session.

Group counselling – from £10 per person per 120 minute session, with a minimum session rate of £60.

Multi-session purchase discounts are available (see below, under “Number of Sessions”)

Fees are reviewed regularly and may be subject to change. Fee changes will apply to new clients, or clients returning after more than a 3 month break (unless session have been prepaid).

Method of Payment

Payment is taken in advance, by cash, debit or credit card, PayPal Me, or by bank transfer (see www.looking-glasscounselling.co.uk/fees for details).



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From the list below, which are the areas that concern you?

- | | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Addictions | Depression | Relationships |
| Smoking | Exams | Lack of Direction |
| Drinking | Eating Problems | Stress |
| Drugs | Feeling Stuck | Self-Esteem |
| Gambling | Guilt | Sleep Problems |
| Food | Motivation | Sexual Problems |
| Setting Goals | Memory | Intrusive Thoughts |
| Achieving Goals | Career | Pain Control |
| Anxiety | Childhood Problems | Panic Attacks |
| Weight Problems | Concentration | Phobias |
| Anorexia | Bulimia | Confidence |
| Public Speaking | Compulsive Behaviour | Fertility |

Please answer the following questions:

What is your main reason for seeking counselling?

What do you want to achieve from the counselling?

Is there else you want to include in the counselling contract?

Please tick if yes:

- Have you had counselling before?
- Are you currently accessing counselling or other therapy?
 - If yes, please give details:
- Are you being treated by your doctor for emotional difficulties or mental health issues?
- Are you taking any prescribed medications?
 - If yes, please give details:



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Personal and contact information

Name:	
Address:	
Telephone:	
Mobile:	
Email:	
Preferred method of contact:	
GP Contact Details:	
Date of last check-up:	
Emergency Contact Details (Parent or Guardian if under 14):	

Your informed consent to the counselling

By signing below, you are agreeing to the terms of this contract and giving your consent for the counselling to commence. More specifically, by signing this contract, you are agreeing that, if you make an appointment, you either attend the appointment or cancel, and that you will pay for all appointments attended.

Signature Date