

## **Counselling in your Community Online Counselling Agreement**

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Before the beginning of our work together it is necessary for us to have a working agreement, so that we both know what is required of us. **Please carefully read the following information to find out what's involved.**

### **Counselling with me**

My name is Hazel Hill and I am a qualified registered (045039) Counsellor and a Member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). I work to BACP's 'Ethical Framework for Counsellors' and hold professional indemnity insurance.

I am an integrative counsellor who believes that every client I see has the power and awareness within themselves to work out their problems. I provide you with a safe space where you can be heard, understood and trusted in a non-judgemental way. I will help you explore your difficulties and work with you towards a solution.

### **Online Counselling**

Online counselling may be able to help with a wide range of issues including, abuse, anxiety, bereavement, cultural issues, depression, eating difficulties, loneliness, relationship problems, self-esteem, sexual orientation, sexual abuse, work related issues and many more. Not all types of issues can be resolved through online counselling and I will advise you if I feel face to face counselling would be more appropriate. If I consider that online counselling would not be the most suitable means of support I will endeavour to assist you in a referral to a suitable alternative source of support in the area you live in.

### **Services available**

Counselling can either be by email, instant messaging or video call both using skype. Payment and this agreement must be completed before our counselling session can begin. A weekly time can be booked for our instant messaging or video call. Therapeutic email exchanges are generally one for each week for an agreed period. Please allow up to 48 hours for a response to your e-mail. If you miss your time slot or fail to send an email then your payment will be kept. The only exception will be if a technical failure has prevented the email exchange or our skype meeting and I have been advised of this via telephone. Payment charges can be found at <http://inyourcommunity.org.uk/sessions-and-prices/>.

### **Confidentiality**

All therapeutic work is confidential and private. Neither of us must communicate the content of emails to a third party, which includes not putting anything we do together on any social media or blog. Please refer to my social media policy. I own the intellectual copyright of what I write and you will need my agreement in writing before publishing anything I have written on any social networking or other website.

Counsellors are ethically required to have supervision and I may discuss your case but your identity will never be revealed. The only time that I may break confidentiality is if you are at serious risk of causing harm to yourself or others or when I am compelled to do so by law. If at any point during our counselling arrangement I felt

that you were in need of emergency support, I may ask for your consent to contact your GP.

### **Security**

Please ensure that you secure your computer and emails against unauthorised viewing by third parties. It is recommended that you only use a private computer and not a work or public computer. Please ensure you keep your anti-viral protection up-to-date and I will undertake to do the same.

For your safety I also recommend that we use encrypted email software, such as [www.safemail.net](http://www.safemail.net) which is free. If you need help setting up an email address then I can help you with this once the agreement has been signed. My confidential email address is [onlinecounsellor@safe-mail.net](mailto:onlinecounsellor@safe-mail.net). All our emails will be stored on an external drive (password protected), which will be kept in a locked filing cabinet for a period of 5 years. After this time they will be expunged.

### **Technology breakdown arrangements**

Should you experience a technical breakdown which prevents you from emailing or skypeing as agreed, please contact me by mobile (the number will be given to you before commencement of counselling) so that we can discuss how to re-arrange our email exchange. I also undertake to contact you by telephone should I experience a technical breakdown.

### **Personal crisis procedures**

I cannot provide an emergency service for clients. If you find yourself in a major crisis and were considering serious self-harm it would be vital to get immediate help. This could include contacting your GP, or going to your nearest accident and emergency department (A & E). You could also call the Samaritans on 08457 909090 or visit their website [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

### **What next?**

If you are happy to proceed with online counselling on this basis, please complete the details about yourself set out below, and confirm by “signing” at the bottom. Then attach this document to an email and email it back to me at [onlinecounsellor@Safe-mail.net](mailto:onlinecounsellor@Safe-mail.net)

We will arrange a mutual time and date”, and I will ask you to pay for one or more sessions and if necessary set up a safe-mail account.

We can then continue working together for as many sessions as you find helpful. If for any reason you need to cancel a session, please let me know at least 48 hours in advance; I will then carry forward your payment and apply it to the following session.

**Personal details**

Name	
Age	
Gender	
Country or area you live in	
Email address	
Mobile phone number	
Type of counselling (email, Skype chat, Skype video)	
Please explain briefly what issues you would like to explore in counselling	
Please describe any counselling or similar help that you have received or are receiving	
Please describe any times that you have considered suicide or serious self-harm	
(Optional) Name and phone number of your GP	

Please type your name and the date below to confirm that you accept this agreement, then save the completed document and return it to me as an email attachment.