

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT INFORMATION AND CRISIS INFORMATION

1. What to expect from counseling

- I will spend about 5-10 minutes discussing my disclosure statement and answering any questions in the first session.
- In individual counseling I spend the first session discussing what brings you into counseling and I also like to get to know you in general so we will discuss areas of your life such as family background, career, educational background, health and substance abuse history, etc. We continue this into the second session and then begin to develop a treatment plan. We collectively set goals for counseling and identify objectives or steps towards reaching those goals.
- In couples or marriage counseling I like to utilize a research supported approach called Gottman Method Couples Therapy. The first session will be together and we will discuss the issues that brings you in and get a history of the relationship. Then I will ask you both to fill out some questionnaires that will help in treatment. Then I like to meet with each member of the couple alone once, and then meet together again to discuss a treatment plan. See section in this disclosure statement for additional information.
- **I encourage everyone to be honest about how they feel after the first session. I truly want people to seek counseling with the person that will be the most helpful so if you are uncomfortable with this session please let me know and I can potentially help you find another counselor who you believe will be helpful for you.**

2. Understanding therapist credentials

- I have a master's degree in Counseling Psychology at WMU
- I am supervised by a fully licensed Psychology, Bob Sheppard, and marriage and family therapy, Nancy Curtis.
- I am not a medical doctor and do not have a Ph.D., so I cannot adjust medications or provide you with direct medical advice, but I can discuss concerns with your primary health care provider.
- I do discuss my cases as needed with other therapists at CFPS. Please inform me if you have any related concerns.

3. Limits of Confidentiality

- I am a mandated reported, which means that I am legally obligated to report any suspected or reported child abuse or neglect or elder abuse or neglect. It cannot be kept confidential.
- I cannot keep private any expression of immediate and certain intentions to harm or kill yourself or other people.

4. General privacy

- If we see one another in public I cannot initiate a conversation in order to respect your privacy.
- **I do not keep secrets in marital or couple counseling** so you need a release to be signed for each other if you want to do couple or marital counseling.

- If you want me to consult and speak with anyone about what you say in counseling you will need to sign a written release of information form.

5. Payments and insurance

- You are responsible for your copays and deductible payments. Copayments are expected at the time of service.
- If because of financial concerns you cannot afford copays at the time of service please discuss your concerns with me and we can set up a payment plan.
- For people who do not have insurance, I offer a sliding fee scale ranging for \$65.00 to \$200.00 per session. Sliding fee scale is based upon income and ability to pay.
- If there is a substantial balance and no effort has been made to pay in a reasonable amount of time then we do occasionally send individuals to collections. We try to make every effort to avoid doing this by offering affordable payment plans.
- **There is a \$65.00 no show and late cancel fee.** This fee will be charged if someone either doesn't show up for their appointment or cancels or reschedules less than 24 hours of their appointment time. This fee is waived in most cases of illness and medical emergencies. This late fee is an out of pocket cost which is not billable to insurances.
- **Insurance takes a great deal of time to process** – sometimes up to several months if multiple insurances are involved. You are responsible for all copays, deductibles, or balances the insurance company doesn't pay. If for financial reasons you need to set up a payment plan please discuss this with me.

6. Crisis Management and contact between sessions

- You may leave me a voicemail 24 hours a day by contacting the main line at
 - 269-372-4140, extension 340.
- This is not a crisis facility, voicemail is checked typically 1-3 times a day. Any messages left after 9:00 pm will not be listened to until the next day.
- In the event of a crisis after hours, there is help available.
- For Kalamazoo residents under 18, you can contact Mobile Crisis Response by calling 269-373-6000 or 1-888-373-6200
- will meet with you in your home or elsewhere in Kalamazoo County to work through a personal or family crisis.
- Dial 211 on your cell phone and you can speak to a crisis worker from Gryphon Place in Kalamazoo 24 hours a day. They can provide you with resources in the West Michigan Area and have crisis workers available to talk.
- If you are in crisis or just need to talk about suicidal thoughts, call
- 1-800-273-TALK (8255), the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. It is a 24-hour, toll-free, confidential suicide prevention hotline. - See more at: <http://www.nami.org/Find-Support>
- If you feel like you or someone you know is in immediate danger of harming themselves call 911 immediately.
- Any Emergency Room should have the ability to assess for danger or suicide or homicide. Parents or concerned adults and friends can go to an Emergency Room and ask to fill out a

petition if the person they are concerned about is not willing or able to go to the emergency room themselves.

- Concerned parents, family, or friends can request a wellness check of someone that they are concerned may be attempting to harm themselves or others by calling 911, Kalamazoo public safety's Non-Emergency: (269) 337-8994, or visiting <http://kalamazoopublicsafety.org/#>