

Professional Disclosure Statement

Paul Hoskins, MA, LLP, LPC, LLMFT
Therapist
Child and Family Psychological Services PC
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Credentials

Master of Arts from Western Michigan University
Limited Licensed Psychologist
Licensed Professional Counselor
Limited Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist
Trained in level one Gottman Method Couples Therapy

Description of practice

I offer a range of therapy services at Child and Family Psychological Services (CFPS) including individual therapy, couple/marriage counseling, premarital counseling, and family therapy services. As a therapist, I work with families, couples, and individuals who struggle with a wide range of concerns and problems. These include, but are not limited to: depression, anxiety, parenting problems, marital or relationship difficulties, divorce concerns, blended family issues, substance use struggles, life adjustment problems, anger management difficulties, and other mental health issues.

My philosophy of practice involves integrating concepts in family systems, cognitive behavioral therapy, behavioral strategies, solution oriented therapy, and humanistic philosophy into treatment that best meets the needs of the clients and families that I counsel.

In addition to my clinical experience, since 2013 I have been a part-time instructor at Western Michigan University in the Family Consumer Science Department. Currently I am instructing a course entitled "Intimate Relationships," which focuses on research and practical skills in the fields of marriage and family therapy, sociology, and psychology.

Education and Professional Experience

In 2011, I graduated with a Master of Arts degree from Western Michigan University. I took courses in the Counseling Education and Counseling Psychology Department and the Couple, Marriage and Family Therapy program at Western Michigan University. I completed my internship at Barry County Community Mental Health where I did individual and family therapy, and I was also a part of a home based therapy team. Prior to attending WMU I received a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology from Central Michigan University and two Associate degrees from St. Clair County Community.

From 2011 to 2015 I counseled at a private practice in Plainwell, Pathways Psychological Associates. At Pathways I successfully engaged in a wide range of therapeutic experiences and modalities including: individual counseling, group counseling, premarital / couple counseling, marital counseling, and family counseling. For a number of years I facilitated anger management

and substance abuse groups. I have had success working with dating couples as well as married couples. I have had a good deal of successful experience working with children and adolescents, typically in the context of family counseling. I have successfully facilitated treatment for children, adolescents and adults with all of the following concerns: depression, anxiety, stress management, anger management, bipolar disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADD/ADHD), oppositional defiant disorder (ODD), substance dependence and abuse, marital problems, parent-child relationship problems, blended family concerns, suicidal and/ or homicidal thoughts, physical and sexual abuse, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). From 2012-2015 I was contracted as a part-time counselor at a trade school in Plainwell, Michigan Career and Technical Institute (MCTI). At MCTI, I counseled students who had a wide range of disabilities.

From 2008-2009, I worked at an adult crisis facility in Kalamazoo, Michigan called Howard Crisis, which was part of Hope Network. There, I worked with individuals who were suicidal and/or Severely Mentally Ill. I also volunteered from 2008-2009 at Gryphon Place in Kalamazoo, Michigan, where I answered phones and spoke with people who were in crisis, suicidal, or needed a referral to fulfill a basic need.

Therapy Fee

Therapy fee is based on services provided and clients' insurance coverage. Co-pays may vary based on coverage. For individuals without insurance coverage, I offer what is called a sliding fee scale. This means that the amount that a client is expected to pay for therapy services will be dependent upon their income. Individual session can range from approximately \$65.00-\$200.00, depending on the client's financial situation. If someone is unable to pay for counseling services CFPS also offers therapy with interns that is free or low cost.

There will be a \$65.00 cancellation fee if the appointment is cancelled or rescheduled less than 24 hours before the scheduled appointment time.

We make every reasonable effort to avoid taking anyone with high unpaid balances to collections, such as agreeing to set up an affordable payment plan and sending out multiple statements, but if someone has a substantial balance and does not make efforts to make payments or is not compliant with an established payment plan, then we do reserve the right to send people to collections.

Confidentiality

I am obligated by law to keep what is said to me in therapy under the strictest confidence. However, there may be times in which the law requires me to provide limited information to third parties. These exceptions include: 1) If I have strong reason to suspect child abuse or neglect, or elder abuse or neglect; 2) If there is strong evidence that you are a danger to yourself or to others; 3) If I am subpoenaed and or mandated by law to disclose records or to testify in court. Please note that these exceptions are rare but it is still important to understand some of the legal limits of confidentiality in therapy.

I also may discuss cases while consulting with colleagues about clients. This is done to enhance the quality of the services that I offer as a therapist. As a Masters level therapist, I am required to seek supervision with a fully licensed psychologist. The fully licensed psychologist supervising me is Robert Sheppard, Ph.D. who is the supervising psychologist at CFPS. Nancy Curtis LPC, LMFT, CAAC of Pine Rest supervises me for my limited license in marriage and family therapy. Both types of supervisions are with a group of other therapists who also have to abide by the

laws of confidentiality for mental health providers. I find that the group supervision format is very helpful in that I am able to listen to feedback from multiple experienced therapists and thereby enhance therapeutic effectiveness.

Other than the above mentioned exceptions, I cannot divulge identifying information about our counseling sessions without your permission. If you would like to provide permission for me to release information to a third party, you may do this with a release of information form which will be provided for you upon intake and upon request.

In order to further protect client confidentiality, if I see a client outside of our office, I legally cannot initiate contact with that person. A client can initiate contact with me if they choose, but I cannot initiate any conversation or even recognize that I know him / her. This law is in place to protect client confidentiality and to avoid awkward moments outside of the counseling session. Clients may not want other people to know that they are in therapy. This law helps clients avoid others from asking questions about the identity of the therapist and how they know this person.

Issues Working with Families

Sometimes maintaining confidentiality among family members, especially couples, can be challenging. I make an effort not to take sides while working with families; therefore, I try to avoid colluding with family members by keeping secrets between them. If a client is seeing me in the context of family therapy, please understand that I will respect this client's privacy. However, if a client needs to speak with me on an individual basis, I will share what is told to me in private with other family members if it is therapeutically relevant, provided a release is signed. Again, I do this to avoid taking sides and perpetuating family secrets that, in the long run, are generally devastating to family togetherness.

Affairs can be devastating to a marriage. For some marriages, it is the lying and the deceitfulness often associated with affairs that create more damage to the marriage than the physical acts of the affair. For this reason, if I am told by one member of a couple, in private, that he or she is having an affair, I will encourage that person to end the affair and disclose the affair with his or her partner. If, within four couple sessions after the affair is disclosed to me, both the affair is not terminated and the client who has had the affair has not disclosed the affair to his or her partner, then I will be forced to terminate couple/marriage therapy. I will respect the confidentiality of the person who had the affair and not disclose it, but I will terminate therapy for a very general reason and refer the couple elsewhere. This is not done out of judgment to the person who has had the affair, but as a marriage/couple therapist my primary concern is with the relationship. As mentioned earlier, not openly disclosing an affair and / or not ending an affair is often detrimental to the relationship.

This same procedure will be used for members of couples who share very serious secrets with me in private such as, but not limited to: Sexually Transmitted Diseases, undisclosed credit card or gambling debts, secret internet pornography addictions. These rules are subject to change if the laws change. As a marriage and family therapist I do not keep secrets as this is often detrimental to the marriage and to the family.

Respecting the privacy of children and teenagers while working with parents can also be a challenge. Outside of special and rare circumstances, I typically don't see a child under 10 without at least one parent or guardian present. I encourage all children and teenagers to be seen together as a family, as it is my belief and experience that this is the most helpful way for many teenagers to deal with family and relationship concerns. If a minor discloses information to me in

private that provides evidence that the minor is engaging in risky or dangerous behaviors such as sexual activity under the age of 16, unprotected sex, risky sexual behaviors, drug use, or criminal activity then in most situations I am obligated to share this information with the minor's parents and, depending on the situation, Child Protective Services may need to be notified. Parents also have a legal right to access their minor child's records.

Gottman Method Couple Therapy

The Gottman Method of Couple Therapy is based on Dr. John Gottman's research that began the 1970s and continues to this day. The research has focused on what makes relationships succeed or fail. From this research, Drs. John and Julie Gottman have created a method of therapy that is a practical approach for improving clients' relationships.

This method is designed to help teach specific tools to deepen friendship and intimacy in your relationship. To help you productively manage conflicts, you will be given methods to manage "resolvable problems" and dialogue about "gridlocked" (or perpetual) issues. We will also work together to help you appreciate your friendship's strengths and to gently navigate through its vulnerabilities.

The Gottman Method of couple therapy has five stages

1) Assessment

- a. The treatment phase is about developing a complex understanding of the situation which will aid in developing a treatment plan. There will be no interventions or recommendations at this point in therapy.
- b. One intake interview together –focusing on areas of concern, a relationship history and hopes for counseling.
- c. Each couple does an individual session –focusing on each person's individual background and to share their own thoughts and feelings about the relationship.
- d. The couple will provide me with an e-mail address to complete some questionnaires specifically designed by the Gottman's to aid in understanding the issues involved and to help mold the treatment planning process.
- e. After the assessment session, I will discuss my recommendations for treatment based on the interview together and individual interviews and the information provided in the questionnaires. Together we will mutually come up with goals for counseling.

2) Treatment

- a. Most of the work will involve sessions where you will be seen together as a couple. However, there may be times when individual sessions are recommended. I may also give you exercises to practice between sessions.
- b. Treatment will be based upon principles discovered by the Gottman's long term research following marriages and discovering patterns related to marriages that were successful and marriages that were not successful. These principles are organized in the Gottman's theory called the "Sound Marital House."
- c. The length of therapy will be determined by your specific needs and goals. In the course of therapy, we will establish points at which to evaluate your satisfaction and progress. I will also encourage you to raise any questions or concerns that you have about therapy at any time.

3) Phasing Out of Therapy

- a. In the later stage of therapy, we will "phase out," or meet less frequently, in order

for you to test out new relationship skills and to prepare for termination of the therapy.

4) **Termination**

- a. Although you may terminate therapy whenever you wish, it is most helpful to have at least one session together to summarize progress, define the work that remains, and say goodbye. If at any point after termination the need for additional therapy arises please contact me and we can either set up an appointment or I can help make a referral if appropriate.

5) **Outcome Evaluation**

- a. The outcome-evaluation phase, as per the Gottman Method, four follow-up sessions are planned: one after six months, one after twelve months, one after eighteen months, and one after two years. These sessions have been shown through research to significantly decrease the chances of relapse into previous unhelpful patterns. The purpose of these follow-up sessions then will be to fine-tune any of your relationship skills if needed and to evaluate the effectiveness of therapy received.

Please write or call the following number in the event you would like to file a complaint regarding your counseling services. This address and phone number should not be used for any other purpose.

Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs
Enforcement Division Allegations Section
P.O. Box 30670
Lansing, MI 48909
(517) 373-9196

1) **What to expect from counseling**

- a. I will spend about 5-10 minutes discussing disclosure statement and answering any questions in the first session.
- b. In individual counseling I spend the first session discussing what brings you in to 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.
- c. 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.
- d. **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**

- a. I have a master's degree in Counseling Psychology at WMU
- b. I am supervised by a fully licensed Psychology, Bob Sheppard, and marriage and family therapy, Nancy Curtis
- c. 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.
- d. 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**

- a. 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.
- b. I cannot keep private any expression of immediate and certain intentions to harm or kill yourself or other people.

4) **General privacy**

- a. If we see one another in public I cannot initiate a conversation in order to respect your privacy.
- b. **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.
- c. 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**

- a. You are responsible for your copays and deductible payments. Copayments are expected at the time of service.
 - b. 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.
 - c. 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.
 - d. 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.
 - e. **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.
 - f. **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**
- a) You may leave me a voicemail 24 hours a day by contacting the main line at 269-372-4140, extension 340.
 - b) 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.
 - c) In the event of a crisis after hours, there is help available.
 - a. For Kalamazoo residents under 18, you can contact Mobile Crisis Response (MRC) by calling 269-373-6000 or 1-888-373-6200
MRC will meet with you in your home or elsewhere in Kalamazoo County to work through a personal or family crisis.
 - b. 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.
 - c. 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>
 - d) If you feel like you or someone you know is in immediate danger of harming themselves call 911 immediately.
 - e) 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.
 - f) 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/#>

Please Sign Below

By signing below I certify that I have been informed and understand all items on Paul Hoskins's disclosures statement. Paul Hoskins, MA, LLP, LPC, LLMFT answered any questions that I may have had about confidentiality and other issues discussed in this document.

Client Name (Please Print):

Date:

Client Signature or guardian signature:

Date:

Paul Hoskins, MA, LLP, LPC, LLMFT

Date:
