

Jacki Nadeau, LCSW
Clinical Therapist

Informed Consent for Psychotherapy

The therapeutic relationship is unique in that it is a highly personal and at the same time, a contractual agreement. I believe that for therapy to be effective, both you and I must be actively involved in developing treatment goals and assessing progress. Given this, it is important for us to reach a clear understanding about how our relationship will work, and what each of us can expect. This consent will provide a clear framework for our work together and will clarify the guidelines for our therapeutic relationship.

Client's Rights and Responsibilities

You have the right to choose a therapist who best suits your needs and life pursuits. You may ask questions about treatment and you may choose to terminate therapy at any time. If you are having a medical or mental health emergency, outside of session, it is important that you get yourself to your local hospitals' emergency department, call 911, or call the statewide crisis hotline at 1-888-568-1112. Thereafter, you can call me or have the crisis worker call me about the status of your situation.

Client's Bill of Rights

You have the right to be treated with courtesy, dignity and respect at all times. You have the right to examine your records, when in your best interest at any reasonable time, and to add written comments to clarify information you believe is inaccurate or incomplete. You have the right to be informed of the cost of professional services before receiving services. You have the right to be informed of the benefits and consequences of any therapeutic interventions prior to implementation. You have the right to refuse any recommended services. You have the right to an individualized service plan, developed by you and I, based on your needs and personal goals.

I do not discriminate against clients because of any of these factors: age, sex, family/marital status, race, color, religious beliefs, place of residence, veteran status, physical disability, health status, sexual orientation, gender identity or criminal record unrelated to present level of danger. If you believe you have been discriminated against, please bring this matter to my attention immediately.

Scheduling and Cancellation

I make every effort to maintain scheduled appointments with my clients. I ask that you also maintain a commitment to meet when we agree or notify me in advance when a change is needed. I believe the success of our work is based on the ability of the client and myself to follow a set of agreements which we have developed together. **Keeping appointments is one of the important agreements that enable us to work in an**

environment of mutual trust and respect.Your appointment session is exclusively for you, therefore, extending that session due to lateness is often not possible.

I have the following policy:

I request that you please attend our scheduled appointments on time. If you are late for an appointment, please notify me via text message, email, or by leaving a voicemail. This way we can establish a plan on how to proceed. Sometimes things occur that are out of our control. In these events, your appointment will be shortened and will end at the scheduled time. **If you are more than 10 minutes late the appointment will be cancelled, and the FULL session fee will apply.** If you need to reschedule or cancel, please provide a 24-hour notice. You have the option to request a telehealth session, online, based on your insurance coverage in the event that you cannot make it into the office for an in-person session. **Without a 24-hour notice,** or without a warranted reason, a missed fee will apply. If this occurs again, I may proceed with discharge to make the space available for other clients.

There is a missed appointment fee for the FULL cost of the session for any unexcused appointments missed or cancelled without a 24-hour notice. You can leave a voicemail message to cancel your appointment ahead of time, as well. Your provider can be reached by voicemail or by text. I check my messages, frequently, and will return your call or text as soon as possible. If you are experiencing an emergency, please call 911, or the Crisis Line at 1-888-568-1112 or go to the nearest hospital emergency room.

Record Keeping

I am required to keep records about your treatment. These records help ensure the quality and continuity of your care, as well as provide evidence that the services you receive meet the appropriate standards of care. Your records are maintained in an electronic health record (EHR) system.

Dual Relationships

Therapy should never involve sexual, business or any other dual relationships that could impair my objectivity, clinical judgement, therapeutic effectiveness or could be exploitative in nature. It is possible, during the course of your treatment, I may become aware of other preexisting relationships that may impact our work together. In that case, I will do my best to resolve these situations responsibly and ethically, but this may entail our needing to stop working together. Please discuss this with me if you have any questions or concerns.

Telephone and Email Accessibility

If you need to contact me between sessions, please leave a message on my voicemail, send me a text message, or email me. My email system is HIPAA compliant and incoming text messages are confidential, and password protected. I am often not immediately available; however, I will attempt to reply to your message as soon as possible. If you are experiencing an emergency, please call 911, or the Crisis Line at 1-888-568-1112 or go to the nearest hospital emergency room.

You may choose to receive appointment reminders via text message or email. Please consider who may have access to your text messages or emails before choosing to communicate via either method.

Social Media and Telecommunications

Due to the importance of your confidentiality and the importance of minimizing dual relationships, I do not accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking site (Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram etc.). I believe that adding clients as friends or contacts on these sites can compromise your confidentiality and our respective privacy. It may also blur the boundaries of our therapeutic relationship. If you have questions about this, please bring them up when we meet and we can talk more about it.

Community and Public Guidelines

If we see each other accidentally outside of the therapy office, I will not acknowledge you first. Your right to privacy and confidentiality is of the utmost importance to me, and I do not wish to jeopardize your privacy. However, if you acknowledge me first, I will be more than happy to speak briefly with you but feel it appropriate not to engage in any lengthy discussions in public or outside of the therapy office.

Parents/Guardians

When working with children and adolescents, communication with guardians/parents is vital. In the case of separated or divorced parents, both parents must consent to treatment unless there is a specific court order stating otherwise. Parents have a right to know how treatment is progressing so decisions can be made about the minor's care; however, the minor has the right to a certain level of confidentiality to facilitate development of the therapeutic relationship and effective intervention. A child's assent/consent, in keeping with their developmental level, will be sought when information is shared, unless urgency precludes same.

Minors

If you are a minor, your parents may be legally entitled to some information about your treatment. I will discuss with you and your parent's what information is appropriate for them to receive, and which issues are more appropriately kept confidential.

Risks and Benefits

The purposes of Psychotherapy are generally used to help someone address, cope with and accept major life changes and stressors such as relationship conflict, traumatic events and stressors, workplace stress and substance abuse. As with any powerful treatment, there are some risks as well as many benefits.

In therapy, there is a risk that clients will, for a time, have uncomfortable levels of strong emotions or negative feelings. These feelings could be disruptive in areas of your life. Even with our best efforts, there is a risk that therapy may not work out well for you. While you consider these risks, you should also know the benefits of therapy have been demonstrated in hundreds of well-designed research studies. In therapy, people have an opportunity to learn new strategies to manage and understand difficult feelings, experience an improved mood, solve challenging life problems, and enjoy improved interpersonal relationships.

Session Duration

The time we spend in session is determined by your insurance company or collaboratively between us if you are self-paying. Most appointments run approximately 55 minutes.

Termination & Discharge

Our work will have specific goals with a projected timeline for completion of objectives, which we will discuss thoroughly and agree upon during our initial appointment. Ending relationships can be difficult. Therefore, it is important to have a termination process to achieve some closure. The appropriate length of the termination depends on the length and intensity of the treatment. I may terminate treatment after appropriate discussion with you and a termination process if I determine that the treatment is not being effectively used or if you are in default on payment.

If treatment is terminated for any reason or you request another provider, I can support you in this transition and refer you. You may also choose someone on your own or from another referral source. Should you fail to schedule an appointment within 30 days of your last attended session, unless other arrangements have been made in advance, for legal and ethical reasons, I must consider the professional relationship discontinued. I will not attempt to reach you as my ethical responsibility is to respect clients' right to autonomy and self-determination in the seeking and following through of professional support. I will discharge you from my services and you will no longer be considered an active client of mine.