



Sarah Ward  
BA (Hons) MBACP (Accred)

## Therapeutic Agreement

This is a mutual agreement negotiated between counsellor and client prior to the commencement of counselling. It sets out the responsibilities of the counsellor towards her clients, and also the client's responsibilities in the counselling relationship.

### **Introduction:**

I work using an integrated model of counselling. I value the influences of the humanistic and person centred approaches although I may draw on other theories and techniques. This gives me the freedom and flexibility to work in a way which best suits you as an individual and by working together we can identify and understand possible areas to look at more closely. I believe the relationship between client and counsellor is at the heart of the counselling process. My aim is to help you to see your life more clearly and to help you make choices and decisions.

### **Confidentiality:**

This is a very important aspect of the counselling relationship. Everything that is discussed in the counselling session is kept in the strictest confidence. If we are working through online counselling I will be using Zoom which has end-to-end encryption. For security both the platform I will be using, Zoom, and my laptop have end-to-end encryption. Recording functionality will be disabled, and meetings will be password protected to prevent unauthorised participants from entering.

As a member of the BACP (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy), I am required to have regular supervision and will need to discuss my work with a supervisor on a regular basis. However, I will not disclose anything that would enable you to be identified.

If there is convincing evidence that you intend to harm yourself or others, or that you intend to breach national security, I might need to break confidentiality by informing your doctor, or in serious cases the police, but ideally this would only take place with your prior knowledge.

Confidentiality will be broken if necessary in the interest of public health and safety.

In the event that I might keep brief notes after a session, these will be anonymised and securely stored, so that you would not be identified from the notes.

All texts and emails are deleted as soon as they are dealt with and contact details are deleted from my phone as soon as sessions are concluded, and be aware that I will not respond to social media requests.

### **Sessions:**

Sessions last 50 minutes, and usually occur weekly at the same time. Payment has been agreed at £50 and is payable at least 24 hours prior to the session by BACS (Bankers Automated Clearing System). The whole session time belongs to you, whether you choose to attend or not. If you arrive part way through your allotted time, I will see you for the remainder of the time. Any sessions missed or cancelled (with less than 24 hours' notice) will have been paid for at the

agreed rate and non-refundable. However, in the case of an emergency or sudden ill health, the payment will be carried forward to the next appointment.

If you miss 2 consecutive sessions **without contact**, I will assume that you are no longer able to attend and withdraw your space on the therapeutic programme.

If I am unwell or unable to attend the session, I will give you as much notice as possible and offer you an alternative appointment.

**For online sessions:** Please note that any inappropriate behaviours or inappropriate dressing will result in the termination of the session with immediate effect. If this should happen, I reserve the right to charge you in full for the session.

Although Zoom has the facility to record sessions, this feature WILL NOT be used by either of us unless we have discussed this in detail previously.

In the event of Technological Breakdowns, we agree that interruptions may happen during our sessions together online and that we both will be active in trying to minimize this.

If our session is affected by technology problems that affect our ability to communicate, we should both:

- Log out of the system
- Wait a few minutes
- Attempt to log back in (if this successful, we will continue)
- If this doesn't work, I will contact you by phone to check on your wellbeing and also to arrange a new date for the session and you will not be charged for the current session.

### **Duration of Counselling:**

You will be offered an initial counselling contract of 10 weeks in duration. At any time we can review whether more sessions are needed or whether to draw towards a healthy conclusion. If you feel that you want to end the relationship before the 10 weeks, it is important that you are able to talk about this first.

### **Complaints:**

I aim to provide a safe, therapeutic environment for my clients and as a member of the BACP I am committed to offering good practice and am bound by its Ethical Framework and Complaints Procedure which can be viewed online at [www.bacp.co.uk/about-us/protecting-the-public/professional-conduct/](http://www.bacp.co.uk/about-us/protecting-the-public/professional-conduct/).

My insurance includes personal indemnity and public liability. If you are unhappy with my service, you can contact the BACP either by email: [bacp@bacp.co.uk](mailto:bacp@bacp.co.uk) or phone: 01455 883300.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Client

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Counsellor

Date \_\_\_\_\_