

Sabrena Swain, M.A., MFT
Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist
License # MFC 42517

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Policies and Fee Agreement

I look forward to providing you with quality treatment. The first step in the treatment plan is to develop a working relationship with you that is free of any misunderstanding. This contract is provided as a clear statement of my policies. It is imperative that you accurately understand each statement below before signing. I will be glad to answer any questions you may have, so please ask.

Confidentiality

Everything that you say to your therapist during treatment is considered confidential. The laws of California and the ethical standards of the profession stress the importance of confidentiality to maximize the conditions necessary for quality therapy to occur.

Limits of Confidentiality – The following situations allow or require the breach of confidentiality.

1. When you sign a form authorizing your therapist to release information to a designated party or to allow your therapist to acquire information from another party.
2. Submitting billing for psychotherapeutic services to your health insurance company or employee assistance program entails signing an authorization to release information. Technically, this allows the company a right to inquire about anything that has occurred during treatment.
3. If you give your therapist reason to believe that you are in danger of harming yourself or another person or you are unable to care for yourself, it may be necessary for confidentiality to be breached in order to contact the proper authorities so that safety may be insured.
4. If you inform your therapist of known or suspected child abuse, elder abuse or dependent adult abuse, state law requires that the proper parties be notified immediately.
5. If your therapist receives a subpoena to appear in court or to provide records of treatment to the court, your right to confidentiality is voided.

Financial Considerations

Individual therapy sessions are forty-five minutes long. My fee is \$110.00 per session. Couple therapy and EMDR sessions are 75 minutes long. My fee is \$160.00 per session. The client is expected to assume full responsibility for the payment of the fee (unless the client is utilizing preauthorized employee benefits). The fee is due at the beginning of each session.

In addition to regular sessions, billing will occur for the following:

1. Missing a scheduled appointment without 24 hours advance notice for reasons other than sudden illness or catastrophe. You will be billed for the full fee if you cancel a session with less than 24 hours notice unless your therapist can schedule another client in your time. Neither an insurance company nor any other co-payment source will be billed for a missed session.
2. Phone conversations and email communication will be prorated based upon a \$110.00 per hour fee.
3. If the therapist is subpoenaed or requested to appear in court, a deposition or provide a written report or assessment, the fee will be prorated based upon a \$110.00 per hour fee. The fee for written reports is due prior to the release of the document. There is a fee schedule for court appearances that will be provided when necessary and the fee is due 5 days prior to the court appearance.

Between Sessions

As your therapist, I strive to be reasonably available when major crisis arise between sessions. It is the client's responsibility to limit crisis calls to legitimate emergencies. You may call the Sutter Center for Psychiatry at (916) 386-3620 if the emergency occurs on a weekend, holiday or during usual sleep hours. I will retrieve my messages from my voice mail several times a day between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. weekdays.

Promptness

Your therapist attempts to carefully schedule clients in order to begin each session promptly at the appointed time. The session will end at the scheduled time if the client arrives late. If your therapist begins a session late due to her own tardiness, the session will be extended to provide the client with the full 45 or 75 minute session. Neither the client nor the therapist is expected to wait longer than 15 minutes past the scheduled time for the start of the session unless there has been previous notice.

Private Practice

Your therapist is the sole practitioner in private practice and is the sole owner. She is affiliated with a group of private practice therapists with common goals and standards that share office space.

The Counseling Process

Please note that the success of counseling depends, in large part, upon the willingness of the client to desire change, share thoughts and feelings honestly, explore behavioral patterns and relational dynamics, and to experiment with alternative ways of perceiving and interacting with others. Initially, as a result of this exploration, it may feel as though "things are getting worse instead of better". Keep in mind that even though this may be uncomfortable, these feelings are usually temporary and reflect a sign of progress.

I have thoroughly read the above agreement and understand each policy statement, signified by my signature below.

Signature _____ Date _____

Signature _____ Date _____