# *Therapy Agreement*

Please find details of my therapy agreement which sets the parameters for working safely and confidentially.

* As a CBT Therapist, my purpose is to create a comfortable, safe and confidential space in which you can explore whatever you decide to bring to therapy. My role is to offer as much care, attention and expertise as I can.
* Therapy usually takes place on a weekly basis excluding pre-arranged holidays and illness, and is generally open-ended unless you would prefer a fixed number of sessions. The length of a session is 60 minutes.
* If I plan to take time off, I will notify you at least a month ahead or with as much advance warning as possible.
* The fee is payable via bank transfer before the appointment. The appointment will be unable to go ahead until payment is received.
* If you need to cancel a session, 48 hours’ notice is required or the full fee becomes payable.
* Contact between sessions should be minimal and used for the purposes of administration only.
* In an emergency I will endeavour to return your call as soon as possible. If an emergency arises that is life-threatening or needs immediate attention you agree to contact the emergency services on 999, go to your nearest hospital A&E department or phone a crisis help line such as the [Samaritans](https://www.samaritans.org/) on 116 123 (for UK Residents). Non UK Residents please get the necessary support in your country via emergency services or known crisis help line.
* While the therapeutic relationship is friendly, it is a professional relationship and in order to protect its boundaries and work in an ethical way, it is considered inappropriate to engage either formally or informally through social networking sites or forums. This protects the confidentiality of the therapuetic relationship.
* You can terminate therapy whenever you wish but suggest committing to at least six sessions once therapy is embarked upon before you decide not to continue. In the case of longer term-therapy, I also suggest spending a number of sessions working towards an ending.
* Therapy is a fully confidential activity. As part of my professional ethical code of practice I have regular clinical supervision where I discuss my work. Your identity is kept anonymous and confidentiality maintained. I also record session notes and these are also anonymised and kept securely for five years after you have left therapy in case you decide to return. Any other personal information e.g address, telephone number, information disclosed on the pre-therapy questionnaire is also strictly confidential and stored securely. If, however, I feel the need to consult anybody else about your case e.g. your GP, I will only do so after discussion with you first, and with your written consent.
* The limits to confidentiality include the following: 1. Where you give consent for the confidence to be broken. 2. Where I am compelled by a court of law. 3. Where the information “is of such gravity that confidentiality cannot be maintained” i.e. in cases of fraud, crime, terrorism and where there is a case of “serious physical harm” to others. 4. Where there are risks to children as defined under the Child Protection Act. 5. Where there is a risk of suicide or serious harm to self in which case I may need to discuss this with my supervisor and/or someone else outside and wherever possible, would endeavor to inform you first. If I need to contact your doctor I will need written as well as verbal consent.
* Code and ethics of practice: I work within the BABCP’s ethical framework, details of which are available on their website.

## *In addition to these points, for online therapy:*

* Online therapy is delivered either by video or voice call. Video and voice are delivered via Microsoft Teams. This platform is securely encrypted. Video and voice sessions are never recorded and the content of in chat messages in sessions, deleted.
* Only communicate through a computer that you know is safe and where confidentiality can be ensured. Be sure to fully exit all online sessions and emails.
* It is important that the environment you choose to work in allows for your physical and emotional safety as well as your privacy. This helps to ensure our work together remains confidential.
* Working online means you don’t necessarily travel to and from your appointment and so may not have the travel time to prepare yourself before and after a session. With this in mind, it is good practice to prepare yourself for a few minutes before you start an online session so that you feel ready to start our work together. Likewise, after a session, it is a good idea to give yourself some time to readjust before you go back to your daily life.If we are working via video, it is also a good idea to have your screen set to full view. This helps to create the experience of presence or ‘being there’ in the therapeutic space.
* It is important that you are aware of what we agree to do in the event of a technology breakdown. Should either of us experience technical difficulties, we both endeavour to text straight away and try to reconnect online within 10 minutes. If after 10 minutes you or I are still unable to connect, we can re-schedule free of charge. Please note I will never intentionally end a session prematurely.
* As the client you understand that online therapy is not appropriate if you are experiencing a crisis or having suicidal or homicidal thoughts. As stated previously, if a life-threatening crisis should occur, you agree to contact a crisis helpline, call 999 or go to a hospital A&E department, or go to appropriate services if you are overseas.

By completing this form you agree to the above therapy agreement terms.

Name:

Date:

Signature: