

Counselling Contract

For online counselling provided by Hanna Wikström

The nature of the counselling I practise

I am a qualified counsellor and registered member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). I have trained as a humanistic counsellor, meaning that I believe counselling is most effective when the client is given the space and time to talk about whatever it is they want to talk about. I hope to help my clients feel better and become more self-aware by providing a safe, empathic and non-judgmental space where they can be themselves and feel able to share their thoughts and feelings openly.

You can read more about my counselling approach on my website (www.hannawikstrom.com), where you can also find important information such as my Privacy Notice, an electronic version of this contract, and information about my ethical commitments to clients.

Confidentiality

Anything you say in your counselling sessions is confidential, meaning it stays between me and you. I may refer to my clients during supervision, which is where I meet with my counselling supervisor to discuss client cases. In accordance with my membership of the BACP, supervision is mandatory for me to attend. It supports me in being the best counsellor I can be so I can be of as much help to my clients as possible.

The only time I would break confidentiality is if I sense there is a risk of harm to you or someone else, or if required to do so by law (this is why I ask for your GP's contact details as part of this contract). I will always discuss with you before sharing any information outside of the counselling space.

Data protection

In the course of our work together, I may end up keeping personally sensitive data about you, such as your name and contact details, and notes I make of our sessions. In accordance with the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), I store any information I have about you in a safe and secure place. For a comprehensive outline of my commitment to your personal data privacy, please refer to my Privacy Notice, which can be found on my website.

The online counselling format and practical considerations

- We will be using the platform zoom for our online counselling sessions, as this is a well-established and reputable online video conferencing tool. If you prefer to use another platform instead, I may need to seek your written permission, depending on the platform suggested (for example, the counselling community does not consider Skype to be as secure as zoom, which might be relevant considering the confidential nature of our conversations).
- I will email you a link to our zoom counselling meeting “room” on the day of our session. You will need a password to enter the meeting, which, for security, I will provide in a separate email.
- With the use of any technology, we might well encounter some hiccoughs: broken internet connections, poor sound or video quality etc. Should our connection fail, or we struggle to hear or see one another for more than 5 minutes, I suggest we move the remainder of that session to the telephone. In this instance, I will close the online meeting and call you on whichever number you have provided me.
- I commit to providing a safe and confidential space for you to talk when we meet virtually. It is your responsibility to ensure you have a similarly confidential space wherever you are, where you can talk without being overheard or interrupted.
- Cyber security is also relevant for us. This includes both of us ensuring whatever laptop or device we use has appropriate malware / virus protection (with the understanding that full cyber security can never be entirely under either of our control). I would also suggest being mindful if anyone else in your household uses your device between counselling sessions, in case confidential information relating to our sessions could be identified without your consent.

Practical arrangements

We have arranged to see each other on a regular basis. Our contract is open-ended, meaning we have not agreed on a set number of total counselling sessions, but will check in regularly to assess how we feel our work together is going.

Each counselling session will be 50 minutes long, at a cost of £50 per session. This is payable via bank transfer within 2 working days of the session. Our sessions will start and finish at an agreed time; if you arrive late, the session will still end on time.

Cancellation policy

Should you need to cancel or rearrange a session, please provide at least 24 hours' notice. Less than 24 hours' notice will likely incur a charge of the full fee for the missed session. Please contact me by phone (07958 652545) or email (contact@hannawikstrom.com) to cancel or rearrange a session.

If I should ever need to rearrange one of our sessions, I will aim to give as much notice as possible - ideally over a week so there's time to find an alternative time and/or date, should we wish.

Getting the most out of counselling

Although counselling has the potential to relieve distress, increase self-awareness and improve quality of life, it can be difficult at times. Talking about personal issues and revisiting painful memories can be uncomfortable, and things may feel worse before they feel better. Ultimately, sticking with counselling through these moments, by maintaining regular sessions and engaging in the work, can be hugely rewarding and helpful.

Asking for help is brave, and taking that first step can be difficult. This contract exists, in part, to reassure you about my counselling approach, and to clearly lay out what to expect from counselling, as well as what is expected of you. I hope this results in you getting the most out of our work together.

By completing and returning this contract to me, I understand that you have read and accept the above information, and that you understand that this contract will be in place for the duration of the time we meet for counselling. Thank you, and I look forward to working with you.

Client's name

Client's signature

Date

Phone no.

Email address

Date of birth

GP name, address, phone number

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Are you on any medications? If so, what?