**Online Counselling Agreement**

**About me:**

My name is Sarah Harrison. I am a MBACP registered Integrative counsellor. I work within the BACP ‘Ethical Framework for Counsellors’, and also to the BACP Guidelines for Online Counselling and Psychotherapy.

Information relating to both of these documents can be found at: [www.bacp.co.uk](http://www.bacp.co.uk)

I work in private practice offering both face to face and online counselling. I have worked with clients ranging from age 12, up to and beyond retirement. I have the fullest commitment to offering a service which is welcoming to all backgrounds in a supportive and non-discriminatory manner.

**What is Online Counselling?**

Online counselling provides an opportunity to explore your personal difficulties in a confidential and supportive environment. This may include expressing feelings that are painful, and which many of us experience at certain times in our lives. When this happens, it can be difficult to stay positive and cope with everyday life. Online counselling gives you the opportunity to access counselling support at a time and in a place which is convenient to you.

**What sort of issues can I contact you about?**

Online counselling may be able to help with a wide range of issues including; abuse, anxiety, stress, depression, eating difficulties, loneliness, relationship problems, bereavement, self-esteem, sexual orientation, sexual abuse, discrimination, pet bereavement and many more.

Where I consider that online counselling would not be the most suitable means of support I will make every effort to assist you in a referral to a suitable alternative source of support.

**What does the service offer?**

We will agree an ‘appointment time’ which will be the time agreed to meet via video call. I tend to use Zoom as a first choice but if this is not possible for you we can discuss other options.

**About the way I work**

I will provide, to the best of my ability, online counselling opportunities that endeavour to create a supportive, non-judgmental environment in which you will be given time and space to understand and gain insight into your situation. This process can foster growth and lead to positive change in your life. I will not be in a position to offer advice. There may be occasions where I ask questions this may be to seek a clearer view of your difficulty or to clarify a misunderstanding in our communication. You are free to ignore my questions and responses, or alternatively spend time during or between sessions reflecting on them.

In the event of a misunderstanding arising for either party, it is advisable that we seek to clarify the cause of a miscommunication together.

**Confidentiality and Security**

The content of your emails will not be communicated with a third party except for the purposes of supervision of my work. In this instance your identity will not be revealed.

At the end of our counselling agreement copies of our exchanges will be stored securely offline for a period of 5 years and then destroyed by shredding after this time. I am a registered Data Controller and abide by the regulations imposed by such procedures. My registration number is: ZA671909

I am legally bound to make disclosure to the police authorities if a client reveals that they are intending to cause serious risk of harm to others. In addition, if at any point during the counselling you were in need of emergency support, I may ask for your consent to contact your GP, or recommend alternative avenues of support other than online counselling.

Please take time to read through the guidelines on my website for ensuring privacy and security of your online communication with me. It’s available by following this hyperlink: ?????

**Guidelines for Emergency Contact**

Online counselling cannot provide an emergency service for clients.

In the event of an emergency arising whilst you are engaged in online work or if you were experiencing suicidal thoughts, I would discuss with you the appropriate support that you could access during this period.

If you found yourself in a major crisis and were considering serious self-harm it would be vital to get immediate help. This could include contacting your GP, or your nearest accident and emergency service (A & E).

You could also call the Samaritans on 116 123 or email jo@samaritans.org (email emergency support). All personal information disclosed will be kept confidential and not used for any purposes other than a counselling record.

This agreement shall be construed and governed in all respects in accordance with the laws of England and Wales and any dispute or differences in relation to this agreement shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the English Courts.

All client material is treated in complete confidence and is removed from my computer at the end of our work together. Electronic records are stored on a password protected memory stick and kept in a locked filing cabinet. No identifying names or material is retained on these records as a client ID number is used to replace such information.

It is not permissible to publicise the content of our exchanges or share them with a third party.

If you have any questions regarding the content of the agreement, or would like further information, please contact me at: sarahharrisoncounselling@gmail.com or telephone: 07544 981 480