

INFORMED CONSENT FOR COUPLES COUNSELING

Couples counseling starts with an assessment of the relationship, past and present. Understand that information discussed in couples counseling is for therapeutic purpose and is NOT intended for use in any legal proceedings involving the partners.

The couple agrees NOT to subpoena the therapist to testify for or against either party or to provide records in a court of action.

By entering into couples counseling, the couple acknowledges that working toward change may involve experiencing difficult and intense feelings, some of which may be painful in order to reach therapy goals. The couple accepts that such changes can have both negative and positive effects and agrees to clarify and evaluate potential effects of changes with the therapist. At any time, either partner may say PASS to indicate he/she needs a break and does not wish to discuss that specific issue further at that time. At any time, either partner may ask for a break to step out of the room to engage in self-regulation and return when ready to resume the session. If an individual wishes to PASS or take a break, he/she must do so with respect to the partner and the therapist by calmly excusing oneself and indicating he/she will return as promptly as possible. "Storming out" may result in the therapist not allowing that individual to return to the session that day.

There will be times when the therapist may appear on either person's side but is really on the side of the relationship. If the therapist sees either member of the couple for individual sessions as part of couples counseling, confidentiality will apply to that individual; the other partner acknowledges that confidentiality will be upheld and agrees to respect the boundaries of that confidentiality. At any point in time, the therapist may wish to speak one-on-one with either partner and ask the other partner to step out of the session for a period of time. If this occurs, the couple understands that the therapist is doing this for clinical reasons and will defer to the therapist's judgment. Again, confidentiality will apply during all one-on-one meetings.

If the relationship ends and either or both partners wish to recontract with the therapist for individual counseling, the decision with whom to continue working is at the therapist's discretion. In some circumstances a referral to another therapist will be made.

During the course of the initial assessment or ongoing therapy sessions, issues may present themselves which could necessitate a postponement or termination of couples counseling. These issues include, but are not limited to, domestic violence, substance abuse/chemical dependency, or untreated serious mental illness of either partner. The therapist will use clinical judgment to assess the appropriateness of couples counseling. In some instances, a referral to another therapist will be made.

Couples counseling sessions will be 90 minutes in length, unless otherwise indicated by the therapist. Since session time is limited to 90 minutes, try to be concise in presenting your thoughts and feelings. Counseling works best if each partner strives for closure in communications, that is, a point of satisfaction that one has said what one needs to say and has asked for what one needs. Extended sessions or marathon sessions (i.e. sessions lasting longer than 90 minutes) are available. Please discuss with therapist if longer sessions are desired. Additional charges may apply.

It is imperative that BOTH partners arrive to all designated “couples counseling” sessions. Your session will begin only when BOTH partners are present. It is your responsibility to arrive on time to your couples counseling session; if the couple is late, the session will still end on time. If either partner is unable to attend, the session will be canceled and subject to late cancellation fees if canceled with less than 24 hours notice.

Your signature below indicates that you have read this Agreement and agree to its terms.

Signature of First Partner

Date

Signature of Second Partner

Date