



### TELEPHONE AND TEXT -BASED COUNSELLING INFORMATION

Hello. Thank you very much for your enquiry about counselling sessions. I am going to give you a bit more information about how I work and telephone/text counselling sessions, in order for you to decide whether it is suitable for you.

I qualified in 2015 with a CPCAB Level 4 Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling. I then went on to gain a further qualification of CPCAB Level 5 Diploma in Psychotherapeutic Counselling (2018). Last year I received my Accreditation Award with the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).

As is required by the BACP, I have 90 minutes supervision per month for my counselling work. I also work according to the Ethical Guidelines (2018) set out by the BACP.

I work with a Pluralistic Model of Counselling. This means that we look together at what you would like to gain from counselling and then I give you different options about how we can work towards what you are requiring. We regularly review how the counselling is going, to ensure that it is meeting your needs and expectations.

I work with an open number of sessions. This means that you decide how long you have counselling for. This will be helped by setting aims or goals for counselling and then we can review every 6 sessions (or whenever you choose to) how the counselling is going for you.

My fees are £20 for the first session and then £40 for subsequent sessions. I request that fees are paid in advance of the session.

### WHAT IS TELEPHONE/TEXT COUNSELLING?

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

### WHAT SORT OF ISSUES CAN I SPEAK TO YOU ABOUT ?.

Telephone/text counselling can help with a wide range of issues including anxiety, stress, depression, low self-esteem, relationship problems, bereavement and abuse.

Not all types of issues can be resolved through telephone/text counselling and I will advise you if face to face counselling, or some other form of support might be more suitable for you. If this situation arises, I will make every effort to assist you in a referral to a suitable, alternative source of support.

I am not able to provide telephone/text counselling to a person who is under the age of 18. If this applies to you, I can help with information on referral to other agencies providing face to face counselling services or other services which is specifically directed at a younger age group.

### WHAT DOES THE SERVICE OFFER?

We will agree on an “appointment time” which will be the time agreed to meet on Zoom , Signal or whatever platform we have decided to meet on. This might be weekly or every other week. As I will need time to read your email reply to this, I will need you to send it at least 24 hours before I reply with an appointment time.

I ask for payment in advance by bank transfer and once this has been made, I will email you a link to access your appointment with me if we are using Zoom . If you have made payment for a session but are unable to meet at the appointed time, I will retain the fee for the session unless we have experienced a technological breakdown which prevents us having the session. In the event of this happening we would discuss how to re-arrange the scheduled appointment.

For telephone appointments I usually use the free online platform, Zoom with the video option turned off. I also use Zoom for text-based appointments using the “chat” function with the video and audio switched off. Once the session has ended the “chat” disappears, ensuring confidentiality. This is a platform recommended by the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) for counsellors to use when working with clients.

I will provide a link for you to download the software if you don't already have it installed on your device. I would suggest that you do not reveal your full name or any personal address details while we are engaged on this platform, as this helps to maintain the privacy of the sessions.

#### BENEFITS.

- Convenience – you can create a comfortable and private space in your own home from which to attend therapy, at a time that suits you.
- You may find it easier to talk/text, focus and express yourself.
- There is a possibility of more flexibility with the timing of sessions.
- Research shows that telephone/text therapy can be as effective as face to face in-person therapy for certain people.
- Secure encryption software offers confidentiality and peace of mind.
- Your environment where you have therapy is your very own private space.

#### CHALLENGES.

- Problems with internet connection. I will share some instructions in the guidance section to help get you set up. We will decide on an alternative method of communication should an issue arise.
- Not seeing/hearing each other can mean that you don't feel an immediate connection with me.

- The visual component of seeing body language and facial expressions is not present in the relationship and it may take a bit more focus to facilitate good communication. With text the voices are also not used which can also impact on communication. These issues can be overcome, and the most important thing is that we are working in a way which you are comfortable with and suits you.

At any point you can request to change the type of sessions you are having – online, telephone or text.

### GUIDANCE

- I would encourage you to treat the session as you would an in-person session and put in place as many of the same boundaries as possible.
- Find a comfortable space with privacy, which could include somewhere in your house, garden or even in your car.
- It might help to post a note on the door if you are using a room to request that you are not disturbed unless it is an emergency.
- I encourage you to use headphones or earphones (if using the phone option) as this will keep the content of our sessions private, improves sound quality, and also minimises distractions.
- Please close other applications and browser windows on your device and put your phone on silence or turn it off, as we would do in person.
- Feel free to bring drinks such as water/tea/coffee to the session. Please avoid alcohol and drugs prior to and during a session and please do not smoke or vape during the session.
- Give yourself time after the session to process what has taken place before re-joining your family, working, or making other calls.

### CONFIDENTIALITY AND SECURITY.

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 themselves or

others. In addition, if at any point during the counselling you are in need of emergency support, I would ask for your consent to contact your GP or recommend alternative avenues of support, rather than online counselling.

With online/telephone/text counselling, it is not possible to guarantee 100% confidentiality, as we will be relying upon a 3<sup>rd</sup> party platform, in order to hold the sessions.

To minimise the risk of any breach of confidentiality, I make sure that I am aware of any updates or changes to the platforms I use. It is also very important that both of us make sure that our devices are fully updated before sessions and that we have virus protection in place.

We will also both agree to not make a recording of any kind of the session.

#### GUIDELINES FOR EMERGENCY CONTACT.

Telephone/text counselling cannot provide an emergency service for clients.

In the event of an emergency arising, whilst you are engaged in a session 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 immediate crisis and were considering serious self-harm it would be vital to get immediate help. This could include contacting your GP, or your nearest Emergency Department (E.D).

You could also call the Samaritans on 116123, email on [jo@samaritans](mailto:jo@samaritans).

If you have any other questions, please don't hesitate to contact me. If you are interested in booking a session, please can you fill out and return the Client Questions form.