

Welcome to my practice!

This document contains important information about my professional services and business policies. Please read it carefully and write down any questions you might have so that we can discuss them at our next meeting.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

Psychotherapy is not easily described in general statements. It varies depending on the personalities of the psychologist and patient, and the particular problems you bring forward. There are many different methods I may use to deal with the problems that you hope to address. Psychotherapy is not like a medical doctor visit. Instead, it calls for a very active effort on your part. In order for the therapy to be most successful, you will have to work on things we talk about both during our sessions and at home.

Since therapy often involves discussing unpleasant aspects of your life, you may experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness, and helplessness. On the other hand, psychotherapy has also been shown to have benefits for people who go through it. Therapy often leads to better relationships, solutions to specific problems, and significant reductions in feelings of distress. But there are no guarantees of what you will experience. I ask that you commit to 4 sessions before realistically evaluating the effectiveness of therapy.

Therapy involves a large commitment of time, money, and energy, so you should be very careful about the therapist you select. If you have questions about my procedures, we should discuss them whenever they arise. If your doubts persist, I will be happy to help you set up a meeting with another mental health professional for a second opinion.

The aim of therapy is to provide you, the client, with a confidential opportunity to explore personal and relational issues in safety. My role as psychotherapist is to help you through this process without judgment or telling you what to do. I may on occasions give information or offer suggestions. If at any time I feel I can no longer help you, I will offer to refer you to someone who can.

CONFIDENTIALITY

To ensure open exploration of the concerns that have brought you to therapy, I maintain confidentiality and abide by the code of ethics of the Health and Care Professions Council and British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy.

Under the same Code of Ethics, I keep client records (short summaries about what happens in session). The records will be kept for at least 7 years following our last session. Under the Data Protection Act 1998 an individual has the right to request all personal data that a Data Controller (e.g. Therapist) holds about them by making an access request. Should you want to access your personal information please make a written request and send it to: raluca@positum.co.uk.

I receive regular supervision in accordance with the HCPC and BACP Code of Ethics to provide the best possible service to you. My Supervisor abides by the same standards for

confidentiality.

I can only release information about our work to others with your written permission. But there are a few exceptions:

1. If you threaten harm to yourself or to another person
2. If we believe a child or protected adult is at risk of harm or abuse
3. If the courts instruct me to give information
4. If you share information about a proposed act of terrorism or other illegal act

If I feel that either you or someone else is in danger or at risk of harm I would first endeavour to discuss with you my decision for breaking confidentiality. Depending on the circumstances this may be your General Practitioner (GP), the individual in danger, a Social Worker and/or the Police. However, I retain the right to break confidentiality without prior consultation with you should I consider that the urgency of the situation requires me to act immediately to safeguard the physical safety of yourself or others.

Confidentiality for Couples and Groups: When couples or groups meet for relationship counselling, sometimes the clients will meet all together for counselling and sometimes they may meet individually with the therapist. When individuals attend counselling sessions the therapist will not reveal any confidential information shared in an individual session with partners, other family or group members involved in relationship counselling without the prior written permission of that individual

SESSIONS AND FEES

Sessions last approximately 50 minutes and will be every week typically on the same day and time, suitable to you and within my hours of operation. It is expected that the session will begin at the agreed time. Any session that begins after this time due to late client arrival for whatever reason cannot be extended beyond the agreed finish time. If you do not arrive or call within 15 minutes of the agreed appointment, this will be considered a cancellation and I will not be available for the remainder of the session.

In instances where you need to contact me between sessions, please send me an e-mail at raluca@positum.co.uk. I do not guarantee a response but I will read the e-mail. If you need to speak to someone immediately, please contact your GP or the Samaritans (08457 90 90 90).

Session fees are:

Individual consultations: £80.

Couples consultations: £100.

Fees are paid at each session by cash or cheque. If paying by BACS, payment must be made before the appointment.

You will be expected to pay for each session at the time it is held, unless we agree otherwise. In circumstances of unusual financial hardship, I may be willing to negotiate a fee adjustment or payment installment plan.

CANCELLATIONS

I charge for all cancelled and missed sessions. I will offer a replacement time the same week if one is available, however this is not always possible.

If for any reason I have to cancel a session I will aim to provide you with 48 hours' notice, and you will not be charged for the session. When possible I will try to offer you an alternative time.

I will give you a minimum of 2 weeks' notice of any planned holiday dates when I will be unavailable. I require (where possible) at least 2 weeks' notice from you.

I understand that your life circumstances may suddenly change. You may at any point desire or be obligated to discontinue therapy. Whatever the reason, I respect your decision but ask that you give one weeks' notice before finishing so that we have the chance to discuss your decision.