

Stay Designated

Informed Consent Addendum

1. Fees

The standard fee for each therapist is listed on our website at www.staydesignated.org and is discussed with each potential client prior to the first session. If circumstances deem it appropriate, a lower fee may be discussed with your therapist. Such circumstances may include, but not be limited to, financial hardship, change in or loss of employment, change in or loss of employment by spouse or significant other, or change in living situation. If for these or other reasons you are unable to afford the standard fee charged by your therapist, your fee may be reduced according to our sliding fee scale. This scale estimates a lower fee based on the number of people in your household and the gross monthly income of all of its members. If you do not qualify for a lower fee based on our sliding fee scale but still find the fee is a hardship, your therapist may lower the fee based on other reasonable criteria. If you still find you cannot afford the fee, your therapist may provide you with lower cost referrals.

Fees are collected prior to the start of each session and may be paid by cash, check, Visa, Mastercard, or Discover. *Stay Designated, Inc.* has a 24-hour cancellation fee policy. If you cannot attend a scheduled appointment you must notify your therapist a minimum of 24 hours in advance or you will be charged the full amount of your session fee. If you know you will be unable to pay your fees at any time, please talk with your therapist in advance. Failure to pay or incurring debt may have a negative impact on your therapeutic relationship so it is important to address this in advance. Your therapist may periodically raise his/her rate to account for rising business costs. When this occurs you will be given a minimum of 4 weeks notice.

2. Your therapist

Your therapist may be an intern and will discuss this with you in your first session. An intern is someone who has earned a master's degree or doctorate in the field of counseling, psychology, and/or marriage and family therapy and has registered with the Board of Behavioral Sciences or Board of Psychology as required by California state law. You may learn more about your therapist intern's background, education, and experience by viewing his/her biographical statement on www.staydesignated.org or by discussing this with him/her. The law requires an intern to maintain a current registration number, earn 3,000 hours, and pass examinations prior to becoming licensed. Your intern therapist is required to meet with a supervisor on a weekly basis to obtain guidance and support about therapy being performed with all of his/her clients. Your therapist intern's supervisor is required to maintain confidentiality with the same limitations as your therapist intern (please see Limits of Confidentiality). If you have additional questions about this process, please inquire with your therapist intern.

3. Therapeutic Process

Therapy is a growth process and as such it can be painful. A therapist can be a good mirror and help facilitate change but this can mean learning things about yourself you do not like. You may experience your symptoms or problems getting worse initially as feelings and issues get stirred up in sessions. This is often necessary to obtain the results you are seeking. It is important to have a realistic idea of what to expect from therapy. Your therapist will talk to you about your goals, whether they are achievable, and the frequency of sessions needed. Your therapist may talk with you about adjusting your goals for a variety of reasons. He/she may provide you with referrals to other

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service providers if needed. You have the right to withhold or withdraw consent for treatment at any time without affecting your right to future care or treatment and without risking the loss or withdrawal of any benefits to which you would otherwise be entitled. You may believe the risks outweigh the benefits or you may choose to pursue an alternative (i.e. self-help books, life coaching, pastoral counseling, etc.). Each of these has risk and benefits as well that you may discuss with your therapist. While psychotherapeutic treatment of all kinds have been found to be effective in treating a wide range of mental disorders, personal, and relational issues, there is no guarantee that all treatment of all clients will be effective. Thus while you may benefit from psychotherapy, results cannot be guaranteed or assured.

It is important you trust your therapist and feel safe in the therapeutic environment. You may, however, feel surprised by some of the feelings you experience toward your therapist and this is part of the process. Often your relationship with your therapist will parallel relationships you experience with others in your life. This may be difficult but it is an important part of the growth process. Discussing uncomfortable feelings and experiences you observe while in therapy may be helpful. In the event your therapist chooses to end therapy, he/she will discuss this with you, explain why, and provide you with referrals to other therapists if needed.

4. Telephone Policy/Therapist Availability

Your therapist is available by phone at (909) 203-7825 according to a specific schedule he/she will share with you. You may leave him/her a voicemail message outside of those hours that only he/she will hear and your therapist will return your call the next business day. If you are in crisis or having an emergency, you may call 911 or go to your nearest hospital. Your therapist will also develop a safety plan with you as appropriate and provide you with additional contact information. When your therapist is on vacation, he/she will provide you with the name and number of another professional who may be of assistance. Your therapist may be available for phone conversations as needed, however phone calls that extend beyond 15 minutes will be charged and pro-rated according to your regular session fee.

5. Family Therapy

Your therapist may deem it appropriate to engage two or more individuals as part of a family in the therapeutic process. If so, he/she will discuss this with you and the decision will be made together. Once the family becomes the unit of treatment (e.g. both members of a couple, a child and a parent), sessions will only occur when all members of the unit attend. The same limits of confidentiality apply for family therapy as apply to individual therapy, however there is an additional policy known as a "no secrets policy". This means that if and when individual family members disclose information to the therapist when others are not present, the therapist may, in his/her discretion, disclose or encourage disclosure of that information to the family unit. In addition, each member of the family unit that participates in therapy must sign a release of information if the therapist is to discuss anything about treatment with other providers or individuals relevant to the therapeutic process. In other words, no one member of the family treatment unit may give permission for the therapist to disclose information about treatment.