

**The
Therapy
Experience**

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I am a Licensed Professional Counselor (#14431) in the State of Texas. I graduated from Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon in 1991 with a Master of Arts degree in Counseling Psychology, and am also licensed in the State of Oregon (#C1245). My counseling practice is a general practice and I work with adults, adolescents, families, and couples.

WHAT THERAPY CAN DO FOR YOU

People usually come into therapy because they are unhappy with how their lives are going. They may despair at repeatedly failing to find and maintain enduring and gratifying personal relationships. They may hate their jobs, and become disillusioned with themselves, God, the government, or their inability to fulfill their dreams. They may feel lonely, inadequate, unlovable, guilty, angry, or responsible in ways that make them miserable.

Today, too many people rely on medications, drugs, alcohol, food, or other distracting negative behaviors to escape from or cope with pain in their lives.

Therapy can help you discover more productive ways to think and respond to your problems, disappointments, and negative relationships.

It can help you accept who you are, where you are, and learn how to change the things you can and come to peace with those you cannot.

My goal is to facilitate your gaining insight into patterns that exist in your life and help you recognize and utilize your strengths, make different choices, and develop behaviors that enhance your life and relationships.

ASSESSMENT, TREATMENT PLANNING, EXPECTATIONS, AND GOALS

Before treatment begins, I will ask you to read my **Notice of Privacy Practices (NPP)** and sign my **Consent to Use and Disclose Your Health Information** form. At our initial therapy session, I will want to know about your life situation and concerns. This mental health assessment often starts with talk about you, your family, and other important people and influences in your life.

I may also want to gather information from others, like a spouse or relative, your family doctor, someone at work or school, or the person who referred you to me. I will ask for your permission before ever contacting anyone else. You and I must discuss and agree on why and what information is needed. It will then be up to you to authorize or not authorize this contact. You must give your permission by signing an **Authorization to Use and Disclose Protected Health Information (PHI)**.

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Therapy helps many people feel and do better, but change and success are never sure things.

There are **risks** in treatment, since parts of the process may upset you or others.

As problems are faced, you may experience some anxiety or stress. Your problem(s) could even seem to get worse during the process of making changes. I work to make relationships stronger, but new ways of thinking, feeling, or behaving can cause conflicts. Sometimes this can lead to break-ups in relationships. There also may be other risks that we can't predict. Please talk about this with me, since **you** must be the final judge about entering or not entering treatment.

The therapeutic relationship is intimate by nature. It is important though that you realize that our relationship is professional rather than social. My professional code of ethics does not allow dual relationships with clients.

THE PROCESS

Therapy addresses "stress" – that is wanting the present (or past) to be different than it is (or was). Behavioral health treatment is a shared responsibility between you and me. It is a journey we take together to help you identify obstacles and blind spots, relieve emotional suffering, pursue personal growth, and generally expand your options to achieve better outcomes.

My role is to establish trust and safety, provide support and acceptance without judgment, and do my best to help you achieve your goals. Your role is to be open-minded, honest, patient, and most importantly - willing to do something different.

Feedback throughout this process is very important to our success. Most problems have solutions, but you need to let me know immediately if something does not seem right. If therapy is not going as you expected, we need to discuss that as soon as possible.

You have the right to terminate therapy at any time for any reason. If you decide to do so, your communication to me about the reason(s) would be most appreciated. Also, if you want, I will provide appropriate referrals.