



Untying Knots Counseling
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469-730-6650

Please read the following information carefully before the first session

Benefits and Risks of Therapy

Research studies repeatedly demonstrate the effectiveness of Individual and family therapy in treating the full range of mental and emotional disorders and health problems. Clients report marked improvement in work productivity, co-worker relationships, family relationships, partner relationships, emotional health, overall health, social life, and community involvement. Other benefits of counseling are improvements in general mood; increased self-esteem and self-confidence; increased ability to set realistic goals and accomplish them; increased ability to manage stressful life circumstances; increased ability to manage strong emotional reactions such as anger, fear, or sadness; increased ability to trust, feel close to, and communicate feelings, thoughts, and needs more openly to others; and an increased ability to stop behaviors that are not serving you well and start engaging in healthier behaviors. A few risks associated with therapy and counseling include: some feelings or behaviors may seem to get worse, especially in the beginning; important people in your life may not support your decision to be in therapy; and you may develop strong positive feelings for your counselor and feel sad or distressed when therapy ends. Effective therapy is sometimes uncomfortable as sensitive issues may need to be explored or challenged. You are strongly encouraged to discuss any fears, concerns, or doubts you have with your counselor, including specific risks and benefits not listed that may be associated with your situation. Every effort will be made to support your personal needs.

Counseling Relationship with Older Children and Adolescents

Trust is central to any therapeutic relationship regardless of age, and as children get older it is developmentally appropriate, they want to ensure their privacy. The therapist will not discuss issues concerning the older child/adolescent without their presence or consent. Safety issues are always an exception, and parents will be immediately informed of any safety issues including self-harm and suicidal ideation, drug use, and sexual activity. This is not meant to be a punishment to the client, but is meant to provide a healthy dialogue about concerning behaviors. The therapist will provide insight to parents about how to best support the client.

Scheduling of Appointments

Initial appointment inquiries are made through the website or by calling or emailing the clinician directly or by contacting the main phone number at 469-730-6650. The time and day of appointments can be coordinated through phone, email, or at the end of your sessions. There is a 24-hour cancellation notice if you need to cancel or reschedule your appointment. Please contact your clinician directly via email or their Google Voice number regarding any schedule changes.

Therapy Portal and Messaging: You will receive an email to set up an account through therapyportal.com which is where you will access telehealth sessions, message your provider to ask questions or where your provider will share information relevant to your treatment, and provide billing information. **Please do not pay for anything on your account unless requested to do so by your provider.**

Divorce and Custody Proceedings

This information applies to all minors regardless of their parents' marriage status. The therapeutic relationship is designed to help you and your child process any difficulties they are experiencing. Sometimes parents and the court desire the clinician's input for custody related matters. Untying Knots Counseling, PLLC and their providers are able to testify in court to a limited degree, but prefer not to due to the barriers to treatment with your that can arise from being placed in this position. If the clinician is subpoenaed as a witness in a case related to your child, the following fees will apply and your signature below is required in understanding compensation will be sought through legal means if left unpaid.

-Once served, the base hourly rate will be a non-refundable \$500 dollars per hour with a minimum of 4 hours (\$2000.00) to appear in court, of which the 24 hour cancellation policy will apply. The \$500 hourly rate will apply for any additional

preparation time with attorney(s), investigators, court personnel, time printing or preparing records, clinician time reviewing records, time spent traveling to and from the court, and all activities between departure for the appearance and return to the office. Mileage will also be charged at \$0.65 per mile from the clinician's office to the court location.

(signature required regardless of marital status).

Guardian name Guardian Signature Date

-If you anticipate going to court for custody related concerns, you need to be upfront regarding this matter. This will require separate information to help you understand the limitations and concerns related to treatment of your child.

Requests for Legal Letters and Paperwork

For example, emotional support animal (ESA), custody, ability to appear, FMLA or any letter to be written on behalf of the client for legal or employment purposes (excluding a school/work excuse note). The clinician requires a therapeutic relationship of at least 6 sessions to be able to fully assess the need of the client, and the letter is not a guarantee. The fee for writing a legal letter on behalf of the client is \$75/per hour and requires a written request (can be via email) with 2 weeks' notice. It is up to the discretion of the provider to complete these documents, and your request may be denied.

24 Hour Cancellation Policy

Your appointment time is reserved *exclusively for you*. **Appointments cancelled or rescheduled with less than 24 hours' notice will be charged at the regular session rate.** I authorize the clinician to charge my card for my late cancellations or therapy services, should it become necessary. Please note the cancellation policy still applies even if not initialed, therefore balances will accrue. Termination of treatment based on excessive late cancellations/no-shows is left to the discretion of your provider. **(Please initial here that you have read and understand the late cancellation policy).**

Afterschool/Evening Appointments

If your appointment is a reoccurring appointment scheduled during peak hours, 3:00pm or later on any weekday or anytime on the weekend, these appointments will be forfeited if there are 3 or more cancellations or late arrivals. This includes cancellations made before the 24-hour cancellation period. Please do not hesitate to discuss if the reoccurring time originally agreed upon does not work for your schedule any longer. The clinician will not hesitate to try to accommodate you, if possible.

(Please Initial understanding of the afterschool/evening policy).

Late arrivals

Non-playroom appointments will be cancelled if the client is more than 15 minutes late and a \$35 late fee will be charged. Playroom appointments will be cancelled if the client is more than 10 minutes late and a \$35 late fee will be charged.

(Please initial understanding of the late arrival policy).

Dropping off your Child

Please bring your child into the office and wait with them until their appointment, as well as returning into the waiting room to pick them up. Please inform your provider if you need to run an errand during the session time. It is ultimately up to the discretion of your provider if they want you to stay in the waiting room for the duration of the session, and reasons will be discussed with you. **(Please initial understanding of the late arrival policy).**

Restroom Use

We ask that you please take your child to the restroom before session so it does not interrupt the continuity of treatment. Of course, we know children may need to use the restroom during the session, and we will have the caregiver on site escort the child to the restroom. The providers at Untying Knots Counseling, PLLC will NOT escort your child into the restroom. If you leave during the session and your child needs to use the restroom, the provider will escort your child to the end of the hallway and will stand in the area where the 2 hallways meet while waiting for your child to use the restroom. This area is under surveillance and will have the provider on camera waiting for your child. We understand that children have varying abilities to use the restroom individually, but we will not be able to provide assistance. For this

reason, we will encourage caregivers of children 7 and under to remain on site. _____ (Please initial **understanding of the bathroom use policy**).

Cessation of Therapy

The clinician and client will make periodic re-evaluations to assess the efficacy of therapy. The client has the right to stop therapy at his/her discretion, at any time. The clinician also reserves the right to stop therapy at his/her discretion, for reasons including but not limited to untimely fee payment, noncompliance with treatment recommendations, conflict of interest, failure to participate in therapy, or client's needs being outside the clinician's scope of practice or competence. Upon either party's decision to discontinue therapy, clinician will usually recommend that the client participate in at least one concluding session to facilitate a positive experience and allow both parties to reflect on the work that has been done. The clinician will also attempt to ensure a smooth transition to another clinician by offering referrals to clients. If you have any complaints about your clinician's service, we invite you to discuss them with your clinician immediately.. This process may enhance the counseling process as well as your progress.

Formal Complaint Process

If you would like to make a formal complaint, please contact the Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council (BHEC) at 1.800.821.3205 or by sending a letter to:

Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council
George H.W Bush State Office Bldg
1801 Congress Ave., Ste 7.300 Austin, Texas 78701
512.305.7700

- We will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.

Record Retention & Confidentiality

Pursuant to HIPAA, Untying Knots Counseling, PLLC practitioners keep personal health information (PHI) about you in professional progress records which are collectively referred to as the clinical record. Your clinical record includes information about your reasons for seeking therapy, a description of the ways in which your problem impacts on your life, your diagnosis, the goals that we set for treatment, your progress towards those goals, your medical and social history, your treatment history, any past treatment records that we receive from other providers, reports of any professional consultations, your billing records, and any reports that have been sent to anyone, including reports to your insurance carrier. Untying Knots Counseling, PLLC will retain client records for a minimum of 7 years for adult clients and 7 years beyond the age of 18 years of age for a minor at which time it will be disposed of in such a way that confidentiality will be maintained. Untying Knots Counseling, PLLC reserves the right to deny your record request if there is substantial reason to believe that having a written copy of the record could be of detriment to you personally. However, if copies of records are obtained, the copy cost is \$3.00 per page, payable upon receipt.

Perhaps the most critical factor in a therapeutic relationship is confidentiality. Much of what you may wish to share with your clinician is very personal. We, as health care professionals, affirm your right to privacy. Information shared during a counseling session can only be shared with an appropriate outside party(s) if one or more of these criteria are met:

1. You sign a written release of information permitting such disclosure.
2. You are assessed as being potentially harmful to yourself or others.
3. You are assessed as being emotionally disturbed to the point of being unable to care for yourself.
4. You reveal current information about abuse or neglect of a child, a disabled person or an elderly person.
5. In the case of a minor, the parents or legal guardians will be notified of any life-threatening or illegal activity that is reported to the practitioner.
6. Records are ordered by a court of law.
7. A summary of records is requested by your insurance company or managed care company.
8. If it is reasonable and necessary for the practitioners at Untying Knots Counseling, PLLC to discuss clinical information specific to your case in order to provide the most effective help for you, the practitioners will share information with one another.
9. Additional information is outlined in the *Notice of Privacy Practices*.

Artificial Intelligence in Record Keeping

As part of an ongoing commitment to provide the best possible service, the provider has opted to use an artificial intelligence note-taking tool that assists in generating clinical documentation based on your sessions. This allows for more time and focus to be spent on our interactions instead of taking time to jot down notes or trying to remember all the important details. A temporary summary of the session is generated for the clinical note. The provider then reviews the content of that note to ensure its accuracy and completeness. After the note has been created, the summary is automatically deleted.

This artificial intelligence tool prioritizes the privacy and confidentiality of your personal health information. Your session information is strictly used for the purpose of your ongoing medical care. Your information is subject to strict data privacy regulations and is always secured and encrypted. Stringent business associate agreements ensure data privacy and HIPAA compliance. Please discuss any questions or concerns you may have about this feature with your provider.

After Hours Policy/Procedure

If you need to contact your clinician at any time, you may do so by leaving a message on the confidential voice mailbox of Untying Knots Counseling, PLLC or by contacting your clinician directly on the number they provide for you. Untying Knots Counseling, PLLC is not a crisis facility and will not be held responsible for any damages occurring as a result of unmet crisis or acute care needs. Your clinician may not be available to respond to you in emergency situations. ***If you are in crisis, please call 988 or go to your nearest hospital emergency room. We also refer to Basepoint PHP/IOP for emergency situations and they can be reached during normal business hours at (972) 357-1749.***

Statement of Confidentiality & Policy Agreement

I understand that Untying Knots Counseling, PLLC offers confidential counseling in so far as allowed by the laws of the State of Texas. I understand that if my practitioner believes there exists a threat of imminent and specific harm to myself or others, my right to confidentiality may be necessarily and legally violated (additional information about how your information is used and released is provided in *The Notice of Privacy Practices*). By signing below, you are agreeing to the following:

- I am indicating that I have read these conditions and fully understand and agree with this Statement of Confidentiality.
- I am also indicating that I have read and agree to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in this document.
- I am consenting to the treatment of my child and agree to make payments at the time of service as outlined above.
- I further understand the limits of confidentiality and understand that those limits also apply in the case of a minor. If I am the legal conservator or guardian of a minor, my signature below indicates my consent to their treatment.
- I understand this signed document will be shared with me to review at any time on my Therapyportal.com account.

Child/Teenager name

Date of Birth of Minor

Parent/Guardian signature

Date

Name, phone #, email of 2nd parent if parents are divorced or separated