



## ***INFORMED CONSENT***

Welcome to Reality Check Counseling Services, LLC. The following material is meant to provide you with information regarding our professional services and policies. Please read it carefully. If you have any questions, please feel free to raise them so that we may discuss your concerns and leave you feeling informed and confident of the process of counseling.

Counseling is not easily described in general statements. It may vary depending on the personalities of the therapist and the client as well as the problems addressed. There are many different methods that we may use to deal with the problems you identify. Successful counseling requires effort on your part, and a lot of work from you, both in sessions (individual and group) and at home. Success takes hard work.

Counseling may involve discussing unpleasant aspects of your life or relationships. You may experience uncomfortable feelings, like sadness, guilt, anger, confusion, frustration, loneliness, and/or helplessness. We will process these feelings together. Counseling has been shown to have significant positive effects for those who wholeheartedly participate in the process. Counseling can lead to more satisfying relationships, significant reductions in stress and anxiety and implementation of effective coping strategies and novel solutions to recurring problems. There are no guarantees of desired outcomes.

Initially, we will evaluate, not only your understanding of counseling and your current situation, but also explore what change or outcome you desire. We will develop a course of action and discuss whether it is consistent with your expectations and commitment to change. If, at any time, you have doubts or questions please feel free to discuss them openly with your counselor or counseling staff. We believe the therapeutic process is a collaborative one in which all parties must participate. The end of counseling occurs when you and your counselor agree that your goals are satisfied, or there is some other reason to discontinue services. You can choose to terminate therapy at any time, but the best results often come from discussing your decision for at least one session prior to termination.

Our fees are competitive to the area and you will receive a copy of our fee scale, along with other forms during your initial session. It is expected that this fee will be paid at the time of service. Fees will be reduced by 5% if paid in advanced on a monthly basis. Individual sessions will generally be 50 minutes and group sessions will generally be one to two hours in length. We expect a 24-hour advance notice of cancellation or rescheduling. You will be charged 50% of your fee for first missed session and 100% of your fees, thereafter, if proper notice is not provided.

We are often not immediately available by phone. We will not answer the phone while in session. You may leave a message and someone will return your call by the end of the next business day. If you are ever calling due to an emergency, please hang up and dial 911 immediately. Please DO NOT wait for our return phone call.

In general, the privacy of all communications between a client and a counselor is held in confidence and is protected by law, and we can only release information about our work to others with your written permission. In the case of couples counseling, both parties must agree before any information is released to a third party. There are a few specific exceptions to this general principle:

- **If a client tells us about abuse (emotional, financial, neglect, physical, or sexual) to children, the elderly, or disabled persons, we are mandated to file a report with the appropriate state agency;**
- **If a client is in imminent danger of harming self or others we will take the appropriate steps necessary to get you immediate help;**
- **If a client has an immediate medical emergency we will take any necessary actions to seek medical assistance, but maintain confidentiality to the extent possible; and**
- **If a client is involved in legal proceedings in which the court orders the release of information, or the client uses his/her mental status as defense, or if the client sues the counselor and/or practice some restrictions or maintenance of confidentiality records may occur.**

Please feel free to raise any questions you may have regarding the limitations of confidentiality. If formal legal advice becomes necessary, we will encourage you to seek qualified legal services.

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this document and agree to these terms.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

Updated: 4/18/18