

Information for Clients

Who Comes To Therapy?

People come to therapy for all sorts of reasons, they may feel stressed, anxious, or depressed; they may have been recently bereaved, or perhaps are trying to adjust to a difficult life transition. People also come to talk about their relationships, or difficulties associated with sex, culture or gender. Many have experienced trauma which they are struggling to come to terms with. Some come because they want support losing or gaining weight or because they have alcohol or other addictions problems. These are just a few examples, generally, therapists work alongside people who are unhappy with their life at the present time.

What Can I Expect In My Psychotherapy?

Sometimes clients find it difficult initially to talk about what is troubling them, particularly if they feel embarrassed, ashamed or are simply shy, therefore I let you set the pace of therapy. I will endeavour to understand your difficulties, and support you in finding ways to either come to terms with your problems, or where possible, help you find solutions. I am not judgemental but will respond to you in a genuine way, based upon how I experience you. This can sometimes be challenging but we will stand shoulder to shoulder and never head to head. What you talk about in your sessions is entirely up to you. Together we will devise a rough plan of the things you wish to look at and we will explore several ways this can be achieved.

Therapy Sessions

Therapy sessions can run for a few weeks, or may last two or three years. Sometimes people come back for a short period with a break in-between. Typically, sessions run for an hour, initially usually once a week at the same time. This way mix ups over times are less frequent. However, some people are unable to manage this, so I aim to be as flexible as I can. In addition, some clients may want to come twice in one week or later on in therapy, they may want to come less often. Again I aim to be flexible and allow space for this in my diary.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

In our first meeting, we will go through a contract which details my policy on confidentiality and under what circumstances this may have to be breached. However, some information may be important for you to receive beforehand. In brief, as a clinical member of the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy, I abide by their code of ethics. For you, this means that all my practice is supervised. I feel that this is important in ensuring that you get the most from your therapy. However, supervision seldom requires the other therapist to have details which would identify you. I also keep notes of our sessions and use these to guide the process of therapy. I offer to write up these notes in report format to share with you. Some

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Confidentiality and Information Sharing continued..

clients find seeing their story written in black and white or hearing it read back to them in session validating and healing. All my records remain locked in a filing cabinet for a period of five years, after which they will be destroyed.

Fees

I offer a free one hour assessment interview. This gives us both the opportunity to see if we feel that we can work together. I also need to ensure that I am the best person for you to see, sometimes I will refer clients on to a specialist service, for example an addiction unit. Following assessment my fees will be charged at an hourly rate, this we will negotiate when we meet. I will ask for payment by cheque or cash at the end of each session. My fees will be reviewed annually and any increases will take effect from the 1st January of each year, I will remind you of this beforehand if an increase applies to you. At the end of our first meeting, if we are both agreeable, I would like to schedule a fixed number of sessions, which can then be reviewed at a later date should you wish.

Qualifications

I studied at Leeds University part-time as an undergraduate in psychology and gained a 2:1 honours classification at the end of the six year programme. Throughout this time I learnt a great deal about the interactions between mind and behaviours. Following this, I took a one year post graduate training course in a psychotherapeutic approach called Transactional Analysis (TA) at the Northern Guild in Newcastle, which I successfully completed the following year. Although I still use elements of TA, my practice is based on humanistic philosophy, reflecting my more recent attainment of a merit in the Masters of Arts Client-Centred Psychotherapy training course based at Leeds Metropolitan University. I am currently undertaking a doctorate programme at the Metanoia Institute in London aiming to qualify in July of 2010. I also regularly attend various conferences and seminars on different psychotherapeutic approaches aiming to keep myself up to date on the latest developments in the field.

Work Experience

I worked for the volunteer organisation Home-Start, a befriending service offered to families of children under five years of age, where I supported families over a period of a year. I was then employed by the NHS as a psychotherapist in a psychology department of a secure forensic unit in Leeds. I offered psychotherapy and counselling support to both in-patients and clients living in the community for three years. Whilst at the forensic unit, I also worked as a counsellor at Harrogate College of Arts and Technology. Most recently, I have worked with in-patients at the Yorkshire Centre for Eating Disorders and have established a private practice. My experience is therefore very varied. I work with both men and women, young and ageing, with all manner of difficulties.