

## **Anna M. Stapleton MA, LLP**

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### **Agreement for Counseling Services**

This Agreement contains important information about my professional services and business policies. Attached is a document titled, "Notice of Policies and Practices to Protect the Privacy of Your Health Information," a notice required by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), a federal law that provides privacy protections and patient rights with regard to the use and disclosure of your Protected Health Information (PHI). The law requires that I obtain your signature acknowledging that you have received the privacy notice. You will also be agreeing to the terms in this Agreement. You may revoke this Agreement at any time. That revocation will be binding unless I have already taken action in reliance on it, there are claims related to obligations imposed on me by your health insurer, or you have not satisfied all financial obligations.

### **PSYCHOTHERAPY**

Psychotherapy is not easily described in general statements. It varies depending on the personalities of the therapist and the client, and the particular problems you are experiencing. There are different methods I may use to help address different problems. Psychotherapy is not like a medical doctor visit. Instead, it calls for a very active effort on your part. In order for the therapy to be most successful, you will have to work in and outside of our sessions.

Psychotherapy can have benefits and risks. Since therapy often involves discussing unpleasant aspects of your life, you may experience uncomfortable feeling like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness, or helplessness. On the other hand, psychotherapy has also been shown to have many benefits. Therapy often leads to improved relationships, solutions to specific problems, and significant reductions in feelings of distress. But there are no guarantees of what you will experience.

### **MEETINGS**

Our first few sessions will involve evaluation of your needs. By the end of the evaluation, I will be able to offer you some first impressions of what our work will include if you decide to continue with therapy. You should evaluate this information along with your own opinions of whether you feel comfortable working with me. Therapy involves a large commitment of time, money, and energy, so you should be careful about the therapist you select. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask them as they arise.

If psychotherapy is begun, I will usually schedule one session (one appointment hour of 50 minutes duration for an individual and 75 minutes minutes for a couple) per week at a time we agree on, although this may vary. **Once an appointment is scheduled, you will be expected to pay for it unless you provide 24 hours advance notice of cancellation (unless we both agree that you were unable to attend due to circumstances beyond your control).** It is important to note that insurance companies do not provide reimbursement for unused sessions.

### **PROFESSIONAL FEES**

My general individual fee is \$100 for a 50 minute session (the initial assessment is \$115), couples' therapy is \$120 for a 75 minute session (initial assessment \$150.00). For consultations, I charge \$125 per hour. In addition to appointments, I charge these amounts for other professional services performed on your behalf, though I will prorate the hourly fee in 15 minute increments for periods of less than one hour. Examples of other services include report writing, frequent or lengthy telephone conversations, consulting with other professionals with your permission, and preparation of record or treatment summaries.