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## **Clinician Disclosure and Informed Consent Statement**

Welcome to New Growth Behavioral Health Services! Entering therapy and choosing a therapist are often daunting choices. My disclosure is to inform you about who I am as a person and a psychologist, my formal education and post formal education trainings. All information is provided to introduce myself and my practice, and to aid you in making a decision that best suits you and your life situation. I have found that education and training is vital, but the interpersonal relationship between therapist and client is vital to success. A meaningful, honest, respectful relationship will support the therapy in times of minimal progress or intense pain and share in the joy of success.

You have the right to choose your therapist who best suits your needs and to refuse treatment at any time.

In addition to this document, you have received a copy of New Growth's Office Disclosure, which describes limits to confidentiality and other information regarding appointments and policies specific to New Growth. You also have access to New Growth's Privacy Policies, which describes the limits of privacy and New Growth's cost sheet, which outlines the cost of services provided by New Growth. Please review all these documents carefully.

## **My Life, Education, and Training**

Educational choices like life choices, can be difficult. Making choices about future options are often made with inadequate or inaccurate information.

I began in a business school with the plan to become an accountant. I dropped out in my 3<sup>rd</sup> year. After completing three years in the Marines as a radar technician, I entered San Diego State University (SDSU) with the plan to become an industrial arts high school teacher. I graduated with a BA in Sociology. After dropping out of a PhD program in Sociology after one quarter, I returned to SDSU where I earned an MS in Counseling in 1982. Several years later I entered the California School of Professional Psychology where I earned a Doctor of Psychology (PsyD) in 2000.

I am a licensed psychologist in Washington. My license number is: PY60914599.

My educational training was in cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), psychodynamic, and existentialism. Clinical skills developed outside of academia include Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), mindfulness and meditation, and further training in CBT.

I have been a therapist for 37 years as a master's level therapist and now as a psychologist. During my earlier years I worked with acute and chronically mentally ill adolescents and adults, sexually abused children and their families, and juvenile and adult felons. For the past 15 years I worked with the

adults as an employee of the federal government. I treated post-traumatic stress in combat veterans and active duty service members. I also treated trauma in men and woman for sexual assault, accidents, illness, and personal losses from witnessing death or injury. I treated relationship problems, but only in individual therapy. I also treated depression and anxiety.

For the last 15 years the populations with which I have worked include men, women, members of the LGBT community, individuals from Africa, South East Asia, Asia, and the South Pacific Islands. The clients I plan to treat at New Growth mirror these demographics. This decision is more than personal comfort; the choices are in line with my profession ethics to work with populations with which I have training and familiarity.

### **The Therapeutic Process**

After the initial assessment, we will develop an individualized treatment plan with goals towards addressing the issues that you identified as troubling. Issues regarding stress, family conflict, difficulties from your developmental history, marital problems, career/planning decisions, substance use/abuse, unresolved grief issues, and difficult life transitions are common themes during the assessment. We will reach an agreement about our treatment focus before proceeding with the therapy.

We will explore your strengths, the beliefs, strategies and behaviors that helped you to develop resilience to weather past issues. With this as a base we will explore areas of desired change and develop an understanding of any barriers to change to enhance strategies to promote change in the desired direction. These will be periodically reviewed related to status and progress towards your goals.

Therapy may involve helping you identify, develop, and implement more effective strategies for problem solving, healthier decision making, more adaptive coping, and healthier conflict resolution. I will often ask you to practice skills outside of our sessions as well as read or engage in other activities between sessions. The type of homework assigned will be collaborative to suit your preferred learning style and needs.

Therapy is understood to be a choice you've made among the available options. Other options include receiving therapy from another provider, using other therapies, using support groups, seeking self-help resources, and other modes of treatment. You and I will initially typically meet weekly, and sessions are generally 50-60 minutes in length. The frequency of meetings and duration of appointments can vary considerably depending on your needs or situation.

### **Risks and Benefits of Therapy**

Therapy has benefits and risks. A major benefit from therapy is often an improved ability to manage and cope with interpersonal relationships. Another possible benefit may be a greater understanding of family and personal goals and values that may lead to a greater happiness. Counseling may help provide solutions to specific problems and may help reduce feelings of emotional distress.

To seek the improvements desired in therapy often requires facing fears, painful history, and unpleasant emotions. Specific feelings, like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness, and helplessness frequently arise. Therapeutically resolving unpleasant events and relationship patterns can arouse intense feelings leading to discomfort as well as life changes that may not be originally intended.

The ability to tolerate the pain has been in my experience a core factor to reach a successful therapeutic outcome.

Some clients only need a few sessions to achieve their goals while others may benefit from long-term counseling. There are no guarantees of what you will experience, or how long the process may take.

### **Record Keeping**

I am required by law to keep records of our sessions together. To ensure accuracy of the session for your progress, I take notes during sessions. All information is stored in our electronic health record. If you do not wish to have a detailed history entered into our electronic health record, I will need this request in writing. I will, by law, maintain a record that includes: your name; the fee arrangement and record of payments; dates counseling was received; the disclosure statement, signed and dated by licensed counselor or associate and client; and the client's written request that no treatment records be kept.

You may ask to see and copy your record. You may also request corrections if you believe something has been recorded in error. Information you share with me, and any record of that information, will be kept in strict confidence. I cannot disclose any information about you to anyone else, including the fact that you are in treatment, unless you give me permission to do so, or unless I am required to do so by law.

### **Professional Consultation**

I participate in a consultation group with New Growth therapists on a biweekly basis. In consultation, I do my best to avoid revealing my clients' identifying information. To that end, I do not share client names or other identifying information. In addition, all consultants are legally bound to keep any information confidential. I participate in consultation as the process improves my ability to provide better care.

### **Professional Boundaries**

I abide by the Code of Ethics of my discipline, which precludes dual roles. Counselors are obligated to establish and maintain appropriate professional boundaries with clients. These relationships do not allow for business, social, sexual, or any other dual relationship that impairs clinical objectivity, effectiveness, or client's welfare, which includes present or past clients, and, in some cases, client's close friends and family members.

The size of our community creates situations where you and I may be present in social situations or other places outside of my office. Due to confidentiality, I will not acknowledge the existence of the relationship outside of the therapy session unless initiated by you.

### **Personal Conduct**

Everyone is expected to conduct themselves in a responsible manner. A session should not be held when anyone is under the influence of a nonprescription drug, alcohol, or medications that are a barrier to the therapeutic process.

## **Limits of Services**

I do not make assessments of fitness for duty/work, workers compensation, disability claims/benefits, legal/courts, forensic, substance use, or predictive assessments of any type. I do not serve as an advocate on issues, act as an expert witness, or go to court as your advocate. I do not access fitness for custody or make recommendations regarding parenting, guardianship, or fitness of a parent or person to live independently.

## **Legal Proceedings**

Due to the nature of the therapeutic process and the fact that it often involves making a full disclosure with regard to many matters of a personal and confidential nature, it is agreed that, should there be legal proceedings (such as, but not limited to, divorce, custody disputes, injuries, or lawsuits), neither you (client(s)), nor your attorney(s), nor to anyone acting on your behalf will call on me to testify in court or at any other proceedings, nor will a disclosure of psychotherapy or counseling records be requested. Considering the above exclusions, upon your request, I will release a summary of your sessions to any agency/person you specify, unless releasing the information might be harmful in any way or violates the privacy of another person. If subpoenaed or ordered by an authorized court of law, health care professionals may be required to release confidential information. Time for preparation and/or attendance in court will be charged as permitted by law.