

Office Policies & General Information Agreement for Psychotherapy Services and Informed Consent for Psychotherapy

CONFIDENTIALITY: All information disclosed within sessions and the written records pertaining to those sessions are confidential and may not be revealed to anyone without your written permission except where disclosure is required by law.

WHEN DISCLOSURE IS REQUIRED OR MAY BE REQUIRED BY LAW: Some of the circumstances where disclosure is required or may be required by law are: where there is a reasonable suspicion of child, dependent, or elder abuse or neglect; where a client presents a danger to self, to others, to property, or is gravely disabled; or when a client's family members communicate to Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT that the client presents a danger to others. Disclosure may also be required pursuant to a legal proceeding by or against you. If you place your mental status at issue in litigation initiated by you, the defendant may have the right to obtain the psychotherapy records and/or testimony by Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT. In couple and family therapy, or when different family members are seen individually, even over a period of time, confidentiality and privilege do not apply between the couple or among family members, unless otherwise agreed upon. Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT will use her clinical judgment when revealing such information. Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT will not release records to any outside party unless she is authorized to do so by all adult parties who were part of the family therapy, couple therapy or other treatment that involved more than one adult client.

EMERGENCY: If there is an emergency during therapy, or in the future after termination, where Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT becomes concerned about your personal safety, the possibility of you injuring someone else, or about you receiving proper psychiatric care, she will do whatever she can within the limits of the law, to prevent you from injuring yourself or others and to ensure that you receive the proper medical care. For this purpose, she may also contact the person whose name you have provided on the biographical sheet.

HEALTH INSURANCE & CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS: Disclosure of confidential information may be required by your health insurance carrier or HMO/PPO/MCO/EAP in order to process the claims. If you so instruct Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT only the minimum necessary information will be communicated to the carrier. Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT has no control over, or knowledge of, what insurance companies do with the information she submits or who has access to this information. You must be aware that submitting a mental health invoice for reimbursement carries a certain amount of risk to confidentiality and/or privacy.

LITIGATION: Sometimes patients become involved in litigation while they are in therapy or after therapy has been completed. Sometimes patients (or the opposing attorney, in a legal case) want the records disclosed to the legal system. Due to the nature of the psychotherapeutic process and the fact that it often involves making a full disclosure with regard to many matters, clients' records are generally confidential and private in nature.

**Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT 4701
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www.hopehealandthrive.com**

Patients should know that very serious consequences can result from disclosing therapy records to the legal system. Such disclosures may negatively affect the outcome of custody disputes or other legal matters and may negatively affect the therapeutic relationship. If you or the opposing attorney are considering requesting Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT's disclosure of the records, Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT will do her best to discuss with you the risks and benefits of doing so.

CONSULTATION: Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT consults regularly with other professionals regarding her clients; however, each client's identity remains completely anonymous and confidentiality is fully maintained.

E-MAILS, CELL PHONES, COMPUTERS, AND FAXES: It is very important to be aware that computers and unencrypted email, texts, and e-fax communication (which are part of the clinical records) can be relatively easily accessed by unauthorized people and hence can compromise the privacy and confidentiality of such communication. Emails, texts, and e-faxes, in particular, are vulnerable to such unauthorized access due to the fact that servers or communication companies may have unlimited and direct access to all emails, texts and e-faxes that go through them. While data on Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT's laptop is encrypted, emails, texts and e-faxes are not. It is always a possibility that e-faxes, texts, and email can be sent erroneously to the wrong address and computers. Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT's laptop is equipped with a firewall, virus protection and a password, and she backs up all confidential information from her computer on a regular basis onto an encrypted hard-drive. Please notify Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT if you decide to avoid or limit, in any way, the use of email, texts, cell phones calls, phone messages, or e-faxes. If you communicate confidential or private information via unencrypted email, texts or e-fax or via phone messages, will assume that you have made an informed decision, will view it as your agreement to take the risk that such communication may be intercepted, and she will honor your desire to communicate on such matters. Please do not use texts, email, voice mail, or faxes for emergencies.

TELEPHONE & EMERGENCY PROCEDURES: If you need to contact Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT between sessions, please leave a message at the answering service (207) 321-1599 and your call will be returned as soon as possible. Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT checks her messages a few times during the daytime only, unless she is out of town. If an emergency situation arises, indicate it clearly in your message and if you need to talk to someone right away call: Maine Mental Health Crisis Hotline: (888) 568-1112 or the Police: 911. Please do not use email or faxes for emergencies. Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT does not always check her email or faxes daily.

PAYMENTS & INSURANCE REIMBURSEMENT: Clients are expected to pay the standard fee of \$150.00 per 60-minute session at the end of each session. The standard one-time intake session fee is \$175. Telephone conversations, site visits, writing and reading of reports, consultation with other professionals, release of information, reading records, longer sessions, travel time, etc. will be charged at the same rate, unless indicated and agreed upon otherwise.

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Please notify Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT if any problems arise during the course of therapy regarding your ability to make timely payments. Unless agreed upon differently, Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT will provide you with timely submission of each therapy session to your insurance carrier. As was indicated in the section, *Health Insurance & Confidentiality of Records*, you must be aware that submitting a mental health invoice for reimbursement carries a certain amount of risk. If your account is overdue (unpaid) and there is no written agreement on a payment plan, Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT can use legal or other means (courts, collection agencies, etc.) to obtain payment.

THE PROCESS OF THERAPY/EVALUATION AND SCOPE OF PRACTICE:

Participation in therapy can result in a number of benefits to you, including improving interpersonal relationships and resolution of the specific concerns that led you to seek therapy. Working toward these benefits, however, requires effort on your part. Psychotherapy requires your very active involvement, honesty, and openness in order to change your thoughts, feelings, and/or behavior. Sometimes more than one approach can be helpful in dealing with a certain situation. During evaluation or therapy, remembering or talking about unpleasant events, feelings, or thoughts can result in you experiencing considerable discomfort or strong feelings of anger, sadness, worry, fear, etc., or experiencing anxiety, depression, insomnia, etc. Psychotherapy may result in decisions about changing behaviors, employment, substance use, schooling, housing, or relationships. Sometimes a decision that is positive for one family member is viewed quite negatively by another family member. Change may sometimes be easy and swift, where at other times it may be slow and even frustrating. There is no guarantee that psychotherapy will yield positive or intended results. During the course of therapy, Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT is likely to draw on various psychological approaches according, in part, to the problem that is being treated and her assessment of what will best benefit you. These approaches include, but are not limited to, behavioral, cognitive-behavioral, cognitive, psychodynamic, existential, system/family, developmental (adult, child, family), humanistic or psycho-educational. Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT **provides neither custody evaluation recommendation nor medication or prescription recommendation nor legal advice**, as these activities do not fall within her scope of practice.

TREATMENT PLANS: Within a reasonable period of time after the initiation of treatment, Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT will discuss with you her working understanding of the problem, treatment plan, therapeutic objectives, and her view of the possible outcomes of treatment. If you have any unanswered questions about any of the procedures used in the course of your therapy, their possible risks, Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT 's expertise in employing them, or about the treatment plan, please ask and you will be answered fully. You also have the right to ask about other treatments for your condition and their risks and benefits.

TERMINATION: After the first couple of meetings, Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT will assess if she can be of benefit to you. Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT does not work with clients who, in her opinion, she cannot help. In such a case, if appropriate, she will give you referrals that you can contact.

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If at any point during psychotherapy Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT either assesses that she is not effective in helping you reach the therapeutic goals or perceived you as non-compliant or non-responsive, and if you are available and/or it is possible and appropriate to do, she will discuss with you the termination of treatment and conduct pre-termination counseling. In such a case, if appropriate and/or necessary, she would give you a couple of referrals that may be of help to you. You have the right to terminate therapy and communication at any time. If you choose to do so, upon your request and if appropriate and possible, Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT will provide you with names of other qualified professionals whose services you might prefer.

AUDIO OR VIDEO RECORDING: Unless otherwise agreed to by all parties beforehand, there shall be no audio or video recording of therapy sessions, phone calls, or any other services provided by Bridget Tremblay PsyD, LMFT.

CANCELLATION: Since the scheduling of an appointment involves the reservation of time specifically for you, a minimum of 24 hours (1 day) notice is required for re-scheduling or canceling an appointment. Unless we reach a different agreement, the full fee will be charged for sessions missed without such notification. Most insurance companies do not reimburse for missed sessions.

I have read the above Office Policies and General Information, Agreement for Psychotherapy Services or Informed Consent for Psychotherapy carefully (a total of 4 pages); I understand them and agree to comply with them:

Client's Name (print) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Client's Name (print) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Psychotherapist's Name (print) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

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