



**AGREEMENT FOR
COUNSELLING, COACHING & PSYCHOTHERAPY SERVICES
CONDUCTED BY THE THERAPY HOUR
– AN OVERVIEW**

This Overview outlines the main points of a Full Agreement for the delivery of psychological services by The Therapy Hour. You should ensure you read and understand the Full Agreement (also attached to the email sent to you) before signing this document, as doing so forms a legal contract between you and The Therapy Hour.

The main points of The Agreement between you and The Therapy Hour are as follows:

- You must be 18 years or over to sign this Agreement. If you are under 18 years, a parent or guardian may sign on your behalf. If you are under 14 years, The Therapy Hour cannot work with you.
- Therapy requires your active involvement. No guarantees as to success of treatment are offered.
- Online, telephone and email services provided by The Therapy Hour are not suitable for crisis intervention. If you feel suicidal and do not already have a face-to-face appointment with The Therapy Hour, you should call a crisis helpline or your country's emergency number.
- We will maintain your information however communicated, securely and in accordance with the laws of England and Wales.
- We will not share or disclose your information with anyone outside The Therapy Hour unless required to do so by the laws of England and Wales, or by the professional codes to which our therapists work, or where you request us to and we deem it to be in keeping with your best interests therapeutically.
- There are clear boundaries in relation to behaviour, payments, session times and session package expiry dates. Refunds and re-scheduling of sessions will not take place where less than 24 hours notice of a cancellation is given. The Therapy Hour and its practitioners reserve the right to withdraw service where the Agreement is breached in respect of these boundaries.
- All The Therapy Hour therapists are fully qualified, accredited and insured to work worldwide.

- Therapists at The Therapy Hour actively discourage dual relationships, that is, any relationship between themselves and clients which goes beyond that of therapist and client.
- Clear procedures exist for use where you believe your therapist has acted unprofessionally.
- You are free to terminate therapy at any time.



AGREEMENT FOR COUNSELLING, COACHING & PSYCHOTHERAPY SERVICES CONDUCTED BY THE THERAPY HOUR – FULL DOCUMENT

INTRODUCTION

This Agreement is a legal document which is also intended as an informed consent and guidance for using services provided by The Therapy Hour. We have tried to ensure it is written in plain English, but it is nevertheless lengthy. The attached Overview lists the most important points of the full Agreement for your convenience. You should however read the full document before signing.

For the purposes of this Agreement,

- “We”, “Us and “Our” refer to The Therapy Hour.
- “Client” or “Clients” refer to you.
- “Practitioner”, “Counsellor”, “Coach and “Psychotherapist” refer to your therapist.
- “Therapy” and “Psychological Services” refer to counselling, coaching and psychotherapy.

1.0 ELIGIBILITY FOR THERAPY

- 1.1 You agree that you are over 18 years of age. If you are over 14 years of age, but less than 18 years, you may undertake therapy with a practitioner at The Therapy Hour, subject to a parent or legal guardian agreeing and signing this Agreement on your behalf. If a parent or guardian signs for you, he or she should declare this, and indicate their relationship to you below, or on our assessment form (see website).
- 1.2 During the initial intake process and the first couple of sessions, your therapist will assess whether or not s/he can be of benefit to you. If you have requested online counselling, his/her assessment will include your suitability to psychotherapy delivered via technology. We do not accept clients who, in our opinion, we cannot help. In such a case, your therapist will give you a number of referrals that you may contact. If at any point during

psychotherapy, your therapist assesses that s/he is not effective in helping you reach your therapeutic goals, s/he is obliged to discuss this with you, up to and including termination of treatment. In such a case, s/he will give you a number of referrals that may be of help to you.

2.0 THE PROCESS OF THERAPY/EVALUATION

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 Working toward these benefits requires effort on your part. Psychotherapy requires your very active involvement, honesty and openness in order to change your thoughts, feelings and/or behaviour. Your therapist will ask for your feedback and views on your therapy, its progress and other aspects of the therapy and s/he will expect you to respond openly and honestly.
- 2.3 During assessment or therapy, remembering or talking about unpleasant events, feelings or thoughts can result in your experiencing considerable discomfort or strong feelings of anger, sadness, worry, fear, etc. or experiencing anxiety, depression, insomnia, etc. Your therapist may challenge some of your assumptions or perceptions or propose different ways of looking at, thinking about, or handling situations that can cause you to feel upset, angry, depressed, challenged or disappointed. Attempting to resolve issues that brought you to therapy in the first place, such as personal or interpersonal relationships may result in changes that were not originally intended.
- 2.4 Psychotherapy may result in decisions about changing behaviours, 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 will sometimes happen quickly, but more often it will take time and patience on your part. There is no guarantee that psychotherapy will yield positive or intended results.
- 2.5 Sometimes more than one approach can be helpful in dealing with a certain situation. During the course of therapy, your therapist will utilize various therapeutic approaches according, in part, to the problem that is being treated and his/her assessment of what will best benefit you. These approaches include but are not limited to behavioural, cognitive-behavioural, psychodynamic, existential, system/family, developmental (adult, child, family) or psycho-educational.
- 2.6 You commit to behaving appropriately at all times during sessions and in the course of any communication with practitioners or agents of The Therapy Hour. You accept that The Therapy Hour will consider any inappropriate behaviour as a serious and fundamental breach of agreement and may terminate both the session and any future relationship with the company if we have reason to believe that you have behaved inappropriately, used abusive, inappropriate, discourteous, or threatening action. If we do this, without obligation on our part, we will as a courtesy to you, send written details of why we have terminated the session or relationship. Any monies already paid for pre-booked sessions will be returned to you within 30 days, apart from those monies relating to a session which was terminated during its course.

- 2.7 You understand that phone and email sessions have limitations compared to in-person sessions, among those being the lack of “personal” face-to-face interactions, the lack of visual and audio cues in the therapy process.
- 2.8 You understand that most medical insurance companies will not cover online, telephone and email counselling and psychotherapy.
- 2.9 You understand that telephone/online/email psychotherapy is not a substitute for medication under the care of a psychiatrist or doctor.
- 2.10 You understand that online and telephone therapy is not appropriate if you are experiencing a crisis or having suicidal or homicidal thoughts (see emergency procedures below).
- 2.11 At the beginning and end termination of therapy, you will be asked to complete a number of assessment and evaluation tools. This process is designed to ensure that we are correctly able to assess the nature and depth of your difficulties, as well monitor the effectiveness of our services. All data collected is stored anonymously with identification codes.

3.0 DISCUSSION OF TREATMENT PLAN

- 3.1 During the first session and throughout this process, your therapist will discuss with you your understanding of the problem, treatment plan, therapeutic objectives and your view of the possible outcomes of treatment. If you have unanswered questions about any of the procedures used in the course of your therapy, their possible risks, your therapist’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. If you could benefit from any treatment that we do not provide, your therapist has an ethical obligation to assist you in obtaining those treatments.

4.0 DELIVERY OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

- 4.1 Your sessions will start and finish at the scheduled times. If you arrive late to a session, whether online, offline or on the telephone, that session will still end at the scheduled time. Refunds for part sessions cannot be offered where the session is incomplete or missed because of your absence.
- 4.2 Where you have elected to conduct counselling via email, you will normally send your email on agreed date. You may send it before, but it will not be read until the scheduled posting time. You will receive a Therapeutic Email response no more than 1 business day after the scheduled date for sending your email. If you miss your scheduled day for sending your email and have not given The Therapy Hour at least 24 hours notice, it will be treated in the same way as a missed session and Therapeutic Email response can be offered without scheduling and paying for a further exchange.

- 4.3 Your counselling emails should be no longer than 1000 words in length. The Therapy Hour reserves the right to make an additional charge of £3.00 per 500 extra words before replying to extended emails from you. Therapeutic Email response will be no less than 500 words.
- 4.4 The Therapy Hour will at all times endeavour to ensure that the technical quality of its online, email and telephone service is of the highest quality appropriate to the method of communication but will not be held responsible for technical problems experienced by you with your own equipment or with communications over the internet or such other causes which are outside of our control.
- 4.5 If you and your therapist are unable to connect or are disconnected during a session due to a technological breakdown, please try to reconnect within 10 minutes. If reconnection is not possible, email to schedule a new session time.

5.0 DUAL RELATIONSHIPS

- 5.1 Dual relationships are those relationships where a practitioner acts in more than one role or has a relationship with the client which extends beyond that of therapist. Examples would include therapist/supervisor, therapist/customer, therapist/friend or lover. Generally speaking, dual relationships are regarded as being counter-productive and in the more extreme cases, exploitative and/or unethical.
- 5.2 All therapists working for The Therapy Hour will actively strive to avoid any dual relationship or action which might impair their objectivity, clinical judgment, or therapeutic effectiveness or which could be exploitative in nature. This extends to refusing invitations from clients to associate on a social or casual basis, both on and offline.

6.0 TERMINATION

- 6.1 You have the right to terminate therapy at any time.
- 6.2 Termination is a stage which every client reaches and is working towards. As such, it needs to be prepared for, especially if you have been working therapeutically for some time. If you, or you and your therapist decide that the time has come to end therapy after an extended period (more than 6 sessions), you are strongly recommended to spend several sessions preparing for this ending. The exact length of time will be worked out by you and your therapist. The time spent on ending will include a review of the work, what has been achieved, alternative sources of support and strategies for coping.

7.0 TELEPHONE & EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

- 7.1 If you need to speak with your therapist between sessions to alert him or her of an emergency (e.g cancellation or need to re-schedule an appointment, please email him or her directly rather

than using The Therapy Hour contact form, email or phone number. You will be contact details for your individual therapist at your first session or email exchange.

7.2 Your therapist is not available to undertake impromptu, unscheduled or last minute sessions. If an emergency situation arises that requires immediate attention, or if a life-threatening crisis should occur, you agree to contact a crisis hotline, call the emergency services' number for your country (e.g 999 or 911), or go to a hospital emergency room.

7.3 National emergency counselling helplines:

United Kingdom:	The Samaritans	08457 90 90 90
ROI:	The Samaritans	1850 60 90 9
Australia:	The Samaritans Lifeline	1800 198 313 13 11 14
New Zealand	Lifeline The Samaritans	0800 543 354 0800 726 666
Canada	Crisis Counselors National Hotline	1-800-448-300
United States:	National Suicide Hotline	800-784-2433

8.0 PRIVACY & CONFIDENTIALITY

8.1 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. Likewise, you are expected to keep communications between yourself and your therapist confidential and you understand that all records of communication between client and therapist remain the property of The Therapy Hour.

8.2 Your therapist will not release records to any outside party unless s/he is authorized to do so by you (or in the case of couple/family/group therapy, all adult members who were part of the treatment), or unless compelled to do so by law or a valid court order.

8.3 When Disclosure Is Required By Law:

Disclosure may be required pursuant to a legal proceeding. This includes not only criminal, but also civil proceedings. For example, if you are involved in a custody dispute or if you place your mental status at issue in litigation initiated by you, the defendant may have the right to obtain your counselling or psychotherapy records and/or testimony by your therapist.

8.4 When Disclosure Is Required by A Professional Code:

Some of the circumstances in which disclosure is required by the law include:

1. Where there is a reasonable suspicion of child, dependent or elder abuse or neglect.
2. When a client presents a danger to self, to others, or to property.

8.5 If there is an emergency during therapy, or if after termination, your therapist becomes concerned about your personal safety, the possibility of you injuring someone else, or about you receiving proper psychiatric care, s/he will do whatever s/he 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, your therapist may also contact law enforcement, a hospital or an emergency contact whose name you have provided.

8.6 In couples and family therapy, or when different family members are seen individually, confidentiality and privilege do not apply between the couple or among family members. your therapist will use his/her clinical judgment when revealing such information.

8.7 Confidentiality of Material:

8.8 All information collected from you by The Therapy Hour or its agents is stored securely and confidentially in accordance with the Data Protection Act, 1998 (U.K). Your information will never be sold or passed on to any other agency, except where the law requires it or you request it.

8.9 If you work online with The Therapy Hour, we ask that you determine who has access to your computer and electronic information from your location. This would include family members, co-workers, supervisors and friends. We encourage you to only communicate through a computer that you know is safe, i.e. wherein confidentiality can be ensured. Be sure to fully exit all online counselling sessions and emails.

8.10 Litigation Limitation:

Due to the nature of the therapeutic process and the fact that it often involves making a full disclosure with regard to many matters which may be of a confidential nature, it is agreed that should there be legal proceedings (such as, but not limited to divorce and custody disputes, injuries, lawsuits, etc.), neither you nor your lawyer, nor anyone else acting on your behalf will call on any director, practitioner or employee of The Therapy Hour to testify in court or at any other proceeding, nor will a disclosure of the psychotherapy records be requested.

8.11 Consultation:

All therapists employed by The Therapy Hour have regular clinical supervision with another professional or peers regarding their clients. The client's identity remains anonymous and confidentiality is fully maintained during these consultations. Your full name and other

identifying information will never be disclosed.

8.12 Requests For Disclosure:

Upon your request, The Therapy Hour will release information to any agency/person you specify unless we conclude that releasing such information might be harmful in any way.

9.0 FEES

9.1 Current rates for therapeutic services are posted on our website.

10.0 PAYMENTS

10.1 Arrangements for payments for face-to-face sessions should be made with your individual therapist. You will normally have the option of paying online via PayPal, via BACS transfer, in cash or by cheque on invoice. Payments for online sessions, telephone sessions and Therapeutic Email exchanges must be made before the session, call or email exchange takes place, via the online booking and payment system unless otherwise agree with the therapist.

10.2 Where paying online, you agree that you are, or your parent or legal guardian is authorised to use the PayPal account, debit or credit card used to pay for sessions.

11.0 CANCELLATION AND REFUNDS

11.1 Since scheduling of an appointment involves the reservation of time specifically for you, a minimum of 24 hours notice is required for re-scheduling or cancelling an appointment. Unless we reach a different agreement, the full fee will be charged for sessions missed without such notification.

11.2 In the event that your therapist has to cancel a session, s/he will contact you via email or telephone to inform you and re-schedule the appointment.

11.3 In the event that your therapist fails to attend a booked session, or does not complete the session then you should contact admin at The Therapy Hour via the website contact form or our main telephone number (see website). This should be done within 24 hours of the end time of the missed or uncompleted session. The Therapy Hour will investigate the situation within 1 business day of receipt of your email. Where necessary and where re-scheduling is not desired or called for, any payment made will be refunded to your account if the details of the case are as stated by you and the cancellation or non-completion of the session was the responsibility of the therapist.

11.4 Where a refund has been agreed between you and your therapist or The Therapy Hour for any reason, please allow 7 days for the funds to be returned to your account.

12.0 DISPUTES

- 12.1 The Therapy Hour endeavours to provide psychological services of the highest standard. However, there are times when things go wrong. Any complaint that you have about the service provided by your therapist should in the first instance be discussed with him or her. If you are unable to obtain a satisfactory resolution to your concerns as a result of that discussion, you should relay your complaint to The Therapy Hour admin by email, using the email facility on the The Therapy Hour website within 24 hours of the end of the session concerned. We will make an initial response to your email within 1 business day.
- 12.2 In the event that you are unable to achieve a satisfactory resolution to your complaint via discussions with either your therapist or The Therapy Hour, you have recourse to the complaints procedure of your therapist's professional association. You will find details of each therapist's professional association on the website.
- 12.3. The Therapy Hour will not be held liable to you, your agent or any other third party for any consequential loss whatsoever that may be claimed as a result of the service it provides or any deemed failure to provide that service.

13.0 FITNESS TO PRACTISE

- 13.1 All The Therapy Hour practitioners have completed a minimum of 3 years post-graduate training in order to achieve their counselling or psychotherapy qualification. In addition, all have undertaken additional supervised practice and assessment in order to achieve accredited or registered status within the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy or the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy, are in good standing with their professional association and have Enhanced Disclosure with the Criminal Records Bureau. All practitioners follow a program of continuing professional development in order to maintain currency of skills as well as undergoing regular clinical supervision with a senior professional.

14.0 LEGAL JURISDICTION

- 14.1 Therapists receiving referrals from The Therapy Hour are governed by the laws of England and Wales, and their respective professional associations. All counselling, coaching and psychotherapy treatment will be considered to take place in within England and Wales.

15.0 PROFESSIONAL CODE OF ETHICS

- 15.1 All The Therapy Hour practitioners are members of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy or registered with the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy, and work to their respective professional codes of ethics.

16.0 PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY

16.1 All The Therapy Hour practitioners have full professional indemnity cover which allows them to work with anyone in any country in the world. However, should a US or Canadian client take out a case against a The Therapy Hour therapist under the terms of his or her insurance arrangement, the case must be heard in a British Court under American or Canadian law.

Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand this Agreement.

Name_____

Signature_____

Date_____

If you are the parent or legal guardian of the client, please state your relationship to him/her.

We will discuss this Agreement during our first session.