



Counselling Agreement and Terms

These terms explain the practical and professional arrangements for counselling with Claire Dickey. We will discuss them before counselling begins, and you may ask questions about them at any time.

These terms apply to adult clients and young people aged 11 to 17. The section headed "Working with young people aged 11 to 17" applies only when counselling is being provided to a young person. References to a parent or carer elsewhere in these terms apply only in those circumstances.

Sessions

Sessions last 50 minutes. We will usually meet weekly at the same time, although we can agree a different arrangement where appropriate.

There is no fixed number of sessions. We will usually review how the counselling is going after approximately six sessions and at suitable intervals after that.

You are free to stop counselling at any time. Where possible, I encourage us to talk about ending so that we can bring the work to a thoughtful close.

If you arrive late, the session will normally still finish at the agreed time and the full fee will apply.

Fees and payment

- In-person counselling: £65 per session
- Online video counselling: £55 per session
- Telephone counselling: £55 per session

The introductory telephone call is free, and there is no obligation to arrange counselling afterwards.

Sessions are paid for in advance, and I will confirm how to pay when we arrange your first appointment. Payment is due at least 48 hours before the session. If an appointment is arranged less than 48 hours in advance, payment is due when it is booked.

For an established weekly arrangement, payment by standing order may be agreed.

I accept some clients through WPA health insurance. Where counselling is funded in this way, any different payment or administrative arrangements will be confirmed before counselling begins. The client remains responsible for any fees that are not paid by the insurer or other organisation.

Where counselling is arranged for a young person, the parent or carer entering into the agreement is responsible for payment and cancellation charges, including any amount not paid by an insurer or other organisation.

Cancellations and missed sessions

If you need to cancel or rearrange a session, please give me at least 48 hours' notice. I will offer another appointment, subject to availability, or refund the session fee.

Sessions cancelled with less than 48 hours' notice, and missed appointments, are normally charged in full. This is because the appointment has been reserved and cannot usually be offered to somebody else at short notice.

If something serious or unavoidable happens, please tell me. I will consider exceptional circumstances fairly and may use my discretion.

If I need to cancel because of illness or another unavoidable event, I will give you as much notice as reasonably possible. The session will be rearranged or any payment will be refunded in full.

Confidentiality

What you tell me during counselling is treated as confidential. However, there are limited circumstances in which I may need to share relevant information:

- If I believe that you or another person may be at risk of serious harm.
- If there is a safeguarding concern involving a child or vulnerable adult.
- If disclosure is required or authorised by law, including by a court order.

Where it is appropriate and safe, I will discuss this with you before sharing information.

In an urgent situation, or where discussing it with you could increase the risk of harm, I may need to act without your agreement. I will only share relevant information with an appropriate person or organisation.

Professional supervision

As a Registered Member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, I undertake regular professional supervision.

I may discuss aspects of my client work during supervision while minimising identifying information as far as possible. Supervision is confidential and helps me to practise safely and effectively.

Working with young people aged 11 to 17

Agreement and consent

Counselling will only begin if the young person understands what is being offered and is willing to take part. Counselling will not be imposed on a young person who does not wish to participate.

A parent or carer with parental responsibility will normally enter into the practical and financial agreement and will be responsible for payment, appointments and cancellations.

Young people aged 16 and 17 are normally able to consent to counselling for themselves. For a young person under 16, I will consider their age, understanding and ability to make an informed decision.

A parent or carer with parental responsibility will normally also be asked to agree to counselling for a young person under 16. Regardless of age, I will explain the counselling in a way the young person can understand and seek their clear agreement.

The parent or carer entering into the agreement confirms that they have parental responsibility. They must tell me about any relevant:

- Court order or legal restriction.
- Safeguarding arrangement.
- Restriction on contact with the young person.
- Disagreement between people with parental responsibility.
- Disagreement about whether counselling should take place.

If there is a disagreement between the young person and their parent or carer, counselling will not be imposed on the young person. I may delay or pause the work while the situation is discussed and clarified.

The first meeting

The first session will usually begin with the young person and their parent or carer together for approximately ten minutes.

This gives us an opportunity to discuss confidentiality, safeguarding and the practical arrangements for counselling. The parent or carer will then leave, and I will continue the session privately with the young person.

We may agree a different arrangement if this would better meet the young person's needs.

Privacy and information for parents

The young person is my counselling client. I will not routinely give parents or carers a report of what has been discussed during counselling.

Parents and carers are encouraged to allow the young person to decide whether, and how much, they wish to share about their sessions.

I may discuss attendance, practical arrangements and general progress with the parent or carer. I will not normally disclose the content of sessions without the young person's agreement unless one of the confidentiality or safeguarding exceptions applies.

Safety and safeguarding

The parent or carer named as the safeguarding or emergency contact will normally be contacted if I have a serious concern about the young person's safety.

Depending on the circumstances, I may also need to contact safeguarding services, emergency services, the young person's GP or another appropriate professional.

There may be circumstances in which it would not be appropriate or safe to contact a parent first. In these circumstances, I will take the action I believe is necessary to protect the young person or another person from harm.

Wherever it is appropriate and safe, I will explain to the young person what information needs to be shared, why it needs to be shared, and who it will be shared with.

Parents, schools and other professionals

A separate consultation with a parent or carer may be arranged if it would support the counselling. Its purpose will be to consider the young person's needs and the support around them, rather than to report the content of their counselling sessions. Any fee will be agreed beforehand.

I will not ordinarily contact a school, GP or another professional without the informed agreement of the young person and, where appropriate, their parent or carer.

This does not prevent me from sharing information where there is a serious safeguarding concern or another legal reason for doing so.

Any substantial meeting, report or professional liaison outside ordinary counselling sessions must be agreed in advance, including any applicable fee.

Contact between sessions

You are welcome to text or email me about practical matters, such as changing an appointment, making a payment or letting me know that you are running late.

Email and text messages are not completely secure, so sensitive personal information should not normally be sent in this way.

I am unable to provide counselling or crisis support between sessions, and I do not routinely check messages during evenings or weekends.

If a longer discussion is needed, we can arrange a separate appointment. Any fee will be agreed beforehand.

Online and telephone counselling

Online sessions take place using Microsoft Teams. I will send you a joining link before the appointment.

Please join the session from a private place where you will not be overheard or interrupted. You must not take part in a counselling session while driving.

If the internet connection fails, we will try to reconnect. If it cannot be restored, I will telephone you using the number you have provided so that we can continue where appropriate.

For online counselling with a young person, I will ask for the address where the young person will be during the session, and a telephone number for a responsible adult who is available nearby. These arrangements will be agreed with the young person and their parent or carer before online counselling begins.

Sessions must not be recorded by either person unless a separate written agreement has been made.

Records and privacy

I keep brief records relating to the counselling. These are stored securely and retained for the period explained in my privacy notice.

You have the right to request access to your personal information, subject to any legal limitations that apply.

The privacy notice explains what information I collect, why I use it, how it is protected, how long it is retained, who it may be shared with and your data-protection rights. It is available at claire-counselling.co.uk/privacy

Other practical boundaries

Phones and other devices should be switched off or silenced during sessions unless we have agreed otherwise.

If you attend a session under the influence of alcohol or non-prescribed drugs and I believe it is not safe or appropriate to continue, I may end the session. We will then discuss whether further counselling can safely proceed.

If we meet in public, I will not approach or acknowledge you first. This is to protect your privacy. You are welcome to acknowledge me if you wish.

I do not ordinarily provide court reports, expert opinions or formal assessments.

Requests for attendance letters or other written information will be considered separately. The purpose of the document, the consent arrangements and any fee must be agreed in advance.

Concerns and complaints

If something about the counselling does not feel right, I hope you will feel able to raise it with me so that we can discuss it and, where possible, resolve it.

I am a Registered Member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy and work in accordance with its Ethical Framework.

If a concern cannot be resolved, you may be able to use the BACP Professional Conduct Procedure. Information about eligibility and applicable time limits is available at bacp.co.uk

Urgent help

Claire Counselling is not an emergency or crisis service.

If you or somebody else is in immediate danger, call 999 or go to your nearest Accident and Emergency department. For urgent mental-health support in England, call NHS 111 and select the mental-health option.

- Samaritans, free on 116 123, at any time.
- Childline, free on 0800 1111.

Statutory cancellation rights

Where the law gives you a 14-day right to cancel an agreement made online or by telephone, that right is not affected by these terms.

If you ask for counselling to begin during the 14-day cancellation period, you are requesting that the service starts before that period has ended. You agree to pay for any counselling session provided before you cancel the agreement.

The 48-hour appointment cancellation policy is separate from any statutory right to cancel the overall counselling agreement.

Agreement

Please complete the section that applies to you. Typing your name in the box below has the same effect as signing by hand. You are welcome to print and sign it instead if you would rather.

Section A. Adult client

Complete this section if the counselling is for you.

Your full name

Date of birth

Address

Telephone

Email

Emergency contact: name, relationship and telephone number

GP surgery

- ☐ I have read and understood the Counselling Agreement and Terms, and I have had the opportunity to ask questions.
- ☐ I understand and accept the fees, the payment arrangements and the 48-hour cancellation policy.
- ☐ I understand the limits of confidentiality set out above.

Client

Signed (type your full name)

Date

Section B. Counselling for a young person aged 11 to 17

Complete this section if the counselling is for your child. Both the parent or carer and, where appropriate, the young person should complete their part.

Young person's full name

Date of birth

Address

Parent or carer's full name

Relationship to the young person

Telephone

Email

Safeguarding and emergency contact, if different from above: name, relationship and telephone number

GP surgery

Anyone else with parental responsibility: name and contact details

Parent or carer declaration

- ☐ I confirm that I have parental responsibility for the young person named above.
- ☐ I have read and understood the Counselling Agreement and Terms, including the section on working with young people aged 11 to 17.
- ☐ I understand and accept the fees, the payment arrangements and the 48-hour cancellation policy, and that I am responsible for payment.
- ☐ I understand that the young person is Claire's client, and that I will not routinely be given a report of what is discussed.
- ☐ I have told Claire about any court order, legal restriction, safeguarding arrangement or disagreement about contact or about whether counselling should take place. If any of these arise later, I will tell her.
- ☐ The emergency and safeguarding contact information I have given is accurate.

Parent or carer

Signed (type your full name)

Date

Second parent or carer, if applicable

Signed (type your full name)

Date

Young person

To be completed by the young person if they are able to. There is no obligation to sign, and counselling will not go ahead if you do not want it to.

☐ Counselling has been explained to me, and I am willing to give it a go.

Young person

Signed (type your full name)

Date

Please return the completed form to hello@claire-counselling.co.uk, or bring it to the first session.
Keep a copy for yourself. If anything here raised a question, please ask me about it. It is much better discussed than left uncertain.