

PSYCHOTHERAPY INFORMED CONSENT
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Welcome to my practice. This document contains important information about my professional services and business policies. Please read it carefully and let me know if you have any questions. When you sign this document, it will represent an agreement between us.

Psychological Services

I am a licensed psychologist in the State of California with a doctoral degree in counseling psychology. I provide a range of psychotherapy services including assessment, talk therapy, and consultation. Counseling or therapy can look very different for each individual depending on the particular issues addressed, the needs of the client, the personalities of the psychologist and client, and a variety of other factors. In order for therapy to be successful, you will have to make an active effort both in our sessions and at home. I cannot predict exactly what your experience will be like, or guarantee specific outcomes, but I am committed to providing you with the most professional, collaborative, and ethical treatment possible.

Psychotherapy can have both risks and benefits. It often involves discussing uncomfortable or painful aspects of your life and you may experience unpleasant feelings (e.g., sadness, nervousness, frustration, guilt). However, counseling can also help you reduce distress, enhance your relationships, and/or find solutions to specific problems.

Our first few sessions (typically 2-3 sessions) will involve an evaluation of your needs. By the end of the evaluation, I will be able to offer you some first impressions of what our work together would look like and a treatment plan to follow, 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 very careful about the therapist you select. If you have questions about my procedures, we should discuss them whenever they arise. At this time, or in the future, if either of us decide that I am not providing the services you need, I will gladly help refer you to another mental health clinician who is more appropriate.

Confidentiality

In general, all communications between a psychologist and client are confidential, and this information can only be released to others with your written permission. However, there are certain rare exceptions, such as: If you threaten to seriously harm or kill yourself, I may have to breach confidentiality in order to protect you by seeking hospitalization for you or contacting family members or others who can help provide protection. If you make a serious threat of physical violence against another person(s), I have a legal duty to warn and protect the person(s) by contacting them and a law enforcement agency. If I have

reasonable suspicion to believe that a child, elderly person, or dependent adult is being abused or neglected, I am mandated to file a report with the appropriate state agency. In most legal proceedings, you have the right to prevent information about your treatment from being disclosed; however, a judge might order my records or testimony in such circumstances as a child custody case or proceedings in which your psychological condition is relevant. Please see the attached Notice of Privacy Practices for more information about federal standards regulating the disclosure of your protected health information.

At times, I find it helpful to consult with other mental health professionals about a client. During a consultation, I make every effort to avoid revealing any identifying information about the client, and the consultant is also legally bound to maintain confidentiality. If you don't object, I will only inform you of such consultations when I feel it is important to our work together.

Meetings

If we agree to begin psychotherapy together, I will schedule you for one 50-minute session per week on the same day and time. However, sometimes sessions may need to be scheduled more frequently to best meet your needs, or less frequently due to vacations, illnesses, or other circumstances. Please see the Billing and Payments section for my cancellation policy.

Billing and Payments

My fee for a 50-minute individual therapy session is \$200. My fee for a 50-minute couples session is \$230. Once an appointment is scheduled, you will be expected to pay for it unless you provide 48 hours (2 days) notice. The cancellation fee will be the same as your regular session fee (\$200 for individual therapy, \$230 for couples). You will be expected to pay for each session at the time it is held via cash, check, or credit card through my client portal. I will raise my fees each year (due to inflation and rising costs of maintaining a business) and you will be given 30 days notice before an increase.

For other professional services lasting over fifteen minutes outside of our scheduled sessions, you will be billed on a prorated basis. These services may include telephone conversations or email communications lasting longer than fifteen minutes, extensive coordination of care, consulting with other professionals (with your permission), report writing, preparation of records or treatment summaries, and the time spent performing any other services you may request of me. I will provide bills/receipts at the end of each session and expect to be paid upon receipt unless otherwise agreed upon.

If you become involved in legal proceedings that require my participation, you will be expected to pay for my professional time and services even if I have been called to testify by another party. Because of the difficulty of legal involvement and the interruption to my regular practice, I charge \$450 per hour for preparation and attendance at any legal proceeding. I will provide bills/receipts at the end of each session and expect to be paid upon receipt unless otherwise agreed upon.

If your account has not been paid for more than 60 days and arrangements for payment have not been agreed upon, I have the option of using legal means (i.e., a collection agency, small claims court). I will inform you before I do so, and give you an opportunity to make prompt payment. If I proceed with such means, I will release only the minimum information necessary (i.e., your name, the nature of services provided, and the amount due).

Insurance Coverage

I do not currently accept insurance directly. Therefore, I am considered an out-of-network provider. I choose not to take insurance directly due to insurance: 1. requiring me to give you a diagnosis, 2. insurance putting limits on how long we can work together, 3. often wants detailed, private information about your care in order to decide if treatment is “medically necessary”.

If you would still like to use your insurance to attempt full or partial reimbursement for my fee, I can offer you a monthly invoice for counseling sessions you can submit to your insurance company. This form does require that I provide a diagnosis. Please contact your insurance company to obtain details regarding your out-of-network benefits prior to your first session. Ask them what your “out of network mental health benefits” are and what address you need to send your receipts to. If you would like assistance with getting insurance reimbursement, consider <https://getbetter.co/> as a possible resource. I will not be fiscally accountable, should your insurance company be unable to reimburse your therapy costs.

Professional Records

The laws and ethical standards of my profession require that I keep treatment records. You are entitled to receive a copy of the records if you request it, and I recommend that you review them in my presence so that we can discuss the contents. If I believe that seeing some part of the record might be significantly detrimental to you, I will leave it out. In this case, you can request to have the records inspected by another mental health professional. You will be charged an appropriate fee for any professional time spent preparing information requests.

Please be aware that if you choose to use your insurance for reimbursement for my fee most insurance companies require you to authorize me to provide them with a clinical diagnosis, sometimes they will also request treatment plans, summaries, or copies of the entire record (in rare cases). This information will become part of the insurance company's files, and while they claim to keep such information confidential, I cannot ensure this. Please see the attached Notice of Privacy Practices for more information about federal standards regulating the use of your protected health information for insurance purposes, as well as your rights regarding access to your records.

Physical Health

Psychological disorders and symptoms often have a strong correlation with medical illnesses and symptoms. At times, some medical conditions require a medical differential diagnosis to determine

symptom etiology. If your presenting symptoms are organic in origin, it is critical that you obtain medical treatment. In addition, prescription and nonprescription medications may have significant side effects that may be important for us to consider. I appreciate full disclosure of all medicines and drug intake and may request a Release of Information so that I can coordinate services with your physician.

Electronic Communications

All electronic contact is to be done through my HIPPA compliant client portal for protection of your confidentiality. I do not use texting to communicate with clients in order to best protect your confidentiality. In the very rare occurrence that my client portal is down, please contact me via phone or my secure email at: lindsey@drlindseytherapy.com. Please keep electronic communications focused on administrative issues such as changing appointment times. If you need to discuss clinical issues in-depth, we will set-up an earlier appointment or make arrangements for a phone or video session.

Social Media Policy

I do not accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking site (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc). I believe that adding clients as friends or contacts on these sites can compromise your confidentiality and our respective privacy. It may also blur the boundaries of our therapeutic relationship. If you have questions about this, please bring them up when we meet and we can talk more about it.

I participate on various social networks, but not in my professional capacity. If you have an online presence, there is a possibility that you may encounter me by accident. If that occurs, please discuss it with me during our time together. I believe that any communications with clients online have a high potential to compromise the professional relationship. In addition, please do not try to contact me in this way. I will not respond and will terminate any online contact no matter how accidental.

Information Available On Websites

I have a website including a blog and videos that you are free to access. I use it for professional reasons to provide information to others about me and my practice. You are welcome to access and review the information that I have on my website and, if you have questions about it, we should discuss this during your therapy sessions. I understand that you may also wish to seek out additional information about me on-line. There is an incredible amount of information available about individuals on the internet, much of which may actually be known to that person and some of which may be inaccurate or unknown. If you encounter any information about me through web searches, or in any other fashion for that matter, please discuss this with me during our time together so that we can deal with it and its potential impact on your treatment.

It is NOT a regular part of my practice to search for clients on Google or Facebook or other search engines. Extremely rare exceptions may be made during times of crisis. If I have a reason to suspect that you are in danger and you have not been in touch with me via our usual means (coming to

appointments, phone, or client portal messages) there might be an instance in which using a search engine (to find you, find someone close to you, or to check on your recent status updates) becomes necessary as part of ensuring your welfare. These are unusual situations and if I ever resort to such means, I will fully document it and discuss it with you when we next meet.

Business Review Sites

You may find my psychology practice on sites such as Yelp, Healthgrades, Yahoo Local, Bing, or other places which list businesses. Some of these sites include forums in which users rate their providers and add reviews. Many of these sites comb search engines for business listings and automatically add listings regardless of whether the business has added itself to the site. If you should find my listing on any of these sites, please know that my listing is NOT a request for a testimonial, rating, or endorsement from you as my client.

The American Psychological Association's Ethics Code states under Principle 5.05 that it is unethical for psychologists to solicit testimonials: "Psychologists do not solicit testimonials from current therapy clients/patients or other persons who because of their particular circumstances are vulnerable to undue influence."

Of course, you have a right to express yourself on any site you wish. But due to confidentiality, I cannot respond to any review on any of these sites whether it is positive or negative. I urge you to take your own privacy as seriously as I take my commitment of confidentiality to you. You should also be aware that if you are using these sites to communicate indirectly with me about your feelings about our work, there is a good possibility that I may never see it.

If we are working together, I hope that you will bring your feelings and reactions to our work directly into the therapy process. This can be an important part of therapy, even if you decide we are not a good fit. None of this is meant to keep you from sharing that you are in therapy with me wherever and with whomever you like. Confidentiality means that I cannot tell people that you are my client and my Ethics Code prohibits me from requesting testimonials. But you are more than welcome to tell anyone you wish that I'm your therapist or how you feel about the treatment I provided to you, in any forum of your choosing.

If you do choose to write something on a business review site, I hope you will keep in mind that you may be sharing personally revealing information in a public forum. I urge you to create a pseudonym that is not linked to your regular email address or friend networks for your own privacy and protection.

If you feel I have done something harmful or unethical and you do not feel comfortable discussing it with me, you can always contact the Board of Psychology, which oversees licensing, and they will review the services I have provided.

Board of Psychology
1625 North Market Boulevard,

Suite N-215
Sacramento, CA 95834
1-866-503-3221
bopmail@dca.ca.gov

Contacting me

You may contact me via my client portal, my email address, or via phone. I prefer you contact me through the client portal and it is often the fastest way to reach me. I am in the office on Mondays, but check my voicemail once each business day. I do not check voicemail or my client portal after 5pm weekdays or on weekends. My phone number is 415-737-5540. Please leave me a message, and I will return your call by the next business day. Given the part-time nature of my private practice, I am not able to provide urgent crisis support in between sessions. If you are experiencing a life-threatening emergency, you will be instructed to call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. For urgent, non life-threatening emergency you can also contact S.F. Suicide Prevention: (415) 781-0500. If I will be unavailable for an extended period of time (due to a planned vacation, illness, or unexpected circumstances), I will provide you with the name of a colleague to contact should any urgent needs arise.

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this document and agree to abide by its terms during our professional relationship.

Printed Name	Signature	Date