**Telephone Counselling Agreement**

Welcome to telephone counselling. Here is some information to ensure that our sessions are as simple and safe for you as possible.

**Telephone counselling**

I recommend that you use a landline or mobile number and not a work or public telephone to maintain your confidentiality. I would also advise not using a speaker phone during our sessions, to avoid being overheard. You may also wish to use headphones, if using a mobile phone, to maintain your privacy. I will make sure I am working in a confidential space during each of our sessions.

Before commencing telephone counselling, we will have agreed a session time that best suits you. This will be for 50 minutes and normally on the same day and at the same time each week. I will ask for your location and a contact number of a trusted person in case any emergencies arise during the session. Feel free to ask me about this if you have any further concerns or questions.

**Technology breakdown arrangements**

Telephone lines are not always completely effective all of the time, so in our first session we can discuss what to do if we lose connection. If a problem with the signal prevents or interrupts the session, with your permission, I will text you on your mobile to try and remedy the problem. If we are unable to reconnect, I will offer a short text exchange to allow the session to be closed safely.

**Confidentiality**

This is a very important aspect of the counselling relationship, which I take very seriously. In the vast majority of circumstances, the information you share will be kept in the strictest of confidence. However, there are a few limitations to the confidentiality I can provide, which are stated below:

If there is convincing evidence that you intend to harm yourself or others, I will need to break confidentiality by informing your doctor or, in serious cases, the police, emergency services or another appropriate third party. Wherever possible, and if it is considered appropriate, you will be informed of this. If you are being treated by your doctor for your mental health, it is advisable that you inform him or her about your counselling sessions. However, I will not confer with your doctor without your knowledge.

I have a legal responsibility to report disclosures relating to any of the following:

* Drug Trafficking Act 1994
* Money Laundering Regulations 2007
* Terrorism Act 2000
* Road Traffic Act
* Child Protection Offences

I have monthly supervision where I may discuss our work together. However, I will not disclose your name or anything that would enable you to be identified. Any information that my supervisor receives is also treated as confidential and subject to the same ethical criteria as counselling. Written case notes made for sessions are limited in nature and kept confidential.

Here is some additional information which will allow confidentiality to be maintained during our call:

* If using a mobile phone, it will be helpful to find a confidential location that has a strong signal.
* Find a confidential space where you will not be overheard or interrupted by someone during our session. This will ensure the effectiveness of our work together.
* Choose a session time where you are unlikely to be interrupted by visitors or other phone calls. Please turn off any other phones or devices or switch them to silent, during our sessions.
* Ensure the email account that you use to communicate with me is not accessible to anyone else.

**Guidelines for emergency contact**

If an emergency arises during our session, I will share with you the appropriate support that you can access during this period. If you are considering serious harm to either yourself or someone else, I will endeavour to discuss the options with you fully. If, however, I feel the risk is serious enough, I will get immediate help. This may include contacting your emergency contact, doctor or the emergency services.

**Privacy Statement**

In undertaking counselling, you will be providing me with certain personal data. In so doing, it is important that you are aware of and agree to the following:

* This contract and other documentation that includes personal data are stored in a locked filing cabinet and in a separate location from your notes, which are anonymous, and stored digitally in an encrypted file.

You can find further information relating to the way I store your data on my website: [www.beachcounselling.co.uk](http://www.beachcounselling.co.uk)

**Code of Ethics**

I abide by the BACP Ethical Framework (links can be found at [www.beachcounselling.co.uk](http://www.beachcounselling.co.uk)). If you feel that I am not conducting myself in an ethical manner, or have any other concerns, they are available to assist you and I would encourage you to do this if you are worried in any way. Please feel free to discuss any concerns with me, if you feel able to do so.

**Social Media**

I do not interact with clients, past or present, on any social media platforms and will not add clients or accept friend requests on my personal pages. I have a professional Facebook and Instagram page which clients are welcome to follow.

**Contact Outside of Sessions**

Contact should be kept to a minimum outside of sessions. However, if you do need to contact me to rearrange or cancel a session, please allow 24 hours for a response. I will, however, endeavour to get back to you before that time if possible. Should you happen to meet me outside of your session please be aware that I will not greet you. This is to protect your privacy and maintain confidentiality. This is especially important if you are with other people. If you acknowledge me openly, I will respond in an appropriate, professional manner. Should we find that we are part of the same group, either social or professional, serious consideration will be given to the complications of this dual role relationship. Where appropriate, and possible, you or I will withdraw.

**Cancellations**

Please allow 24 hours for cancellations, to avoid incurring a fee. If you do need to cancel within 24 hours of a session, you will be charged in full. Please may I advise that no further sessions can be booked until payment from the prior session has been received. If I have to cancel a session, I will aim to provide you with at least 48 hours’ notice. If that cancellation is at very short notice, I will offer your next session to you free of charge. If the phone isn’t answered at the time of the session, I will leave an answer phone message and will attempt to call you back once more. If I am unable to contact you, I will send you a text and you will be able to call me back at any point during our 50-minute session.

**Payments**

My session fee is £55 and will remain the same during our work together. Please can this be paid by bank transfer, using the details below, prior to our session. The payment will confirm your session booking.

Account Name: Catherine Beach

Account Number: 33259595

Sort Code: 20-17-92

Reference: Please put your initials in the reference section of the payment.