



James M. Blue, Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist

TREATMENT AGREEMENT and CLIENT PROFILE

Welcome to the office of Dr. James M. Blue, a professional psychological services practice. **The Treatment Agreement** constitutes a formal agreement between us. Please read it carefully and raise any concerns that you have before you sign it. **The Client Profile** follows this agreement. The Client Profile includes a signature line stating that you understand the Therapy Agreement. Please complete and sign the Profile and return it to me prior to our first session.

COVID-19 addendum:

Due to the virus issue, our physical office closed. Dr. Blue is 100% teletherapy until further notice. Therapy takes place on a HIPAA-compliant platform that is easy to use, but which requires a good internet connection. When a tipping point is reached in control of the virus situation, we will likely return to a physical office space (my prediction as of April, 2021 is early Fall, 2021), but will be open to continuing telehealth sessions for those who prefer it (or who live elsewhere in the state of Texas). Our billing service can check your insurance to see if you are covered for tele-health (most companies have made that allowance due to Covid, but may change as it gets more under control). Prospective clients should double check insurance on their own though, to be sure of their coverage.

Definitions:

I am licensed and qualified to provide psychotherapy, consultation, and psychological evaluation services by the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (License #31393).

In the paragraphs that follow, second person (“you,” “your,” etc.) references are to you the client and/or dependents and/or spouse participating in therapy with James M. Blue, Ph.D. First person (“I,” “me,” etc. references are to James M. Blue, Ph.D. Collectives (“we,” “us”) refer to agreements and/or work relating to both.

Services:

The purpose of psychological therapy is to explore current and historical events, and to examine and begin to understand how these factors influence your life, as you experience it in the present day. Therapist and client then work collaboratively to develop and implement strategies that help to alleviate problematic issues, as well as aid you in reaching personally identified goals of personal growth. During the therapy process we may address a wide variety of topics including your personal history, personal relationships both past and present, specific personal projects, life balance, job performance and satisfaction, or general conditions in your life, business, or profession. The services provided by me cover topics that are decided jointly between you, the client and me, the therapist. I view this as an interactive process that is driven by what you need at the time, to help you on your journey through life.

Payment Procedure:

Therapy fees are set at \$110. per 50-minute session, unless other arrangements have been made. Payment is due at the beginning of the session in the form of cash or check, or can be automatically drawn from a credit card on file (with your permission only). We can bill your insurance, if you wish, and insurance benefit payments may then be credited back to you. Services left unpaid following treatment may be subject to additional fees. Additional services requested, reports, extended consultations related to your treatment or that of your family may be billed at the established hourly rate. Fees for returned checks and costs of collection proceedings are the full responsibility of the client. Sessions cancelled fewer than 24 hours prior to an appointment, or no-showed, will be charged to your account.

Therapy and Psychotherapy:

I am trained and licensed to help people explore, examine, and understand complex present and historical situations, learn new ways of perceiving and responding to the world around them, and make significant progress towards spiritual, emotional, behavioral changes. I offer my skills in the areas of human development, behavior, emotional/intellectual status, and spirituality, along with interactive counseling techniques, communication, problem solving, motivation, and change processes. I do this through a service called “therapy” or “counseling”, in which you come to me for help in processing events, making decisions, and implementing them, in order to achieve goals that you decide for yourself and/or your family.

As your therapist, my job is to help you understand the present and historical contexts of your life. With understanding we can take information and skills that you already have and (1) make decisions about which changes you would like to make, (2) develop a personalized plan in order to make those changes, (3) to implement your plan and make the behavioral changes, and (4) to develop strategies to maintain the changes you have made. I will support, encourage, and help you stay on track with your goals.

Though I am here to help you do so, you as the client set the agenda for your therapy. Your success will depend on your willingness to define and take risks and try new approaches. You can expect me to be honest and direct, asking straightforward questions, and using challenging techniques to help you move forward. In collaboration with me, you are expected to evaluate your own progress, and if the therapy is not working as you wish, you should immediately inform me so we can both take steps to correct any concern. As much as any human endeavor, therapy can involve feelings of distress and frustration that accompany the process of change. Though therapy can be quite successful in most instances, it does not offer any guarantee of success. You should know up front that individuals going through therapy sometimes feel a bit worse before they begin to feel better, but that this is a common reaction, not to be feared.

Confidentiality:

Confidentiality of the communications within therapy is a common requirement for health care providers in the mental health field, is a hallmark of the Psychology Code of Ethics, and is one of the most important features of the therapy process. Fundamentally, this means that I will not discuss our work together with anyone outside of those specifically involved in your treatment with me. Likewise, I will not discuss the work of others participating in therapy in my practice with you.

However, there are several exceptions to the rules of confidentiality, whereupon information about your therapy can be released, mostly designed for the protection of you and/or others. These are as follows:

I may release information about your treatment:

- 1) With your written permission
- 2) If required by a court order

Additionally, I am legally obligated to breach your confidentiality:

- 3) If I have information that indicates that a child, elderly person, or disabled individual is being abused, I must report that to the appropriate state agency.
- 4) If a client is an imminent risk of harm to him/herself or makes threats of imminent violence against another person, I am required to take protective actions, which may include phoning legal authorities such as the police or other agencies.

In any case, I will make every effort to discuss such issues with you before taking any such action.

In some communities, seeing your therapist around town is a distinct possibility. I will typically not approach a client outside of the therapy office unless I have a prior or existing acquaintance with that individual, whereupon not acknowledging them would be conspicuous. This is not meant to be unfriendly, but rather to protect your rights of privacy. You, however, may greet me or choose not to greet me as you wish. Similarly, I do not see the choice not to greet me as an unfriendly gesture - I respect your privacy. If verbal contact is initiated, topics from therapy are never to be discussed outside of the therapy environment.

Additionally, it is important to understand that therapy is a professional relationship. While it is a particular type of close interpersonal relationship, it is not one that can extend beyond the professional boundaries of my office, either during or after our work together, except as noted above (i.e., chance meetings in public). There is much research revealing that when professional and personal boundaries become blurred, the various benefits gained from the therapy relationship may be put at risk.

As you are likely aware, it is impossible to protect the confidentiality of information that is transmitted electronically. This is particularly true of E-mail and information stored on computers connected to the Internet and if you use a cordless or cell phone, someone with a scanner could hear you talk. Although I am open to client contact through the Internet, I suggest that it be used for issues of purely logistic concerns (appointment scheduling, etc) rather than discussions of therapy issues.

Feedback:

Therapy is a relationship between the two of us. As with any relationship, there is the possibility of ups and downs, communication concerns, misunderstandings, etc. If, at any time, you feel that your needs are not being met or you are not getting what you want out of the therapy, please tell me so we can discuss your needs and adjust your treatment as needed. We will continue to work on the goals that you define unless you want to stop, which we will do whenever you ask.

Session Time and Attendance:

Therapy is scheduled at a time of our mutual convenience. The day and time for your next session will be scheduled at the close of each therapy session or may be scheduled by telephone or email. Please understand that the time scheduled for your therapy is held specifically for you. Any requests by other clients for the same hour are declined. You are responsible for keeping this appointment and **you are financially responsible for the session regardless of your attendance.** I will make reasonable efforts to reschedule sessions when notified in a timely manner.

Conclusion of Treatment:

I fully support the termination of treatment when you have come to a place that feels right to do so. You may end your treatment at any time by providing me with one week's notice. Deciding to end treatment will be your decision. However, the anticipation of ending therapy, as well as the actual ending in itself, are often relevant therapy issues to discuss, as they entail leaving a relationship that may have become important to both client and therapist. As such, discussion of this decision is strongly encouraged. I am committed to conduct therapy in the most helpful and healthful fashion and that requires that we talk openly about ending our work together when that time comes.