



CONSENT FOR TREATMENT AND CONFIDENTIALITY DISCLOSURE FORM

About Me:

My name is Autumn Stepanyants, and I am a Registered Clinical Counsellor #19849. I hold a Master of Counselling Degree and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology, specializing in Psychosocial Rehabilitation (PSR). I also hold post-graduate level training in Narrative Therapy, Nature-Based Therapy, Synergetic Play Therapy®, Family Preservation, Existential/Logotherapy, as well as Complex Trauma, Sand Play, and Grief trainings from the Centre for Expressive Therapy, and more. I tend to use an eclectic and responsive approach that is tailored through client feedback. I include additional elements of client centered listening, interpersonal neurobiology, neurosequential model theory, and mindfulness. If you have any questions or preferences regarding any of the types of counselling theory and techniques I may use, please don't hesitate to discuss it with me.

Please carefully read over the following information and we can discuss any questions you may have.

What Is Clinical Counselling?

Clinical counselling helps people improve their emotional, psychological, mental, and physical health while moving toward and creating more positive and fulfilling relationships with oneself, others, and one's larger community, including the natural environment that surrounds us. The building of a trusting relationship between client and counsellor is important as counselling may cover topics that are difficult to talk about. We will work together to establish your own therapeutic goals and continually evaluate them as we proceed.

In our first session(s), I will ask questions to try to get a sense of what brings you in to counselling/therapy. We will talk together about a plan for your time in therapy and discuss what your goals are. I may ask you about things that you do not normally feel very comfortable thinking about or feeling. You have the right to decide what you are comfortable sharing and may choose not to discuss certain topics. However, sometimes it is helpful to push yourself a little and see whether some benefit may come from enduring the discomfort.

If you have any questions about what is happening in therapy, please ask me. You also have the right to decline therapy at any time. If you ever find that you are unhappy about what is happening in your sessions, I encourage you to talk to me so that we can address your concerns.

If you ever have serious concerns about me or about another RCC, you may contact the BC Association of Clinical Counsellors. BCACCs contact information can be found at the bottom of this form.

Benefits Of Therapy:

Therapy can help a person gain a new understanding about their situation, learn new ways of coping with or solving problems, develop new skills, reduce feelings of distress, change unwanted behaviours, improve self-esteem, and aid a person to make new decisions about how they want to be in the world and in their relationships. Therapy can connect us deeper with ourselves, others, community, and, depending on your goals, the natural world around us. Therapy can help a person develop new skills

and change behaviour and thought patterns that may be unhelpful or even detrimental. Therapy can contribute to and create increased happiness, wellbeing, and understanding of oneself, others and systems around us.

Risks Of Therapy:

While there are significant benefits to therapy, there are also some potential risks. Therapy may stimulate memories, evoke strong emotions, and create changes in perception that may alter one's self-concept and ways of relating to others. Sometimes when bringing up uncomfortable feelings and difficult memories, people sometimes feel worse before they begin to feel better. This is especially a concern for clients who have been through trauma. Some find that as they experiment with new ways of thinking and behaving, relationships with others are altered or disrupted.

Since therapy often involves discussing unpleasant aspects of your life, you may experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness and helplessness. There are no guarantees of what you will experience. You are encouraged to share any feelings of fear, concern, or doubt about the counselling process with me at any time during your sessions. It is important to understand that therapy is a process that often involves some ups and downs and can also sometimes be hard work. That said, you are encouraged to continually discuss any thoughts or concerns you are having with me. Counselling is a process of personal exploration and may lead to major changes in your life perspectives and decisions. Together we will work to achieve the best possible results for you.

Confidentiality & Limits of Confidentiality:

I value the quality of the relationship between counsellors and clients, especially client's privacy and safety. The gathering and retaining of client's personal information is guided by the BC Association of Clinical Counsellors and the Personal Information Privacy Act. Thus Information about counselling sessions will not be released to anyone without your written consent unless one of the exceptions to confidentiality (as outlined below) have occurred. Otherwise, ALL other information is kept strictly confidential.

The 3 limits of confidentiality placed upon me as a Registered Clinical Counsellor are:

1. If during the course of counselling, information emerges that clients may do harm to themselves or others, I must act upon this information, with or without your permission in order to ensure your safety and /or the safety of others.
2. If during the course of counselling information emerges about child abuse, I am legally obligated to inform the appropriate authorities of this alleged abuse with or without your permission.
3. It is also possible that courts may require disclosure of client records, if they contain information related to legal proceedings.

In order to further protect your confidentiality, I will not acknowledge you if we meet each other in public. You are welcome to approach me, however. You are free to talk about our professional relationship with whomever you choose.

Fees:

Counselling fees are set according to recommendations by BC Association of Clinical Counsellors Fee Guidelines. These fees are payable by cash, cheque, debit or credit card. If a cheque cannot be honoured due to insufficient funds, a \$25 administrative fee will be charged in addition to the session fee. My fees are set at:

- \$140 +GST for 50 minute individual sessions
- \$140 +GST for 45 minute play therapy sessions
- \$210 +GST for 75 minute parenting sessions
- \$210 +GST for 75 minute couples or family sessions

Emailed receipts will be issued for each paid session and will include my name and professional association ID number for insurance claims. Many extended health benefits plans will reimburse you for the services of a Registered Clinical Counsellor (RCC). Please check your plan's details to see if you are eligible. If you discover that Registered Clinical Counsellors are not covered for your plan, then you have the option to write a letter to your employer or benefits provider to ask them to include RCCs. Healthcare spending accounts can often cover the cost of counselling as well.

Cancelled and/or Missed Appointments:

Because your session time is reserved exclusively for you, a minimum of 24 hours notice must be given to cancel your appointment or the full session fee will be charged. Clients will be charged their full appointment fee for all missed sessions or sessions cancelled with less than 24 hours notice. Clients arriving late for appointments are entitled to receive the remainder of their scheduled appointment for the full appointment fee. A missed appointment or late cancellation means I was not able to schedule someone else in that time spot. I hope that you understand this policy and invite you to discuss it further with me if you have any questions or concerns.

I understand that accessing private practice counselling services can be a financial investment. I invite you to repeatedly reassess your investment with me directly. My goal is that you feel the return of your investment has been satisfactory at the least, but hopefully exceptional.

Technology for Virtual Sessions:

Please note that technical issues and/or poor internet connections may be a concern for virtual sessions and should be considered in the decision-making process when deciding if virtual sessions are a good fit for yourself. The platform that I use for virtual sessions is a PIPA compliant and secure app called Jane. A link will be emailed to you prior to the session about Jane as well as the link for your session. You will require a stable private WIFI internet connection. Please also have your phone accessible in case there are any disruptions to internet services so that I can call you to collaborate on whether to continue by telephone or reschedule the interrupted session.

If virtual sessions are a good fit for you, it is recommended to have or create a space that is confidential and private for the virtual session. Include comforts in your space such as water and/tea and tissues. Please do not hesitate to communicate more with me if you need further troubleshooting for your virtual sessions and creating the best environment for yourself. While it is rare to have virtual service disruptions, when we create a plan on how to handle a potential disruption it can be less stressful if the moment does occur.

Contacting

Please contact me at autumn@mossandferncounselling.com. My regular business hours are Monday to Thursday 9am to 4pm and Fridays 9am to 7pm. I will respond to you as soon as possible, however there are times while I am in session that I may not be able to call or email back until the following business day. Should you need to get a hold of me between sessions, it is best to email rather than call. Please note that email and texting cannot be guaranteed confidential so please limit contacting me via email or phone to only discussing scheduling concerns.

If you have an emergency, please call 911, or your local crisis line contact. In BC, this number is 1-800-784-2433. For youth aged 5-20 years old, contact Kids Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868.

Please sign below to acknowledge that you have read the above information, had sufficient time to consider it carefully, asked any questions that you needed to, and understand the conditions. By signing this you give your consent for therapy and will receive a copy of this agreement. You may access any of your personal therapeutic files at any time.

Client Signature: _____ DATE: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature (If applicable): _____ DATE: _____

Counsellor Signature: _____ RCC REG NO. #19849

BCACC contact information for registered therapists:
#14 – 2544 Dunlevy Street
Victoria, BC V8R 5Z2
Telephone: 1-800-909-6303
Email: hoffice@bc-counsellors.org