



Dr. Alyx MacTernan, Ed.D., LPC, NBCC

Informed Consent Agreement

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Prior to beginning a counseling relationship, it is important for you to familiarize yourself with my approach to treatment, your rights and responsibilities, and my counseling practices. You have received my Notice of Privacy Practices (NPP) and my Professional Disclosure Statement (PDS).

The NPP outlines your right to confidentiality and privacy and defines under what circumstances your health information may be released to another person(s) or agency. The PDS identifies my credentials as a Licensed Professional Counselor and your rights under Georgia, Florida or Texas law (the state in which you reside) with respect to counseling services you receive from me.

Negotiating and Facilitating Your Needs as a Client

It is important to me that you actively participate in the process of our engagement as client and therapist. I encourage you to be forthcoming with your needs of me in effectively facilitating your personal process. Some ideas, experiments, or interventions I suggest may not resonate with your intuitive wisdom for yourself and, especially in these cases, I invite you to bring this incongruence to my attention. Having an open dialogue about the process of your therapy with me can be of major importance to your personal goals in therapy, so I will ask you to provide feedback about the process in most sessions! If you have any additional concerns, questions, or curiosities about my rationale for the facilitation of our work together, please feel invited to express them to me at any time.

Risks to Counseling and Treatment

It is important for you to know there are risks involved in counseling and treatment. For example, some people experience an increase in stress, particularly during the early stages of counseling. Some problems may seem to get worse before they get better. In some cases, discussing long-standing, unresolved problems can seem to aggravate rather than help the problem. This often happens in couples or family counseling. These are natural occurrences and you should be aware of them. Other risks may occur as well, depending on your unique situation. Please ask me about what risks you can expect, and I will also discuss other risks as I identify them.

Counseling and Treatment Alternatives

I am not able to treat all concerns and problems confronting my clients. As a result, I cannot guarantee successful treatment. If I determine that I cannot adequately treat you, I will inform



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you at the earliest opportunity and assist you in finding services that are more appropriate. This could include a referral to another mental health provider, a hospital inpatient program or a substance abuse program. Other referrals may also be important. If at any time you have doubts about the appropriateness or effectiveness of your treatment with me, please discuss these doubts as soon as possible.

Legal Proceedings and Court Involvement

If you are involved in or anticipate being involved in legal or court proceedings, please notify me as soon as possible. It is important for me to understand how, if at all, your involvement in legal proceedings might affect our work together. In the event you are seeing me because you have been asked to obtain an evaluation for a legal proceeding, it is important for you to know the difference between treatment and an evaluation, and that treatment is not a substitute for an evaluation. Treatment is also not an appropriate way to obtain evaluation results. If you need an evaluation, I will assist you to find a provider who offers this service.

It is also important for you to know that I will not be a party to any legal proceedings against current or former clients. I will work with you to support treatment goals, not to address legal issues that require an adversarial approach. Clients entering treatment are agreeing to not involve me in legal or court proceedings or attempt to obtain treatment records for legal or court proceedings when marital or family counseling has not been successful at resolving disputes. This prevents misuse of your treatment for legal objectives.

In the event that you do require my testimony or involvement in non-adversarial aspects for legal or court proceedings, I will do so only with your consent. I will be unable to disclose any information pertaining to other family members or parties in counseling without their specific consent.

Appointments and Cancellations

Session length: All sessions will be 50 minutes.

Scheduling/Cancellation: All sessions are by appointment only, confirmed by telephone and/or email. Feel free to leave a voicemail 24 hours/day at the phone number I give you. In the event that you need to cancel an appointment, please do so at least 24 hours prior to our scheduled session. This helps me value and schedule my time in a way that best serves my own needs and that of my other clients.



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Emergencies

If you feel you are a danger to yourself or others or are experiencing a medical emergency – call 911 immediately. Do NOT rely on communication with me, through this website or any other method for urgent medical needs.

Payment

Your payment for each session is due at or before the time of our scheduled session, unless otherwise contracted by us in writing. Debit or credit card payments are to be made via the website.

Consent for Internet Communication

I am willing to communicate with clients via email with regard to the logistical aspects of our work together. Such communication could include, and is not limited to: scheduling a session, conveying/clarifying instructions, conveying contact information of clients or client referrals.

Please understand that I will choose to save communication regarding your personal process in therapy for our scheduled sessions. Internet communication can pose some security risks. We want our clients to be aware of these risks. Potential security risks and conditions for internet communication are:

- Confidentiality is not guaranteed. Internet communication between me and my clients may be accessed by anyone who comes into my client's log-on and password at home and/or work. Email messages go through multiple servers and are subject to review by authorized employees of ISPs and by unauthorized hacking.
- Internet correspondence is subject to court subpoena.
- I will make hard copies of all internet communication and these hard copies will become a part of the client's record. This correspondence is protected and may not be re-disclosed without the client's consent.
- Internet communication is subject to failure. Clients need to understand that e-mail correspondence sent either by me or my clients may not be received.

Web-based Platforms

Video and electronic communication via web-based platforms are an emerging method for coaching and counseling and affords many opportunities for clients to access practitioners outside their locale, and/or from the convenience of their own venue. It is important to understand that, due to the use and nature of the internet, I cannot guarantee confidentiality



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for our video and electronic communication for the following reasons:

- Video or text conferencing can be seen or heard by any third party with internet access.
- Video or text conferencing conducted at your place of employment may be the property of your employer and may be seen or heard by your employer.
- Video or text conferencing conducted in any location may be overheard by any person in your vicinity.
- It is unknown the length of time for which our video or text communication may be stored, and whether your health information is protected.