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Professional Disclosure Statement

Professional Education

A licensed marriage and family therapist (LMFT) is a mental health professional who provides systemic counseling to couples and families. A licensed professional counselor (LPC) is a mental health professional that provides professional therapeutic services to those who would like to improve their mental health, receive psycho-education, or use human development principles to improve their daily lives. In the state of Texas, both a licensed marriage and family therapist and a licensed professional counselor are required to hold a master's degree in counseling, or a counseling related field, and must also complete at least 3000 hours of supervised experience in their field.

I earned my bachelor's degree at Hollins University in 1987. After my children were in school, I pursued my master's degree in marriage and family therapy at Amridge University. With that degree, I began the process of obtaining my licenses as both a marriage and family therapist and a licensed professional counselor. I earned my PhD in marriage and family therapy, also at Amridge University. I am active in AAMFT, the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapist.

Theories and Practices

My theoretical orientation is systemic and my therapy preference is solution-focused therapy. Systemic thinking involves the idea that we are all affected by those who are around us. Our families affect our thinking and our development. When working with a client, I try always to be aware of the system in which the client functions. Solution-focused therapy is a person-centered therapy that believes we have the tools to solve our own problems, if we are focused in the right direction. I work with clients to find the exceptions to their problems: times when things are working well. Then I help the client find ways to have things work well on a more consistent basis.

Some concerns respond better with other forms of therapy. I also use cognitive behavioral therapy, trauma focused cognitive behavioral therapy, psycho-education, play therapy and motivational interviewing. I work with the client in order to find the therapy that fits best with their presenting problem and their self as a person.

There are times when my therapy dog, Luke, will be in sessions. Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) has been shown effective in reducing anxiety and calming emotions. Luke and I have been a certified Pet Partner team since 2011 and he has come into the office with me during this time. Since not all clients are comfortable having a dog

present in the session, there are days when Luke is not scheduled in the office with me. Generally, Luke will be in the office on most days but never Mondays. Please let me know if you prefer to have Luke present or not and I will do my best to accommodate you. If there are allergy concerns or if Luke would produce anxiety for you, I will be sure and schedule your appointment on a day when Luke will not be there.

Counseling relationships have a normal timespan, depending on the need of the client. We will decide together what our goals for therapy are and when we will know they have been met. My hope is that your experience with me as a counselor will be a positive one so that if you need additional counseling in the future, you will feel comfortable returning to counseling.

It is a violation of professional ethics to enter into a counseling relationship with a client who is under the care of another licensed or certified counseling professional. If you are currently receiving counseling elsewhere, please let me know so we can discuss options. If I feel at anytime that you need care beyond what I can provide, I will refer you to a capable source.

Confidentiality

Counseling is based on a sense of confidentiality and safety. It is my responsibility to keep all information concerning my clients confidential, unless the client or their parents or guardians give me WRITTEN consent. The limits to this confidentiality are listed below:

- I have reason to believe my client is a danger to themselves or to others
- My client discloses information about the abuse of a child, an elderly person, or a disabled person
- I have reason to believe my client is suicidal or homicidal
- I am issued a subpoena regarding my client
- My client's insurance company requires information in order to release payment
- My client makes a formal complaint to the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors regarding our therapy

As part of this relationship, if we meet in public I will protect your confidentiality by not acknowledging or approaching you first. I will not discuss your case in a public place. You are in control of the counseling relationship. You have the right to end the relationship at any time.

If I am counseling your child or adolescent, I understand that you are curious about what happens in the counseling sessions. It is important that your child or adolescent feels safe and able to trust the counseling relationship. It is my policy to maintain confidentiality with your child or adolescent while keeping you updated on your child's progress. I ask you to remember that as a professional, if at any time I feel your child or adolescent is in serious danger, I will break confidentiality to share information

with you and the proper authorities if necessary in order to keep your child or adolescent safe. I will inform the client before breaking confidentiality if possible.

When you bring your child in for counseling, it is imperative that you stay in the building during the session. I must be able to find you in case of emergency.

Practical Concerns

Individual, couples, and family sessions last 45-50 minutes. The fee for a session is \$125 for the initial consultation session, and \$100 for all future sessions, payable at the time of the session. I accept credit cards, checks or cash, although I cannot provide change if you do pay cash. A \$35 charge will be due for all returned checks. I accept Blue Cross Blue Shield insurance and will file your insurance for you. I can provide you with a super invoice for any other insurance that you can file with your insurance company for reimbursement.

I value your time as much as you value my time. I will be ready to begin our appointments on time as part of my personal commitment to you. If you arrive late for your session, you will be able to complete the rest of your session but due to scheduling conflicts, cannot stay past your normally scheduled time. You will be financially responsible for the entire session. If you need to reschedule or cancel a session, please do so at least 24 hours in advance. Sessions not rescheduled or canceled 24 hours in advance will be billed \$50 charged to the credit card on file in my office. If you cancel two sessions in a row, I will offer your session time slot to another client if needed.

If you need phone or email consultation between sessions, feel free to call or email me. I will not interrupt a session to answer the phone, but I will return your call as soon as possible, no later than the next morning. I will answer emails within 24 hours of receiving them. Consultation phone calls will not last more than 15 minutes.

If you are dissatisfied with my services at any time, please let me know so we can discuss your concerns. If I am unable to resolve your concerns I will assist you in finding another counselor with whom you might be able to work more effectively. If you wish to file a formal complaint, please contact:

Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors Complaints management and Investigative Section
P. O. Box 141369
Austin, Texas 78714-1369
(512) 834-6658

Client, Parent, or Guardian signature	Date
Counselor signature	Date
