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INFORMATION FOR CLIENTS

Welcome to my practice. I appreciate the opportunity to be helpful to you. I hope that this will be the start of a beneficial professional relationship.

This brochure is for you to keep and refer to as needed. The purpose of this brochure is to provide you as much information as possible in a convenient format. However, please feel free to ask any questions about the material or any other questions that might come up for you.

Professional Experience

I am a licensed clinical psychologist who provides individual and couples counseling for adults and adolescents. I received my Ph.D. in counseling psychology from Loyola University Chicago in 1995. I have been working in the mental health field in a variety of ways since 1987. I abide by the code of ethics set forth by the American Psychological Association. I have had training and experience working with a wide range of issues including depression, anxiety, relationship concerns, grief and loss issues, sexual identity concerns, eating disorders, low self-esteem and life transitions.

Appointments

We will usually meet for a 50 minute session. Your appointment time is reserved for you so it is necessary to charge the set fee for appointments which are not cancelled 24 hours in advance. Exceptions to this rule are made due to circumstances that we would both define as an emergency.

Messages

You can reach me through my voicemail at 312-458-9086. I will return your call within 24 hours and in most cases, by the end of the day. Please leave a number and range of times that I can reach you. You can also contact me via e-mail at connie@conniemartinphd.com or through my website at www.conniemartinphd.com

Treatment

Evaluation: The first few meetings will be spent getting to know each other and gathering information about you. When the initial evaluation is over we will discuss the treatment recommendations. Throughout treatment we will assess your progress toward your goals and make adjustments as needed.

Treatment philosophy: I strongly believe that you should feel comfortable with the therapist you choose and the therapy itself. As a client you will be putting a good deal of time, money and energy into therapy. Thus, it is important to choose a therapist carefully. Therapy is more likely to be helpful to you when you are comfortable with your therapist.

I think of my approach to helping people as a collaborative effort in which we work together to address the defined problem area. Psychotherapy requires your active involvement to change thoughts, feelings and behaviors. For example, I want you to tell me about important experiences, what they mean to you and what strong feelings were involved. It is my job to facilitate this process by providing an atmosphere in which all areas of a problem can be openly discussed. I will work with you to gain insights into the connections between your thoughts/feelings and life choices. Next, we can work together to explore different options or choices that you might try to solve problems or relate differently to people. The goal for therapy is for you to be empowered to make choices that are congruent with your wants and needs.

Aside from the many benefits of therapy there are some potential risks. You may experience uncomfortable levels of sadness, anxiety, anger or other feelings. These risks are expected when people are making important changes in their lives. Finally, even with our best efforts, there is a risk that therapy may not work out as anticipated for you. It is important that we discuss these issues as they come up. If it is determined that you might benefit from a different kind of treatment I will work with you to get it. For example, I may make a referral to your medical doctor, a psychiatrist, a nutritionist or other health care providers.

Ending treatment: The end of treatment usually occurs after you and I have discussed your progress and have determined that it is time to end treatment. However, you may opt to end treatment whenever you want. It would be constructive to have one or two sessions to summarize your progress and make plans for moving forward.

Client's rights/Confidentiality

Your confidentiality (privacy) is protected by state law and by the rules of my profession. The policies and practices to protect the privacy of your health information is outlined in the "HIPPA" form that you received in the first session. Areas in which confidentiality is not protected include:

1. If I believe that a child has been or will be abused I must report this belief.
2. If I believe that an adult has been abused or exploited I must report this belief.
3. If I believe that you are in imminent danger to hurt yourself or another person I must report this belief.

4. Judicial and administrative proceedings in which you are being evaluated for a third party or where the evaluation is court ordered.
5. Health Oversight Activities
6. Worker's compensation

There are two situations in which I might talk about your case with another therapist. I will ask for your agreement to let me do so in these two situations.

First, when I am away from the office for an extended time, I will have a fellow colleague cover for me. This therapist will be available to you in case of an emergency. Generally, I would tell this therapist only what he/she would need to know for an emergency.

Second, I sometimes consult other therapists or professionals about my clients. This helps me in giving high quality care to you. Your name will never be given to them and they will be told only as much information as they need to understand your situation.

Release of information/Record Keeping

If your records need to be seen by another professional I will discuss it with you. If you agree to share these records you will need to sign a release form. This form states the specific information to be shared, with whom, why and sets time limits. You will be given a copy of this form after you sign it.

Fees, Payment & Billing

For a session of 50 minutes the fee is \$140. Fees for telephone sessions are billed at the rate of office sessions. I ask clients to pay for each session at its end. If we agree to a monthly billing system you will receive a bill in the last scheduled session of the month. I ask that the bill be paid the following session. If you think you will have trouble with payment please discuss this with me. If your bill remains unpaid, termination of services may be initiated and appropriate referrals will be made.

Insurance

Clients are personally responsible for the fees for service. If you will be using health insurance we can discuss what each of our responsibilities will be in obtaining payment.