

**Deborah Ward BSc Dipl MA (Int Psych) MBACP
Integrative Psychotherapist**

Therapist – Client Contract

Welcome to my practice. This document contains important information about my professional services and business policies. Please read it carefully and jot down any questions you might have so that we can discuss them at our next meeting.

Psychotherapeutic Services

Psychotherapy is not easily described in general statements. It varies depending on the personalities of the therapist and the client, and the particular problems brought forward. There are many different methods I may use to deal with the problems that you hope to address. Psychotherapy is not like a medical doctor visit. Instead, it calls for an active effort on your part. In order for the therapy to be most successful, you will have to work on things we talk about both during our sessions and at home.

Psychotherapy can have benefits and difficulties. Since therapy often involves discussing difficult or unpleasant aspects of your life, you may experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness and helplessness. On the other hand, psychotherapy has also been shown to have long-term benefits for people who go through it. Therapy often leads to better relationships, solutions to specific problems, and significant reductions in feelings of distress. But there are no guarantees of what you will experience.

Our first few sessions will involve an evaluation of your needs and what you hope to achieve through therapy. By the end of the evaluation, I will be able to offer you some first impressions of what our work will include, if you decide to continue with therapy. You should evaluate this. If you have questions about my procedures, we should discuss them whenever they arise. If your doubts persist, you may wish to meet with another professional for a second opinion. Your well being is the primary concern.

Meetings and Fees

After the preliminary session(s) we can both decide if I am the best person to provide the services you need in order to meet your treatment goals. Once we proceed, it is usual practice to schedule one 60-minute session per week at a regular time we agree on. In certain circumstances, this may be increased to two sessions per week if we both feel it is appropriate.

Once an appointment slot is scheduled, I will keep that session hour booked for you on an on-going basis until you give notice to conclude therapy. I do not offer on-going psychotherapy or counselling on a less than once a week basis nor do I offer a casual book-as-you-go appointment system as I do not believe it provides therapeutic value. Occasionally, there is merit in fortnightly sessions for clients who have been in therapy for an extended period of time and are working towards closure. If cost is the issue, please mention this. You are bound to receive more benefit from a fixed number sessions on a regular basis, than occasional sessions.

If your work involves regular travel, shift patterns, etc, please discuss this with me so that we can find a mutually acceptable working arrangement.

While a **notice period to finish therapy** is therapeutically recommended, you are free to stop whenever you wish. However, until I receive notification to end therapy from you, your weekly appointments remain scheduled for you and you are responsible for those

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fees whether you have attended or not. There are palliative reasons for this and is usual practice in the profession.

There are a few exceptions to this, though, and I do try my best to cater for real needs whenever possible. These exceptions are:

- You do not have to pay for sessions missed due to a reasonable number of holidays when there has been at least a week's notice given. However, if you take a high number of holidays, it may be necessary to pay for some missed sessions to make it viable for me to maintain your booking slot.
- Longer-term absence due to illness, disability, hospital treatments or work commitments (e.g. travel, shift work) should be discussed and negotiated individually.
- In the case of short-term illness or emergencies, I will endeavour to offer an alternative mutually-convenient session. I treat each event individually.
- You are not responsible for the sessions I am unable to fulfil (holidays, illness, etc).
- Initial telephone sessions must be paid for at the time of booking; on-going telephone sessions must be paid up in full at least 48 hours before your appointment time.

NB. All other cancellations are chargeable. In the absence of notice to finish treatment, all on-going non-attended sessions remain chargeable. Until you give notice to finish, I keep your session time reserved for you for a reasonable period of time.

Session Times

If you are attending sessions in West Oxfordshire, please be aware that I do not have a waiting room. Please arrive at the specified time as I am unable to respond any earlier, just as I would not interrupt your session for another early arrival. Sessions are 60-minutes long.

The session will finish at the hour's end; not sixty minutes after a late start.

Confidentiality

The privacy of communications between a client and a psychotherapist is protected by the professional code of ethics and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). I would only release information about our work to others with your written permission. But there are a few exceptions. In all these cases, I would make every attempt to discuss this with you before taking action:

- In extreme circumstances, such as potential suicide or delusional states, it be appropriate to contact your general practitioner;
- If I believe you are planning or threatening actual bodily harm or abuse to others, especially to the vulnerable such as children, the elderly or disabled, I am obliged by law to report these intentions;
- If it comes to my attention that you are planning or involved with plans to support terrorist acts, I am obliged by law to report these intentions;
- If I am served with a court order or any other disclosure obligation by UK law.

My GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) policy covers what data I might collect or hold about you and how it is stored. I take this seriously and with utmost respect for

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my clients. Please read as agreement to this contract means you have read and agree to my GDPR policy.
<http://www.deborahward.co.uk/privacy.php>

Supervision

I may discuss aspects of the work we do together with my supervisor. This is considered good practice within the profession and is to ensure the high standard of my work. I would not reveal your identity or discuss you in any way that could identify you.

You affirm that you are:

- are over 18 years of age
- are not falsifying your identity or email details
- declare whether you have received or are receiving any other therapy, counselling or psychiatric care
- are not at risk of harming others
- will declare any medications taken, drug or alcohol dependency or abuse, any other addictions
- your sole purpose of counselling and psychotherapy is for your personal and confidential counselling use only
- you will declare at the outset if there exists any additional agenda in your seeking counselling. This may include, but is not limited to, undergoing counselling or therapy for research, publishing, distribution or any other secondary purpose.
- you will declare at the outset if your participation in this counselling will be shared in any form, be it, recordings, transcripts, copying or reporting of or on the experience, your impressions thereof, surveillance and any other use of the session, verbal or otherwise, other than for your personal therapeutic benefit.

Geographical Setting

This counselling and therapy service is provided in the United Kingdom and is available to UK residents located within the United Kingdom at the time of the service being provided. Any prospective or current client must declare, at the outset, their geographic location and residency if other than in the United Kingdom. All and any therapeutic and counselling service by Deborah Ward is specifically denied to people who live in a country or state other than the UK that requires licensure in that location. It is the responsibility of the client to declare, at the outset, any legal requirements their area of citizenship or residency demands.

Dispute

Deborah Ward and you, the client, agree that any dispute arising out of this service shall first be resolved by mediation, if possible. This contract was entered into in Oxfordshire County, United Kingdom, and any necessary arbitration or litigation will take place in this county. All terminology is intended for a UK audience; those not familiar with UK psychotherapy and counselling terms should not assume nor construe meaning applicable to a non-UK service, professional qualifications, standards or any other aspect of The Being Well's operations.

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Licensing and Code of ethics

I am a Member of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy and of the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy and abide by the Association Code of Ethics.

If you do not agree with these terms and conditions, please discuss these points as soon as possible.

Deborah Ward