

Counseling Agreement

Thank you for your interest counseling and for giving me an opportunity to serve you. The following information will serve as an agreement between us.

My Role and Commitments – I provide biblically-based counseling and will seek to help you apply God’s Word, the Bible, to your life, based on my understanding and training. I am not a state-licensed therapist, psychologist, or psychiatrist. I do not adhere too many of the state sanctioned guidelines for psychologist, psychiatrist, or licensed therapist and should not be expected to follow the methods or standards of those mental health professionals.

Scope of Practice - If you have legal, financial, medical or other technical questions, you should seek advice from an independent professional. I will seek to cooperate with such advisors and help you to consider their counsel in light of God’s Word. I do not give professional advice.

Discontinuation – At any time during our counseling, for reason(s) sufficient to either of us, you or I have the option to discontinue counseling.

Confidentiality - Confidentiality is an important aspect of the counseling process and I will carefully guard the information you entrust to me. We desire as much as possible to protect your privacy.

There are situations, however, in which I might believe that it is wise or mandated (biblically or legally) for me to share certain information with others. Some examples might be:

1. When I am uncertain how to address a problem and need advice from a professor, pastor, or counselor.
2. When there is concern that you or someone else might otherwise be harmed unless others intervene.
3. When abuse or another crime must be reported to the authorities.
4. When your pastor or church leadership is needed to provide pastoral assistance.
5. In counseling minor children, I might need to divulge information to parents or legal guardians.

Please be assured that I strongly prefer not to disclose your personal information to others, and I will make every effort to help you find ways to resolve a problem as privately as possible.

I also ask you to agree to not discuss our communications with people who do not have a necessary interest in the counseling process. In addition, where your situation might involve legal issues, you must agree to treat all dealings with me in regard to this counseling as settlement negotiations, which means they will be inadmissible in a court of law or for legal discovery. Furthermore, you must agree that you will not try to force me to divulge any information acquired during the counseling process or to testify in any legal proceeding related to the process.

Fee – Because this counseling is a ministry, the suggested fee is only \$65 an hour for individuals and \$120 for couples. The counseling process will usually include between-session growth assignments (e.g., reading) that might require you to purchase materials.

Conflict Resolution – In the unlikely event of a conflict between you and me, all parties must seek to resolve it in a biblical manner, through discussion, and, if necessary, through mediation and arbitration, according to the *Rules of Procedure* of the Institute for Christian Conciliation. It is expressly understood that by agreeing in advance to arbitrate that the counselee is giving up his right to a trial in the civil courts.

Making Counseling Effective – Doing the following will increase the effectiveness of our sessions:

1. *Be committed.* Come to each session with a humble spirit, seeking to learn how God wants you to handle your problems based on his Word.

2. *Attend each scheduled session.* If an emergency arises and you cannot attend a session, please contact me as soon as possible.

3. *Be as open and honest as you can.* At the same time, I realize that talking about your problems might be very difficult for you and that your trust might take time to develop.

4. *Be patient*—your problems did not develop in a day. It may take me several sessions to obtain a good understanding of your situation. It is vital for me to carefully listen, to gather needed information, and to build understanding and trust with you.

5. *Complete assignments given, and review and pray over the matters discussed during previous sessions.* I will give you assignments that fit our counseling aims and will help you make progress between sessions.

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Agreement by Counselee(s): If you have any questions about the above matters, please talk with me. If you are comfortable and in complete agreement with all of the above, please sign below and return this sheet to me before or at the beginning of our first session.

I have read and understand the above guidelines and find them acceptable.

Name _____ Signed _____ Date _____

Name _____ Signed _____ Date _____

Name _____ Signed _____ Date _____

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to serve Jesus by helping you find and apply his answers to your problems. May God encourage, bless, and empower you in these coming days!