



Superior Psychiatric Services™
A Professional Medical Corporation

Newport Beach & Palm Desert

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Treatment Description and Consent

Psychotherapy

Psychotherapy may have benefits such as significant reduction in distress, improved social relationships, resolution of significant problems, and a clearer understanding of one's self, values and goals. However, there are no guarantees about what will happen in therapy. For therapy to be most successful, you will have to be able to talk openly and honestly, address any difficulties that arise, and put forth an active effort outside sessions.

Psychotherapy may also require revealing unpleasant aspects of your history and current life. Therefore, in the initial stages of treatment, psychotherapy may lead to uncomfortable levels of feelings like sadness, guilt, anxiety, anger, frustration, loneliness, and helplessness and could impact your relationship with others. Be sure to let us know if you have this experience. Generally, unpleasant experiences are temporary.

By the end of your initial evaluation, I will offer you some initial impressions and an initial treatment plan. You should evaluate this information along with your own assessment about whether you feel comfortable working with me. Therapy involves a large commitment of time, money and energy, so you should be careful about the therapist you select. If you have any questions about my procedures, then we should discuss them whenever they arise. If your doubt persists, I will be happy to offer referrals for you to secure an appropriate consultation with another mental health professional.

Medications

Medications are often used as adjuncts to psychotherapy. Sometimes, you will be seeing someone else for therapy, and I will be responsible for your medication management. If this is the case, I will coordinate your medical care and medication goals with your therapist. If I am doing both your medication management and psychotherapy, we will work together to find the

optimal combination of medication (if warranted) and therapy that help to fulfill your personal goals.

If a medication is indicated, I will discuss with you the nature of your illness, the reason for the medication, the likelihood of improving with and without medication, I will also explain any reasonable alternative treatment other than medications which have not been tried and an explanation why they should not be tried first. Further, you will understand the type(s) of medication being recommended, dosage and frequency of administration including a discussion of the initial dose, the maintenance dose and the dose range; probable side effect known commonly to occur and any side effects likely to occur in particular cases, as determined by your medical and psychiatric history or known medical conditions; and any possible long term effects which may occur after taking the medication for long periods (usually three months) or terminating the medication, including tardive dyskinesia or withdrawal. Finally, we will discuss the effect of sudden withdrawal of the drug against medical advice.

As many psychiatric conditions have an underlying biological basis, medications can be an important component of treating certain illnesses. It is my belief that a bio-psycho-social model to treatment-incorporating biological aspects, psychological factors and social components, provides most patients the best chances of improving. We will look at all of these areas through the course of our treatment and decide which interventions are right for you.

Sessions

My normal practice is to conduct a thorough evaluation in the initial interview. This comprehensive assessment is necessary whether I will provide you with therapy, medication management, or both, as it will allow me to better understand your history, your symptoms, and your reasons for seeking treatment. During this time, as well as in the next 1-2 sessions, we can both decide whether I am the best person to provide the services that you need. If psychotherapy is initiated, I will usually schedule one fifty minute session per week at a mutually agreed time. We may agree to vary session length and frequency.

Professional Fees

My fee is \$495 for an initial sixty minute assessment/evaluation (regardless of whether it is for therapy, medications or both), \$495 for a fifty minute therapy session with or without medication management, and \$225 for a twenty-five minute medication management only session. Any other professional services that require longer than 10 minutes such as report writing, telephone conversations, preparation of treatment summaries, court proceedings (even if I am compelled to testify by another party), or time spent performing any other services you may request will be charged \$100 for each 10-minute increment, similar to the fee for therapy.

Cancellations and No-Show Policy

Once your appointment is scheduled, you will be expected to pay for it unless you provide at least 48 business hours advance notice of cancellation. Business hours are considered the weekdays between Monday and Friday. This means if you have an appointment on Monday January 8th at 4pm, you must cancel by Thursday January 4th at 4pm to avoid being charged. If you do not provide at least 48 business hours notice, or fail to show for the scheduled appointment, you will be responsible for the FULL cost of the session. Insurance companies will often not reimburse for missed sessions or sessions cancelled late.

Billing and Payments

You will be expected to pay for each session at the beginning of each session, unless we agree otherwise. Payment schedules for other professional services will be agreed to at the time these services are requested. If your account has payment overdue for over 60 days, I have the option of using legal means to secure payment, including collection agencies or small claims court. In most cases, the only information I would provide would be client name, nature of services provided, and amount due. There will be a \$25 service charge for all returned checks.

Insurance Reimbursement

We may accept some insurance plans. For those of you whose insurance we take, we will bill the insurance company directly. For all other clients, we are considered an "out of network provider" for PPO plans. You will be considered responsible for paying your own fees. We will provide you however with a standard receipt in a form that can be submitted to your insurance company. Therefore, it is very important that you find out exactly what mental health services your insurance policy covers. Many insurance companies are oriented towards a short-term treatment approach, and therefore, it may be necessary to seek additional approval from your insurance company after a certain number of sessions. Some plans will allow us to continue, while others will not once your short-term benefits are no longer available.

Please be aware that most insurance agreements require you to authorize me to provide a clinical diagnosis, and sometimes additional clinical information such as treatment plan or summary, or in rare cases, a copy of the entire record. This information will become part of the insurance company files, and in all probability, some of it will be computerized. All insurance companies claim to keep such information confidential, but once it is in their hands, I will have

no control over what they do with it. In some cases they may share the information with a national medical information data bank.

Contacting Us

I may not be available immediately by telephone. I do however carry a cell phone in case of emergency. You will be able to either leave a message or speak directly with our office during business hours. I make every effort to return your call same business day. If it is a weekend or holiday it may take more than a business day to return your call. However, please let me know if the call is urgent and I will call immediately. We have an answering service that will take messages during non-business hours. When you call please be sure to leave some numbers where you can be reached and best times to try and return your call. If your call is an emergency there are instructions on my voicemail of how to page me. Please also and always call "911" in an emergency as well. You should always go to the emergency room at your nearest hospital as well. I would be sure to all your primary care physician well.

If I will be unavailable for an extended period of time, I will provide you with the name of a trusted colleague whom you can contact if necessary.

Professional Records

Both law and the standards of my profession require that I keep appropriate treatment records. You are entitled to review a copy of the records, unless I believe that seeing them would be emotionally damaging, in which case, I will be happy to provide them to an appropriate mental health professional of your choice. Because these are professional records, they can be misinterpreted or upsetting, so I recommend that we review them together so that we can discuss what they contain. I can also prepare an appropriate summary for review. Clients will be charged an appropriate fee for any preparation time that is required to comply with an information request.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is the cornerstone of mental health treatment and is protected by the law. I can only release information about our work to others with your written permission. Some basic information about diagnosis and treatment may be required as a condition of your insurance coverage. Exceptions to confidentiality where disclosure is required by law:

If there is a threat of serious bodily harm to others, I am required to take protective actions, which may include notifying the potential victim, notifying the police, or seeking appropriate hospitalization.

* If there is a threat to harm yourself, I am required to seek hospitalization for the client, or to contact family members or others who can help provide protection

* If there is an indication of abuse to a child, an elderly person, or a disabled person, even if it is about a party other than yourself, I must file a report with the appropriate state agency

* If you are involved in judicial proceedings, you have the right to prevent me from providing any information about your treatment. However, in some circumstances in which your emotional condition is an important element, a judge may require my testimony

* If due to mental illness, you are unable to meet your basic needs, such as clothing, food, and shelter, I may have to disclose information in order to access services to provide for your basic needs

These situations have rarely arisen in my clinical practice, but should such a situation occur, I will make every effort to fully discuss it with you before taking any action. I may occasionally find it helpful to consult with other professionals. In these circumstances, I will make every effort to avoid revealing the identity of my client. The consultant is also legally bound to keep the information confidential.

Initials_____