

CONNECT PSYCHOLOGICAL

SERVICES, LLC

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COACHING SERVICES AGREEMENT

This document contains important information about my professional services and business policies. Please read it carefully and discuss any questions you may have with me. When you sign this document, it will represent an agreement between us.

Coaching & Psychotherapy

In addition to being a coach, I am also a licensed psychologist in Illinois with training and experience in diagnosing and treating emotional problems. While there are some similarities between coaching and psychotherapy, they are very different activities and it is important that you understand the differences between them. Psychotherapy is a health care service and is usually reimbursable through health insurance policies. This is not true for coaching. Both coaching and psychotherapy utilize knowledge of human behavior, motivation and behavioral change, and interactive counseling techniques. The major differences are in the goals, focus, and level of professional responsibility.

The focus of coaching is development and implementation of strategies to reach client-identified goals of enhanced performance and personal satisfaction. Coaching may address specific personal projects, life balance, job performance and satisfaction, or general conditions in the client’s life, business, or profession. Coaching utilizes personal strategic planning, values clarification, brainstorming, motivational counseling, and other counseling techniques.

The primary foci of psychotherapy are identification, diagnosis, and treatment of mental and nervous disorders. The goals of psychotherapy include alleviating symptoms, understanding the underlying dynamics which create symptoms, changing dysfunctional behaviors which are the result of these disorders, and developing new strategies for successfully coping with the psychological challenges which we all face. Most research on psychotherapy outcomes indicates that the quality of the relationship is most closely correlated with therapeutic progress. Psychotherapy patients are often emotionally vulnerable. This vulnerability is increased by the expectation that they will discuss very intimate personal data and expose feelings about themselves about which they are understandably sensitive. The past life experiences of psychotherapy patients have often made trust difficult to achieve. These factors give psychotherapists greatly disproportionate power that creates a fiduciary responsibility to protect the safety of their clients and to “above all else, do no harm.”

The relationship between the coach and client is specifically designed to avoid the power differentials that occur in the psychotherapy relationship. The client sets the agenda and the success of the enterprise depends on the client’s willingness to take risks and try new approaches. The relationship is designed to be more direct and challenging. You can count on your coach to be honest and straightforward, asking powerful questions and using challenging techniques to move you forward. You are expected to evaluate progress and when coaching is not working as you wish, you should immediately inform me so we can both take steps to correct the problem.

Because of these differences, the roles of coach and psychotherapist are often in potential conflict and I believe that, under most circumstances, it is ethically inappropriate for one to play both roles with a client concurrently. Positive change is difficult enough without having to worry about role confusion. This means that if either of us recognizes that you have a problem that would benefit from psychotherapeutic

intervention, I will refer you to appropriate resources. In some situations, I may insist that you initiate psychotherapy and that I have access to your psychotherapist as a condition of my continuing as your coach.

It is also important to understand that coaching is a professional relationship. While it may often feel like a close personal relationship, it is not one that can extend beyond professional boundaries both during and after our work together. Considerable experience shows that when boundaries blur, the hard won benefits gained from the coaching relationship are endangered.

Coaching Sessions

I generally schedule sessions with clients once per week at a time we agree on. Sometimes I will meet more or less frequently or for different session lengths if that is consistent with the plan we both agree to. If you need to cancel a scheduled coaching session, please do so at least 24 hours in advance. If you do not do so, you will be expected to pay a \$75 fee for that session. If you cancel and want to reschedule for a different day or time, I will try to do so. If you are late for an appointment, we will be able to speak for the remainder of your scheduled time slot.

Professional Fees

My fee for coaching is \$200 per hourly session. In addition to our regular sessions, I charge \$200 per hour for other professional services you may need, though I will break down the hourly cost into 15-minute increments if I work for periods of less than one hour. Other services could include report writing, telephone conversations lasting 15 minutes or longer, attendance in meetings or consultation with other professionals you have authorized, preparation of records or coaching summaries requested by you, and time spent performing any other professional services that you may request.

If you become involved in legal proceedings that require my participation, you will be expected to pay for my professional time even if I am called to testify by another party. Because of the complexity and difficulty of legal involvement, I request a \$1,000.00 retainer. My fee is \$500.00 per report and \$350.00 per hour for attendance at any legal proceedings.

Billing and Payments

You will be expected to pay for each session in full at the time it is held unless we agree otherwise. Payment schedules for other professional services will be agreed to when they are requested. If you make a payment by check, and your check does not clear due to insufficient funds or any other reason, you will be expected to reimburse me in full for any related bank fees that I am charged as a result.

If your account has not been paid for more than 60 days and arrangements for payment have not been agreed upon, I have the option of using legal means to secure the payment. This may involve hiring a collection agency or going through small claims court. In most collection situations, the only information I would release regarding the client's treatment is the client's name, the nature of the services provided, and the amount due.

Contacting Me

I am typically not immediately available by phone. I do not answer the phone when I am in sessions with clients, and I work only part-time. When I am unavailable, calls go to my voicemail, which I check regularly during business hours. I will make every effort to return your call within the same business day or at least within 24 hours. If you are difficult to reach, please leave times you will be available. If you do not want me to identify myself to others in your household when calling you or leaving a message for you, please let me know in advance. At times when I will be unavailable for an extended time, I will provide you with the name of a colleague to contact if necessary.

If you choose, you may use text messaging to reach me. However, understand that text messages are not encrypted, and I cannot guarantee your privacy from outside sources. If you choose to text, please limit your texts to concerns about scheduling or simple questions. Serious matters or issues that require an extended response from me should be handled during your session or by phone. As with phone calls, I only respond to text messages during business hours.

Confidentiality

In general, the privacy of all communication between a client and a coach is protected, and I can only re-lease information about our work to others with your written permission. However, there are a few ex-ceptions as described below.

If I believe that a client is in imminent danger of harming himself/herself, I have an obligation to inter-vene, which may include pursuing hospitalization and/or contacting family members, friends or others who can help provide protection. If I believe that a client is likely to attempt serious bodily harm to someone else, I have a duty to intervene, which may include contacting the police, warning the intended victim(s), and/or pursuing hospitalization.

I am required to report any suspected physical or sexual child abuse or neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services as soon as it comes to my attention. Likewise, I am obligated to report any suspected elder abuse to the appropriate agency if the elderly person is not capable of reporting the abuse herself/himself.

If you become involved in legal proceedings, in most cases you have the right to prevent me from provid-ing any information about your coaching. However, in some proceedings such as those involving child custody or those in which your emotional condition is an important issue, a judge may order my testi-mony if she/he determines that the issues require it.

I occasionally find it helpful to consult with other professionals about a case. In these consultations I make every effort to avoid revealing the identity of the client and the consultant is legally bound to keep any information discussed confidential.

Conclusions & Signatures

By signing below, you are indicating that you have read the information in this document, you have dis-cussed the contents with me to your satisfaction, and you agree to abide by its terms during the course of our professional relationship.

Client – Printed name

Signature

Date

Dr. O’Keeffe

Signature

Date

Confidentiality Notice:

The contents of this document and any attachments are confidential and intended solely for the addressee(s). The information may contain confidential and/or privileged information that may be protected from disclosure. If you have this document in error, any use or reproduction or dissemination of this document is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender.