

Linda Hillery Counselling



Client Contract (Online)

This is an agreement between Linda Hillery (Counsellor) and the undersigned client and outlines the responsibilities and terms of our therapeutic relationship.

Sessions

Each session will last 50 minutes. Please be prompt. If you arrive late for any reason, your session will still end at the scheduled time, and the whole session will need to be paid for. If you know in advance that you are going to be late, please send me a short text. If I have not heard from you, I will leave the session after 20 minutes.

Your conduct during and after sessions is paramount to our working together. Abusive or aggressive behaviour will not be tolerated, and I reserve the right to terminate a session if I believe you to be under the influence of alcohol or any illegal substance, or if I feel there is any serious threat of harm to me or others.

Using Zoom

- I will send you a Zoom invitation before each session by email. This will include a link that will enable you to 'Join the Meeting.'
- I operate a waiting room, which is available shortly before our session time, and I will open the session at the time we have agreed.
- I will never attempt to contact you via Zoom outside of our session time. Any other contact will be by phone, text, or email as we agree.
- If you do not join the meeting at the agreed time, I will text you and wait up to 10 minutes for a reply so we can consider the way forward.
- If I do not hear from you, and you do not join the session, I will close the meeting room after 20 minutes. The session will be marked as cancelled without due notice.
- Should technical difficulties occur, I will suggest continuing the session by phone. I would never intentionally break the link without informing you first.

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A step-by-step guide to setting up and using Zoom can be found on my website.

Online Safety (Phone & Zoom)

- If you are experiencing technical difficulties in joining your session, please let me know immediately.
- I may ask clients to confirm their location, if it appears to be different to their home address, at the start of each call to keep accurate records should an emergency arise.
- I invite clients to provide a safe word that allows them to change the subject if there is any chance of them being interrupted during the session.
- I will not record our sessions together and ask that you do not record the session on any device without discussing it with me in advance.
- If I believe security has been breached or you are not alone, I reserve the right to terminate the session.
- If I believe you to be at serious risk of harm to yourself or someone else and you leave the session, you agree that I can use the emergency contact details you have provided for your safety.
- Zoom sessions are identified in my Zoom account calendar by my first name and your first name only, i.e. Linda & Name, and sessions are encrypted.

For all electronic communications, electronic surveillance by national security services is legally authorised and outside of our direct responsibility and control.

Initial Consultation

Our first session together will be a consultation, an opportunity for me to learn a little more about you and what has brought you to counselling at this time, and a chance for us both to consider whether we can work together in a way that will be helpful for you. You may have already shared some of this information if you have previously

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taken advantage of the free informal chat option. There is no obligation for you to commit to further sessions at this stage, and you may wish to take some time to reflect before making any decision. Additionally, if I feel I do not have the appropriate skills to be able to support you, I will let you know at this point, and I will do my best to signpost you to alternative options wherever possible.

Ongoing Sessions

For counselling to be most effective, sessions are usually scheduled weekly or bi-weekly at the same day and time. If you prefer to work more flexibly and/or would like your sessions less frequently, I kindly ask for flexibility in return, as I cannot guarantee being able to offer these on the same day/time basis. I offer both short and long-term work, and we will agree between us what feels most appropriate initially based on your therapeutic goals. We will then regularly review our progress and how we are working together.

Cancellations/Absence

Counselling can feel very challenging and emotional at times, so committing to attend regularly allows these feelings to be worked through and is very much part of the process. Whilst I try to be flexible wherever possible, once we have agreed a day and time for your counselling sessions, I hold this space exclusively for you, and require **a minimum of 48 hours'** notice, by telephone, text or email, if you need to cancel or change a session. Where less than 48 hours' notice is given and/or if you fail to attend a session, **the full fee will apply.**

If you fail to attend, I will email you to confirm that you wish to attend your next scheduled session or to agree an alternative date and time where appropriate. If two consecutive sessions are missed, or I do not hear from you within two weeks of your last session, I will assume you no longer wish to attend, and this contract will be terminated.

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I close for two weeks over Christmas and New Year, and I aim to provide a minimum of two weeks' notice of any other holiday or planned absences. If I need to cancel a session, I will do my best to offer you an alternative. You will, of course, not be charged for any sessions cancelled by me. In the unlikely event that I become incapacitated, a trusted colleague has permission to access my work mobile phone to be able to contact you for the sole purpose of being able to inform you of the situation at the earliest opportunity. Your contact number is retained on my work mobile, under your first name and the first initial of your surname, for the duration of our work together after which time it is deleted.

Ending Therapy

You can decide to end your counselling at any time. If you feel you would like to bring your sessions to an end, please let me know so that we can discuss this together and plan a good ending where we can reflect on your therapeutic work and/or discuss any issues that you feel may be outstanding.

Contact

My work limits my availability, so I am unable to offer any contact between our sessions other than communications relating to practicalities such as appointment days/times. If you feel your weekly sessions are not enough, please let me know so we can consider what additional support you may need. If you need more urgent support, please call 111 for advice or if you are in crisis and at threat of harming yourself, or have harmed yourself and need medical assistance please call 999 for an ambulance or get yourself straight to your closest A&E.

Our counselling relationship is a professional one, so I will not send or accept any personal friend requests on any social media sites, and I do not post anything about my client work

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online. I both live and work locally, so there is a chance we may bump into each other outside of our sessions. To protect your privacy, if we happen to see each other outside of your counselling sessions in the real world, I will not acknowledge you unless you do so first, and then only to exchange greetings, such as to say hello, unless you choose to engage in further conversation.

Fees & Payment

Fees for individuals are £60 per session on weekdays, 9am to 5pm and £70 per session after 5pm. My fees are reviewed annually, and I will provide clients with two months' notice of any changes. Invoices will be issued for each session, and payment **must be received at least 48 hours before your session** to secure your space. I do not accept Cash, PayPal or Credit Cards.

Payment must be made via BACS bank transfer to:

Sort Code: 60-83-71

Account Number: 54401638

Account Name: Linda Hillery Counselling

Please quote your initials and invoice number in the reference field where possible.

If someone else will be paying for your sessions, and you wish me to send the invoices directly to them, I will need your permission to do so. Where sessions are to be funded directly by a third-party healthcare provider such as your insurer/EAP then the relevant protocols for sending invoices directly to them will be followed. It is your responsibility to check that your policy covers you for therapy and that your provider will allow you to work with me before booking a consultation. You should also check the number of sessions they will cover, whether they will cover the cost in full and any excess that may

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apply. In signing this contract, you understand and acknowledge responsibility for paying any shortfall.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an essential part of our counselling relationship, as you will be trusting me with very sensitive and personal information. Everything we discuss in our sessions is kept in the strictest confidence, with the following exceptions:

- I believe you are at serious risk of harm to yourself or to others.
- You disclose information about criminal offences, for example, terrorism, drug trafficking or money laundering.
- I am required to disclose information by a court of law.

I operate within, and am governed by, English & Welsh Law

You give permission for me to contact the emergency contact details you have provided, and/or your GP, or another appropriate healthcare professional, if I have serious concerns about your wellbeing and safety. Any action will be discussed and agreed with you first, wherever possible.

As a registered member of the British Association of Counselling & Psychotherapy (BACP), I am required to have regular clinical supervision where aspects of our work may be discussed. Your name and other identifying information will not be disclosed, and my supervisor/supervision is also bound by confidentiality and a code of ethics.

Data Protection

Your privacy is especially important to me, and you can be confident that your personal information will be kept safe and secure and will only be used for the purpose it was given to me.

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I adhere to current data protection legislation, including the General Data Protection Regulation (EU/2016/679) (the GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003. I (Linda Hillery) am the Data Controller for Linda Hillery Counselling and registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), Reference: ZB290477. Please see my privacy policy, which is available via my website, for more information on your rights and my obligations to you regarding collecting, using, sharing, and storing information.

Concerns or Complaints

As a registered member of the BACP, I adhere to their guidelines for ethical practice, a copy of which can be found on their website:

http://www.bacp.co.uk/admin/structure/files/pdf/566_ethical_framework_feb2010.pdf

If you have any concerns about my work, I would very much welcome the opportunity to discuss these with you and will make every attempt to address them. Should you still be dissatisfied, more information on how to raise a complaint can be found on the BACP website or you can contact them directly on 01455 833300.

I have read and understood the above and agree to these terms of therapy.

Client Signature: Date:

Print Full Name:

Please note, if you are unable to add your physical signature to this document, you can send me an email confirming that you have read and understood the counselling contract and agree to its terms.