

# Informed Consent for Dynamic Psychotherapy

## Individual, Couple, Group and Family

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This document is to inform you of all possible contingencies that may arise in the course of psychotherapy. Please check to be sure that you have read, understood and asked any questions that you may have regarding its contents.

### Information about your therapist:

Tory Seagraves, MA, Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist

License MFT 86295 Issued by the state of California Board of Behavioral Sciences

### Fees

The fee for service is \$175 per individual therapy session (50 minutes). Reduced fee services are available on a limited basis.

Fees for telephone contact are as follows:

First 10 minutes: Free

11 to 30 minutes: Half of hourly fee

31 to 50 minutes: Hourly fee

Check, cash, and credit/debit card are accepted for payment. **Checks are payable to Tory Seagraves M.A., LMFT.** Returned check fees apply. Account statements will be provided to you upon request.

As is legally required, your fee will be agreed upon in the first session, and may be adjusted as circumstances change. Fees are payable at the beginning of each session. If you prefer, you may pay for future sessions in advance. Cost of living increases may occur on an annual basis. Interest may be charged on accounts past due. Regular rates will apply for any document preparation, court work, or testing.

### Insurance

Please inform me if you wish to utilize health insurance to pay for services. The amount of reimbursement depends on the requirements of your specific plan. Insurance companies generally limit coverage to certain diagnosable mental conditions. Please understand that you are responsible for verifying and understanding the limits of your insurance coverage, as I am unable to guarantee whether your insurance will provide payment for the services provided to you. Please discuss any questions or concerns that you may have about this with me.

### Appointment Scheduling and Cancellation Policies

Sessions are typically scheduled to occur one time per week at the same time and day if possible. I may suggest a different amount of therapy depending on the nature and severity of your concerns. Your consistent attendance greatly contributes to a successful outcome. In order to cancel or reschedule an appointment, you must notify me at least 24 hours in advance of your appointment. If you do not provide me with at least 24 hours notice in advance, you are responsible for payment for the missed session. Exceptions may be made in cases of extreme illness or emergency.

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### Therapist Availability & Emergencies

I am available for regularly scheduled appointment times. Dates of vacations and other exceptions will be given out in advance, if possible. Telephone contacts between office visits are welcome. However, they are best kept brief as important issues are better addressed in person, within regularly scheduled sessions. You may leave a message for me anytime on my confidential voicemail.

I am available to return messages at these times:

Monday – Friday: 9 AM - 7 PM

Saturday: 9 AM to 12 PM

In the event of an emergency involving a threat to your safety or the safety of others, please call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room.

### Confidentiality

State law and professional ethics require therapists to maintain confidentiality except for the following situations:

1. There is suspected child abuse, elder abuse, or dependent adult abuse.
2. "Tarasoff" and "Ewing" situations in which serious threat to a reasonably well- identified victim is communicated to the therapist.
3. A threat to injure or kill oneself is communicated to the therapist.
4. You are required to sign a release of medical records by your medical insurance.
5. You are required to sign a release for psychotherapy records due to involvement in litigation or other matters with private or public agencies. Think carefully and consult with an attorney before you sign away your rights.
6. Clients being seen in couple, family and group work are obligated legally to respect the confidentiality of others. The therapist will exercise discretion (but cannot promise absolute confidentiality) when disclosing private information to other participants in your treatment process. Secrets cannot be kept by the therapist from others involved in your treatment process.
7. I may, at times, consult with professional colleagues about our work without asking permission, but your identity will be disguised.
8. Clients under 18 do not have full confidentiality from their parents.
9. It is also important to be aware of other potential limits to confidentiality that include the following:
  - All records, as well as notes, on sessions and phone calls can be subject to court subpoena under certain extreme circumstances.
  - Most records are stored in locked files but some are stored in secured electronic devices.
  - Cell phones, portable phones, faxes, and e-mails are used on some occasions.
  - All electronic communication compromises your confidentiality.

### About the Relationship with the Therapist

Because of the nature of psychotherapy, the therapeutic relationship has to be different from most relationships. It may differ in how long it lasts, in the topics we discuss, or in the goals of our relationship. It must also be limited to the relationship of therapist and client only. If we were to interact in any other ways, we would then have a "dual relationship." Therapy professions have rules against such relationships to protect us both.

- I cannot be your supervisor, teacher, or evaluator.

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- I cannot be a therapist to my own relatives, friends (or the relatives of friends), people I know socially, or business contacts.
- I cannot have any other kind of business relationship with you besides the therapy itself.
- I cannot give legal, medical, financial, or any other type of professional advice.
- I cannot have any kind of romantic or sexual relationship with a former or current client, or any other people close to a client.

There are important differences between therapy and friendship. Friends may see your position only from their personal viewpoints and experiences. Friends may want to find quick and easy solutions. A therapist offers you choices and helps you consider what is best for you.

You should also know that therapists are required to keep the identity of their clients confidential. Therefore, if you have any particular preferences about public meetings, let me know, otherwise I may ignore you when we encounter each other in a public place. I must decline to attend your family's gatherings if you invite me. Lastly, when therapy is completed, I will not be able to socialize with you like your other friends. In sum, my duty as a therapist is to care for you and my other clients, but only in the professional role of therapist. I am not permitted to give or to receive gifts from clients except tokens with personal meaning to the therapy process.

**Termination of Treatment:** The therapist may terminate treatment if payment is not timely, if prescriptions are not filled (such as seeking consultation, refraining from dangerous practices, coming to sessions sober, etc.), or if some problem emerges that is not within the scope of competence of the therapist or if the therapist experiences the interaction as abusive. Clients have the right to terminate at any time, but the usual minimal termination for an ongoing treatment process is four to ten sessions and a satisfying termination to long-term work may take a number of months.

Clients are urged to consider the risks that major psychological transformation may have on current relationships and the possible need for psychiatric consultation during periods of extreme depression or agitation. Not all people experience improvement from psychotherapy and therapy may be emotionally painful at times.

Patients have the right to refuse or to discontinue services at any time and complaints can be addressed to:

**Tory Seagraves**

**1000 Quail Street, Suite 130**

**Newport Beach, CA 92660**

### What Is Dynamic Psychotherapy?

Dynamic psychotherapy originated with the work of Dr. Sigmund Freud in Vienna in the late nineteenth century. Therapy is both a way of understanding human emotions and of helping people with their relationships and their personal problems. The mature or rational self that functions more or less successfully in the real world is only a part of the total person. The more immature, irrational, or unconscious self functions silently in the background to produce various symptoms and maladaptive behaviors that often intrude into the person's social life, personal relationships, school or work activities, and physical health. In dynamic psychotherapy, specific problems are viewed in the context of the whole person. The quest for self-knowledge is seen as the most important key to changing attitudes and behavior.

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Dynamic psychotherapy is based on the insight that our personalities are the result of passing through and solving relationship issues at many developmental stages. At any stage, the way we have reacted to events in our lives may have caused us to get stuck at a certain level of insight or problem solving. While we go ahead and mature satisfactorily, in many ways we may carry within us the parts that didn't have a chance to develop. We can have a mature exterior and be functioning more or less successfully, while internally we may feel vulnerable, confused, depressed, angry, afraid and childlike. We may not feel able to bounce back from rejection, get past blocks, allow our real feelings to surface, or stay in touch with our feelings and desires. Our physical health may be compromised in many ways by emotional and relationship issues.

Dynamic psychotherapy is designed to help the client get in touch with her or his unconscious memories, feelings, and desires that are not readily available to the conscious mind. Therapy is designed to help clients of all ages understand how their unconscious feelings and thoughts affect the ways they act, react, think, feel, and relate. Whether or not therapy works depends a great deal on the client's willingness and ability to experience all relationships deeply, especially the therapeutic relationship. Each client, by expressing her or his story in whatever ways possible to someone who knows how to listen and to give new meanings back, has the opportunity to learn about herself or himself in a new way.

Dynamic psychotherapy can provide a safe place for people of whatever age to discover for themselves their own truths. It provides a unique opportunity to re-experience personal history in a new relationship, to see it in a new way, and to make connections between past and current conflicts that illuminate the way one relates to oneself and to others. Clients are encouraged to talk about thoughts and feelings that come up about therapy or about the therapist. These feelings are important because elements of one's earliest affections and hostilities toward parents and siblings are often shifted onto the therapist and the process of therapy. This phenomenon, known as "transference," offers a rich source of understanding, for it offers the possibility for people to re-experience and re-work important feelings arising from the past with the maturity they possess in the present.

Dynamic psychotherapy is usually not a short-term therapy as it takes time to explore the complex layers of feeling and experience that make up a person's own unique relationship history. People find that their therapy can easily extend for several years but there is no prescribed length of treatment. Only the people closely involved have a sense of when personal goals have been met. When the client feels she or he has accomplished the desired goals, then a termination date can be set and agreed upon.

Dynamic psychotherapy aims to help people experience life more deeply, enjoy more satisfying relationships, resolve painful conflicts, and better integrate all the parts of their personalities. Perhaps its greatest potential gift is the essential freedom to change and to continue to grow in relationships.

### **Commitment**

Therapy is a significant investment of time and money. I encourage you to make a commitment to getting the most from your sessions by attending regularly and being open to the experience of making a change in the direction of your goals. Please feel free to ask any questions you may have about the therapeutic process.

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**Agreement for Dynamic Psychotherapy**

I have read this informed consent completely and have raised any questions I might have about it with my therapist. I have received full and satisfactory response and agree to the provisions freely and without reservations.

I understand that my therapist is responsible for maintaining all professional standards set forth in the ethical principles of his/her professional association as well as the laws of the state of California governing the practice of psychotherapy and that she is liable for infractions of those standards.

I understand that I will be fully responsible for any and all legal and/or collection costs arising as a result of my contact with my therapist, including compensation at our agreed upon rate for his or her time involved in preparing for and doing court work.

I understand that my therapist from time to time makes teaching and research contributions using disguised client material. By consenting to treatment I am giving consent to this process of professional contribution and the right to use disguised material without financial remuneration.

**Client Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Client Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Guardian Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Guardian Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Therapist Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Statement of the Therapist**

This document was discussed with the client and questions regarding fees, diagnosis, and treatment plan were discussed. I have assessed the client's mental capacity and found the client capable of giving an informed consent at this time.

**Therapist Initials** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_