

Marjorie F. Milstein, LCSW

LCS6768 ■ (619) 543-1133 office ■ (619) 543-0711 fax

www.marjoriemilsteinlcsw.com

Important Information About Psychotherapy

The problems that motivate people to seek psychotherapy often develop over time. Likewise, psychotherapy designed to address these problems can take a period of time. Helping you to feel better is the purpose of our work together. You can do your part by openly and honestly communicating your thoughts and feelings, even though this may be difficult at times. The psychotherapy process can bring up uncomfortable feelings and reactions such as anxiety, sadness, and anger. This can sometimes be a normal response to working through unresolved life experiences. We will work together to get through difficult times. If you are ever concerned that our work together is not helping, I encourage you to discuss this with me. Finally, though psychotherapy is designed to be helpful, there are no guarantees about the outcome of treatment.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your communications with me are considered privileged information and will be held in confidence by me with some exceptions as outlined in the HIPAA Privacy Act (See my [Notice of Privacy Practices](#)). Therefore, I will not release to others any information about you covered under the HIPAA Privacy Act that is considered confidential unless you give me explicit permission in writing to do so by signing an Authorization to Release Confidential Personal Health Information form. Please be aware that there are certain situations in which I am required by law to release information without your permission:

- threats to harm yourself
- threats to harm another person
- child, dependent adult, or elder abuse or neglect
- health oversight: if the California Board of Behavioral Science were investigating a complaint against me they might have the authority to subpoena confidential records
- judicial proceedings where there is a court order
- if you should file a worker's compensation claim, I may be required to submit reports
- on your status to determine your eligibility

See my [Notice of Privacy Practices](#) for all circumstances and more specifics.

If you decide to use your insurance to pay for your treatment, your insurer will request that I share information such as diagnostic codes, symptoms, treatment plans, progress of psychotherapy, prognosis. Each insurance company asks for different types of information. I will make every effort to protect your privacy, but you should know that insurance companies sometimes share information with each other, or ask you to release it in determining things such as pre-existing conditions. To minimize information received by insurance companies, some people choose to pay me directly and submit claims to insurance companies themselves, or not use insurance at all, to ensure maximum control over their personal health information. Finally, when you do use insurance you should know that I will be sharing basic information with my billing agent for billing purposes, such as dates of service, diagnostic codes, fees, payment, etc.

In an effort to better protect your privacy I do not use e-mail in my psychotherapy practice, and although it is perhaps less convenient, I request that you call me when you need to get in touch with me at (619) 543-1133. You may leave confidential messages on my voicemail 24 hours a day, although I may not be able to get back to you until the following business day.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

You may leave messages for me 24 hours a day at (619)543-1133. Although I check my messages throughout the day and up until 8pm in the evenings, and make every effort to call you back as soon as is possible, I may not be able to return your call on the same day that you called. I will, however, call you back within 24 hours unless I am away, in which case I will make arrangements for emergency coverage. In the event of an emergency, please call 911, go to your nearest emergency room, or call the San Diego Crisis Hotline at 1-800-479-3339.

When I go out of town or am on vacation, I will arrange with another qualified professional to cover for me should you need to talk to someone. However, should an acute emergency arise please follow the emergency protocol noted above.

FEES, CANCELLATIONS, AND MISSED APPOINTMENTS

The standard session is 50 minutes. Sessions of other lengths may be pro-rated if they exceed 50 minutes. You may also be billed for other services such as lengthy reports or phone calls.

Appointments are generally made on a regular weekly basis, and this appointment time is held for you from week to week. Unlike medical doctors, dentists, and other health care professionals, mental health professionals work with a relatively small number of individuals at any one time. Missed appointments and late cancellations are costly for the therapist and deny other individuals the opportunity to use that time. You will be responsible for appointments not cancelled within 24 hours unless we are able to reschedule during the same week, ahead of time, at a mutually convenient hour, or I can fill the cancelled appointment, which I will make every effort to do. Please note that health insurance plans cannot be billed for missed appointments.

It is important to understand that these arrangements are not intended in any way to be punitive, but rather as a way to make my schedule and income as predictable as possible. I understand that at times there are unavoidable emergencies, serious illness, etc., which may befall either of us, and we can discuss this should they occur.

It is your responsibility to verify your mental health coverage with your insurance company in advance of your first appointments and to verify with your insurance carrier if your visits need to be authorized. It is important to understand that this financial agreement is between you and Marjorie Milstein, LCSW not between Marjorie Milstein, LCSW and your insurance company. You are ultimately responsible for your bill.

PATIENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and fully understand this document Important Information about Psychotherapy.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Print name: _____