



## INFORMED CONSENT FOR PSYCHOTHERAPY SERVICES: COUPLES PSYCHOTHERAPY

**Welcome:** Before starting your therapy, it is important to know what to expect from couples therapy, and to understand your rights as well as commitments. This consent form is an attempt to be as transparent with you as I can about the nature of the couples therapy process, so you are fully informed prior to starting the therapy.

**What to expect:** Couples therapy is a process of identifying interaction and communication patterns that are negatively impacting the friendship, intimacy, and fulfillment of needs of one or both partners in a couple. Each partner will be expected to honestly examine their own interaction and communication styles, identify and express their own vulnerabilities, and make an attempt at experimenting with alternative methods of communicating and interacting. Each partner will be helped to further clarify their own values and their own level of commitment to the relationship, and the outcome of the therapy may be increased satisfaction with the partnership or increased clarity about the decision to part ways.

**My credentials:** I am a clinical psychologist who is licensed in the state of Texas by the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists. As a licensed psychologist my work is regulated by the laws governing my license as well as the ethical principles of my profession. In addition to my psychology license I am an ICEEFT certified EFT couples therapist and also have training in Gottman Method couples therapy.

**Fees:** Couples therapy is billed at the rate of \$215/ session and each session lasts approximately 1hr 20 minutes. *We, the couple, agree to pay the stated fee by cash or credit card at the beginning of each session. If we, the couple, are prevented from attending our scheduled session and do not cancel our appointment at least 24 hours in advance, we agree to pay the full session fee.* This practice of being charged for no-shows or late cancellations is standard practice in the field and takes into account that you are not just paying for services rendered, but renting a time slot, which I will not be able to fill on short notice.

**Confidentiality:** When you attend sessions with a psychologist, the information you disclose is protected by strict confidentiality laws enforced both by the licensing board governing my license and state law. Without your written consent and permission, I cannot reveal whether or not you are a client of mine and cannot discuss any information from our sessions with a third party.

The following are exceptions to this rule:

- If one of you pose an imminent danger to yourself, your partner, or a third person, I am allowed to provide the minimum amount of information needed to best involve law enforcement or health care providers in the management of your case.
- If you talk about events that lead me to believe that a child under the age of 18 or an elderly or disabled person is at risk for emotional, physical or sexual abuse, neglect, or exploitation, I am required by state law to make a report to Texas Family and Protective Services with or without your consent.

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- If you are not yet 18 years of age, your parents or legal guardians may have access to your records and may authorize release of information to other parties on your behalf.
- If you disclose sexual misconduct by a previous therapist I am required to make a report to the licensing board governing the license of the therapist.
- If a judge in a court of law orders me to release information or if I need to respond to a lawfully issued subpoena.
- If I need to cooperate with legal actions against a mental health professional by a licensing board.

When you attend couples therapy sessions, you as a couple are considered to be “the client”. This means that except in the circumstances above, I will need a written consent from both of you in order to disclose any information to a third party.

**No secrets:** As a therapist who is entrusted with information from both partners of a relationship, I have a policy of “No Secrets”, which means that I cannot promise to protect secrets of either partner from the other person, especially if the secret is harmful or destructive to the process of the therapy itself or undermines the agreed upon intention of the therapy.

**Boundaries:** Because the relationship is the main focus of couples therapy both partners of a couple must be present for the couples session to start. It is often not in the best interest of the couple to distribute time unevenly between partners or to have unplanned meetings with only one partner present. If one partner is late in arriving or does not show for the appointment, I reserve the right to delay the start of the session or to cancel the session if necessary.

**Length of couples therapy:** Based on my experience and the general findings from trials of emotionally-focused couples therapy, a completed couples therapy can take anywhere from 5-20 scheduled sessions. Length of time depends on severity level of problems, history of past trauma/ infidelity/ or betrayals, and the presence of co-occurring emotional or psychological issues such as mood disorders, depressive symptoms, substance use problems, or personality disorder traits. It is advisable (but optional) for each partner to schedule at least 1 individual session with me as part of the couples therapy process.

**Limitations to couples therapy:** Couple therapy will only be effective in cases where both partners put in a good faith effort to work on their problems and their relationship. Deliberate dishonesty or deceit, unwillingness to introspect and take responsibility for one’s actions, or lack of interest and motivation to engage in the couples therapy process by one or both partners, will undermine the therapy.

*We, the client, understand and consent to the above terms, and agree to initiate treatment with Rune Moelbak, Ph.D. (Psychologist, License TX #36117)*

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(Print Name of Partner 1, D.O.B.)

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(Print Name of Partner 2, D.O.B.)

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(Signature of Partner 1, Date)

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(Signature of Partner 2, Date)