Therapy Contract

This contract is an agreement between me as your therapist, and you as my client. Contracting ensures that we both have a clear understanding of our commitments and responsibilities while we are working together. You will be asked to review and sign a copy of this contract before attending a first appointment. If you have any questions about anything in this contract, please let me know.

Therapy Services

I am appropriately qualified and experienced to provide Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) to adults and children. Therapy will be a confidential space to explore your experiences and work together to identify opportunities for learning and growth.

I am committed to providing a professional service at all times, including adherence to the standards of conduct, performance and ethics, outlined by the British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies (BABCP). Further information about these standards is available on the [BABCP website](https://babcp.com/About/Governance-and-Policy/Policies-and-Documents/BABCP-Standards-of-Conduct-Performance-and-Ethics)

Confidentiality

Rest assured that everything you discuss with me is confidential. This means I would never discuss the content of your sessions, or any of your personal details with anyone else, unless you have asked me to.

Confidentiality will only be broken if I am concerned that you or someone else may be at risk of significant harm. I will always try to speak to you about this first, unless speaking to you could place you or someone else at greater risk.

If you tell me something, which suggests that a child or vulnerable adult could be at significant risk of harm, for example information concerning acts or planned acts of serious violence or the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of a child or vulnerable adult, then I have an ethical responsibility to alert the appropriate authorities.

If you are a child (under the age of 18), I also have a responsibility to inform your parent or guardian if I feel that you could be at risk of significant harm. Whether I would need to speak with your parents would depend on your age and the level of risk. Again, I would always try to speak to you about this first and, where possible, support you to share the information yourself.

There are also very rare occasions where I would be legally obliged to share information, either in response to a specific court order, or if you were to disclose details of terrorism, drug trafficking or money laundering, each of which I have a legal obligation to report to the police.

Consent

By signing this agreement, you are consenting to treatment, according to the terms and conditions in this contract and those published on my website. If you are aged 16 and above, you have the right to consent independently. However, any client below the age of 16 requires the additional consent of their parent or guardian.

Crisis Support / Emergencies

If you tell me about thoughts of harming yourself, including thoughts of self-harm or suicide, I will support you to explore and manage these difficult thoughts and feelings as part of the therapy. However, if we feel there is a significant level of risk and you require urgent care, I will direct you towards relevant crisis care provision, such as your GP or your nearest Accident and Emergency (A&E) department.

Between therapy sessions, if you ever feel that you are at risk of harming yourself or others, or you have already acted on these thoughts, then you are advised to request an urgent GP appointment, or present at your nearest A&E Department. You may also find it helpful to phone Samaritans (116123), or text the Shout crisis line (text the word SHOUT to 85258) for further support.

If you or someone else is in immediate danger and/or you require urgent care and are unable to attend A&E, you are advised to call 999 to request an ambulance. **Please note that I am unable to provide urgent care or crisis support, so please do not attempt to contact me if you are in crisis.**

Appointments and Fees

Appointments are subject to availability and booked in advance. Generally, a therapy session will be 50 – 60 minutes in length. Occasionally, longer sessions may be helpful (e.g. 90 minute sessions) and will be charged according to the agreed hourly rate. I always recommend weekly therapy sessions where possible, to ensure maximum consistency and momentum. However, fortnightly appointments are also available. Requests for additional meetings, calls, letters, or reports will be considered and charged at the same agreed hourly rate, unless otherwise agreed.

Fees are agreed before therapy begins and will remain the same for the duration of your therapy, including where specific concessions have been agreed. Payment methods will be discussed at the start of treatment and will generally be via Bank Transfer (BACS) or online payment. Individual appointment fees are payable in advance, up to and including the day of your appointment.

Cancellations

It is important to prioritise therapy for the duration of your treatment, in order to achieve the best possible outcomes. However, I understand that everyone is busy and there may be times when one of us needs to cancel or rearrange an appointment. I request as much notice as possible if you are unable to attend a planned appointment. If you do need to cancel or rearrange, you can contact me by phone, or text. For missed appointments, or cancellations with less than 24 hours’ notice, the full session fee will be charged.

Referrals

No therapist or therapeutic approach is appropriate in all circumstances. There may be times when I might recommend an additional or alternative approach. I reserve the right to decline treatment in any circumstance where I do not have the appropriate skills, knowledge or experience to fully meet your needs. This may include circumstances when a specialist multi-disciplinary or multi-agency approach would be recommended, such as eating disorders, serious mental illness, or complex psychosocial needs. I will always discuss your options with you and try to guide you towards the right support but I would only make a referral for further support with your consent.

Contact outside of Sessions

Maintaining healthy professional boundaries is a key component of my commitment to safe and ethical practice. As such, we would not normally have any contact outside of the therapeutic relationship. However, there may be times when our paths might cross, professionally or in a public setting. If we do bump into each other, I will generally ignore you to protect your privacy and confidentiality. If you approach me, I will be happy to say hello but it would not be appropriate for us to pursue further social contact, including in person or online. If a situation arises where we may have further contact, such as through work or mutual connections, we can discuss this to ensure that we both feel comfortable.

Parents and Carers

If you are under the age of 18, it can be helpful for parents or carers to be involved in your therapy. This might include supporting you during or between your therapy sessions. Often, parents or carers will ask for occasional updates about your support, including information about your progress and the content of your sessions. It is important that you are placed at the centre of decisions about how your parents or carers might be involved in your therapy. Where possible, I will aim to support you to share important updates with your family yourself, and to think about how you want to involve them in your support. However, I can also provide occasional updates to parents and carers, with your consent. This can be reassuring for your family and can help them to understand how they can support you outside of the therapy sessions.

Endings

The best therapeutic endings are planned. Ending sessions provide an opportunity to reflect on your journey as a whole, to consolidate your learning and plan for life beyond therapy. Endings can feel difficult, so I will keep this in mind throughout our work together and ensure that you are supported, particularly as we approach our final sessions. If you are thinking about ending your therapy sessions, I would request that you try to attend one further session to talk this through and reflect on any challenges or barriers. You will never be placed under any pressure to continue.

Record Keeping

I keep written records of our sessions and any relevant letters or email / text correspondence. All personal information, including session notes, is stored safely and securely at all times. You can read more about privacy and data security in the Privacy Notice on my website. If you have any questions about your personal data, please contact me by email or ask me in your session.

Video and Audio Recordings

The use of video and audio recording is very common in therapy, both as part of an intervention and for therapist’s use in supervision. It is helpful for me as a therapist to present videos of my practice to my clinical supervisor, as part of developing and maintaining my clinical skills. I will always request specific written consent before making audio or video recordings and you will retain full control over how recordings are used.

You may choose to make your own audio or video recordings of our therapy sessions and you are welcome to do so. Sometimes it can be helpful to watch or listen back to a session after the session has finished. Any recordings you make are your property and I cannot accept any responsibility for their use or security. Recordings are allowed for personal use only and no recordings may be shared with anyone, including online, without my explicit consent.

Insurance and DBS

I am appropriately insured to undertake private therapy and supervision. I have an enhanced DBS clearance to work with adults and children.

Complaints

I am committed to ensuring that you receive a high standard of professional service at all times and I am always grateful for feedback, including about any ways that I can improve the services I provide. If for any reason you are not satisfied with any aspect of the services I have provided, please speak with me or contact me by email in the first instance. I will aim to respond promptly to any concerns. Any complaint that you don’t feel comfortable raising with me can be raised with the BABCP. Further details are available on their website. For more information about your personal data and how to raise a complaint regarding privacy or data security, please see the Privacy Notice on my website for full details.

*I agree to the terms and conditions outlined in this contract and consent to begin therapy according to these terms. I understand that this contract can be reviewed at any time, at the request of myself or the therapist:*

**The Therapist: Alex Habens**

**Date:**

**The Client:** **[Print full name]**

**Date: [insert date signed]**

**For clients under the age of 16:**

**Name of Parent or Guardian: [Print full name]**

**Date: [insert date signed]**