



Online Counselling Agreement and Assessment form

About me:

My name is Rukhsana Fazal

My qualifications are Bsc.Psychology, Msc Developmental Psychology, Certificate in Integrative Counselling(BAC), CBT training from Wimbledon Guild, Mental Health trained instructor (MHFA England), Family Systemic Practitioner from PrudenceSkynner (Springfield Hospital, Tooting). Diploma in Online Counselling and Supervision (Qualifying soon). Completing training in Body Control Pilates in Summer 2020.

I have been trained by BACP 'Ethical Framework for Counsellors', and Supervisors online services. I follow the BACP Guidelines for Online Counselling and Psychotherapy. Information relating to both of these documents can be found at: www.bacp.co.uk

I am a qualified and experienced counsellor with 20 years of face to face counselling practice , and family practitioner for the past 8 years. Experience. I have recently started working on-line using e-counselling. Presently, I am working in Therapy Works doing private clientwork in offering both face to face counselling and online counselling. I have worked with clients across all age ranges, from age 5 up to and 65 years of age. I have the fullest commitment to offering a service which is welcoming to all backgrounds in a supportive and non-discriminatory manner.

What is Online Counselling?

Online counselling provides an opportunity to explore a personal difficulty in a confidential and supportive environment. This may include expressing feelings that are painful, and which many of us experience at certain times in our lives. When this happens, it can be difficult to stay positive and cope with everyday life. Online counselling gives you the opportunity to access counselling support at a time and in a place which is convenient to you. Online counselling can provide support for a broad range of personal difficulties, but there are occasions where it would not be considered suitable, for example where a client is at risk for example. If this applies for you either when applying for support, or during ongoing sessions I will offer information of alternative sources of support, which you can make contact with and request support from.

What sort of issues can I contact you about?

Online counselling may be able to help with a very wide range of issues including, abuse, anxiety, stress, depression, eating difficulties, loneliness, relationship problems, bereavement, self-esteem, sexual orientation, sexual abuse, discrimination, pet bereavement, and many more.

Not all types of issues can be resolved through online counselling and I will advise you if face to face counselling, or some other form of support might be more suitable for you. Where I consider that online counselling would not be the most suitable means of support I will make every effort to assist you in a referral to a suitable alternative source of support.

I am not able to provide online counselling to any person who is under the age of 18 or who is in crisis. If this applies to you I can help with information on referral to other agencies providing face to face counselling services who offer crisis support, or if you are under 18, to online services which are specifically directed to a younger age group.

What does the service offer?

We will agree an 'appointment time'. This might be via email, IM, voice only or webcam. If via email therapy the appointment time when you will receive my email reply via Protonmail, or the time agreed to meet on Vsee. (which is a secure and encrypted online platform used for online counselling). This could be weekly or more frequently if you request this. As I will need some time to read your previous email I will need you to send in your therapy email at least 48 hours before I send you my reply. You can download vsee software for our webcam sessions without charge at www.vsee.com We can also use Zoom, and there is no need for you to download software as I send a meeting invite to you via email

You will need to set up your own Protonmail account prior to your initial assessment appointment, Protonmail is secure and fully encrypted and available at: www.protonmail.com

My protonmail address is: NaturalHealing3@protonmail.com All further email contact is conducted by Protonmail

If for any reason we experience technical issues during a 'real time' appointment I will try to re-connect with you, but if this is not possible we will make contact via the agreed alternative, such as by phone or email.

Payment for your sessions

Session fees are currently £50.00 per counselling hour. The initial appointment will include some further assessment questions to help my understanding of how I can help you find a way forward with what has brought you to counselling.

The Payment of £50.00 for your session is due a minimum of 24 hours prior to the appointment time, using the Paypal facility on the www.ocst.co.uk website. If you have made payment for a session but are unable to meet at the appointed time I will retain the fee for the session unless we have experienced a technological breakdown which prevents us meeting online or exchanging emails. In the event of this occurring we would discuss how to re-arrange the scheduled

appointment. Where a block of six appointments are purchased at a reduced rate, these are valid for a period of 3 months.(six appointments can be purchased as a block for a fee of £240.00).By using the paypal facility on my websites you are covered by Paypal's privacy policy:

<https://www.paypal.com/ie/webapps/mpp/ua/privacy-full>

About the way I work

I will provide, to the best of my ability, online counselling sessions that endeavour to create a supportive, non-judgmental environment, in which you will be given time and space to understand and gain insight into what is troubling you. This process can foster growth and lead to positive change in your life. I will not be in a position to offer advice. There may be occasions where I ask questions about what you have stated on your application form or during a therapy session This is to help seek a clearer view of your difficulty or to clarify a misunderstanding in our communication. You are free to ignore my questions and responses, or alternatively spend time between sessions exchanges reflecting on them.

'Online' counselling is different to face-to-face work as misunderstandings may occur due to a lack of usual facial expressions and tone of voice. It is therefore important for us both to feel comfortable to ask for clarification if we are unsure of something we say or refer to within our exchanges and leads to a misunderstanding or rupture in the counselling relationship occurring.

Confidentiality,Security, and Data Protection

The content of your emails or online appointments will not be communicated with a third party except for the purposes of supervision of my work. In this instance, your identity will not be revealed, and the presenting issues are discussed in a general context, to help ensure I am working ethically and safely with clients. I strongly recommend that online clients use an encrypted email server for sending and receiving email exchanges when engaging with counselling, this helps to ensure that our communication will not be intercepted by a third party. A free and secure email provider is www.protonmail.com My protonmail address is: NaturalHealing3@protonmail.comAll contact after our initial communication would be via this email provider.

In respect of online counselling via email,SMS, and webcam the UK police force and other international government authorities can ask for access to an individual's email account or synchronous messaging account where there is suspicion of illegal activities. On this basis I am not able to guarantee confidentiality in circumstances which lead to access being granted.

Where a complaint is made by a client to my professional body I reserve the right to breach confidentiality and to use my session notes in order to address any grievances which might occur within the OCST counselling practice. Wherever possible you will be informed of this.

At the end of our counselling agreement copies of our exchanges will be stored securely offline for a period of 7 years and then destroyed by shredding after this time. I am a registered Data Controller and Data Processor and abide by the regulations imposed by such procedures. My registration number is:Z9440927.OCST has a policy for data processing and storage.The procedures in this document have been compiled in relation to GDPR (General Data Privacy Regulations) from May 26th 2018 onwards.

What information is kept about me and who has access?

As the Data Controller and data Processor I maintain and store brief notes relating to your sessions. I will not share this data with someone other than yourself, unless required by a court of law. Under GDPR you have the right to request a copy of session records. Where requested by you these will be within 30 days in electronic format, Under GDPR you have the right to ask for records to be amended if you feel they are inaccurate. If you wish to ask for an amendment or if you raise objection to any data kept by me, such objection will be stored with the original session notes.

How is my information stored?

The Client agreement /assessment form you are completing here and any brief session notes will be stored on an external hard drive which is password protected and stored in a locked cabinet.

Any electronic contact we have during the process of assessment and ongoing sessions will be deleted from my computer at the end of our agreed work together. Your phone number may be stored anonymously on my phone if we engage with 'real time' sessions using Vsee or Whatsapp and is deleted at the end of the counselling contract

Please indicate if you give your consent for me to maintain these records under the conditions described above YES / NO

Please take time to read through the guidelines on my website for ensuring privacy and security of your online communication with me. It's available on the 'additional resources' page of the www.ocst.co.uk website

My websites are hosted by a company called Webhealer, who adhere to requirements of GDPR.

Guidelines for Emergency Contact

Online counselling **cannot** provide an emergency service for clients.

In the event of an emergency arising whilst you are engaged in online work or if you were experiencing suicidal thoughts, I would discuss with you the appropriate support that you could access during this period.

If you found yourself in a major crisis and were considering serious self harm it would be vital to get immediate help. This could include contacting your GP, or your nearest accident and emergency service (A & E).

You could also call the Samaritans on :116123 or email jo@samaritans.org (email emergency support). All personal information disclosed will be kept confidential and not used for any purposes other than a counselling record.

This agreement shall be construed and governed in all respects in accordance with the laws of England and Wales and any dispute or differences in relation to this agreement shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the English Courts.

Social Media

It is not permissible to publicise the content of our exchanges or share them with a third party using social media or other aspects of personal and public forums. I will not be able to accept any invitations for contact with current or past clients via social media, nor will I endeavour to initiate contact with clients via social media sites or forums.

If you have any questions regarding the content of the agreement, or would like further information, please contact me at: NaturalHealing3@prontonmail.com, or 00447748508556

Please answer the questions listed below prior to returning the agreement document. The information you provide helps to form the initial assessment of online counselling being suitable as support for you and the personal issues you would like to explore in counselling.

- Please provide brief details below regarding the issues you would like to explore in counselling:
- Have you received counselling, psychological, or crisis intervention support in the past, or are receiving such support currently? If so please provide brief details of the nature and outcome of the support received and also what you found helpful/unhelpful from the support?
- If you are currently taking medication for a mental health issue, please include details and dosage below:
- Do you have the support of a friend or family members if you needed to talk to someone about a personal matter which is troubling you if you became distressed during the process of counselling?
- Please let me know if you have any current thoughts about ending your life and whether you have at any time in the past had such thoughts or have acted upon them and, if so please, outline what support you sought at the time to overcome the suicidal thoughts?

GAD-7

Over the last 2 weeks how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?
not at all several days more than half the days nearly every day

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Feeling nervous, anxious or on edge | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2. Not being able to stop or control worrying | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3. Worrying too much about different things | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4. Trouble relaxing | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 5. Being so restless that it is hard to sit still | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 6. Becoming easily annoyed or irritable | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 7. Feeling afraid as if something awful might happen | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

GAD-7 total score =

PHQ-9

Over the last 2 weeks period) how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?

not at all several days more than half the days nearly every day

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Little interest or pleasure in doing things | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2. | Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3. | Trouble falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4. | Feeling tired or having little energy | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 5. | Poor appetite or overeating | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 6. | Feeling bad about yourself — or that you are a failure or have let yourself or your family down | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 7. | Trouble concentrating on things, such as reading the newspaper or watching television | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 8. | Moving or speaking so slowly that other people could have noticed? Or the opposite — being so fidgety or restless that you have been moving around a lot more than usual | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 9. | Thoughts that you would be better off dead or of hurting yourself in some way | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

Total:

Please complete the following information below and return the agreement to me as an attachment if you would like to proceed with online counselling:

Full name:

Address:

Date of Birth:

Emergency contact number (in the event of technology breakdown which disrupts a counselling appointment):

The details requested below, in respect of your GP, and home address are taken in order I need to ask your permission to secure additional support for you. The earlier question about serious self-harm also addresses safety, as I do need to gather this information to help assess if online counselling is suitable as support for the issues you would like to bring to your sessions.

GP Name and Address:

Are you seeking online counselling via Email, IM (instant messaging), or webcam?

Please 'sign electronically' here with your name if you agree to the general and GDPR points within this agreement (including data storage procedures mentioned)