

Jim Swaniger, MA
Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist
License # LMFT 36314
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East Tower, Suite 600
Newport Beach, CA 92660
949.760.7171

INFORMED CONSENT FOR PSYCHOTHERAPY

The State of California expects that you are informed of possible contingencies that might arise during psychotherapy. Please be sure you read, understand, and discuss all questions you have about this document with your therapist. Since this document has the force of contract, we cannot proceed until we reach an agreement on all items.

PSYCHOTHERAPY SERVICES

During your initial appointment(s) we will discuss your reasons for seeking my services; your goals; the risks and benefits of therapy and appropriateness of my training, experience, and licensure. If we agree to continue, therapy can have several benefits including better self-understanding, improved interpersonal relationships and resolution of your current concerns. Please note that therapy can involve considerable discomfort as you explore and resolve difficult issues. The number of visits and the types of psychotherapy used will depend in part on the type of problem(s), the treatment plan we develop and the effort you invest in our work.

The primary treatment method will be psychodynamic psychotherapy. Please read the attached explanation of 'Dynamic Psychotherapy' and discuss any questions with your therapist.

CANCELLATION POLICY

Due to the long-term nature of my practice, I must hold you responsible for all regularly scheduled appointments whether or not you are able to attend. Should it be necessary for you to cancel the appointment, I must have a (24) hr. cancellation notice in order to waive the fee,

FEES

1. The fee for service of \$190 generally covers a (50) minutes session and is payable at the time service is rendered. Cost of living increases may occur on an annual basis. A (30) day notice is provided prior to any fee increases.
2. The fee for work done and/or expenses incurred on your behalf, such as written reports, travel or legal proceedings is \$190/hr.
3. Communication by any means outside of the scheduled session are charged on a prorated basis plus any associated communication fees.
4. Accepted forms of payment include Zelle, check, cash, debit, or credit card. Receipts are provided at your request.
5. Cancelled or returned check fee is \$25.00.

INSURANCE BILLING

I do not bill insurance companies. At your request I will provide a statement which you can submit to your insurance company to seek reimbursement of fees already paid. Call your insurance company to determine any "Out-of-Network" reimbursement benefits.

You understands that I **am not enrolled in Medicare**; that I do not bill Medicare, nor am I submitting claims to Medicare for services rendered under this Consent or representing that services provided under this Consent are reimbursable by Medicare. If you submit my receipts to Medicare you will not be paid.

If you are Medicare-eligible now, or becomes Medicare-eligible in the future, you agree that psychotherapy services provided by me under this Consent are being provided on a **private-pay basis**. Payment is due directly from you according to the fee policies stated in this Consent.

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CONFIDENTIALITY

The information disclosed by you is generally confidential and will not be released to any third party without your written authorization except where required or permitted by law. Exceptions to confidentiality include but are not limited to reporting child, elder or dependent adult abuse, when a patient makes a serious threat of violence towards a reasonably identifiable victim, or when a patient is dangerous to him/herself or the person or property of another.

Your confidentiality is at risk whenever you communicate issues concerning your therapy by phone; voice mail; text message; email; fax; when you pay with a credit or debit card: when you submit insurance claims forms and when you disclose your treatment to anyone.

INTERACTIONS OUTSIDE OF THERAPY

We cannot interact outside of therapy since this would constitute a prohibited “dual” relationship. Let me know if you have preferences about public encounters, otherwise I may ignore you. I cannot give or receive gifts from clients except tokens with personal meaning to the therapy process. I will not be able to have any form or personal or business relationship with you during or after your therapy. My duty as a therapist is to care for you and my other clients but only in the professional role of therapist.

THERAPIST AVAILABILITY

- Appointments can be made or rescheduled by calling my confidential office voicemail at 949-970-7171 during regular business hours.
- The emergency number where I can sometimes be reached is 949-244-8572.

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESOURCES

In the event that you feel unsafe or require immediate medical or psychiatric assistance call **855-635-4657** or **911** or **988** or **211** or go to the nearest hospital Emergency Room.

TERMINATION OF TREATMENT

You have the right to terminate therapy at any time. The recommended time span for agreed upon termination is usually (3) sessions. I may terminate treatment if payment is not timely; if you are not compliant with prescribed medications related to your medical, emotional and/or psychological well-being; if you do not follow-through with my recommendation(s) to consult with other licensed healthcare professionals; if you do not refrain from dangerous practices (coming to sessions intoxicated, etc.); if you attempt to gain or use personal information about me such as my residence or otherwise attempt to make personal contact; if some problem emerges that is not within the scope of my competence; if I experience our interaction as abusive, or if it becomes known that you are currently in therapy with another therapist and you do not disclose this to me.

THERAPY RISKS

Clients are urged to consider the risks that any degree of psychological change may have on yourself and on your relationships, and the possible need for psychiatric support during periods of extreme depression or agitation. Not all people experience improvement from psychotherapy and at times therapy may be emotionally painful. At your request, information on other treatment options will be provided

COMPLAINTS

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What is Dynamic Psychotherapy?

Dynamic psychotherapy is both a way of understanding human emotions and helping people with their relationships and their personal problems. The mature or relational self that functions more or less successfully in the real world is only 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 a 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.

Dynamic psychotherapy is based on the insight that our personalities are the result of passing through and solving relationship issues at various 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 did not 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 his or her unconscious memories, feelings, and desires that are not readily available to their conscious mind. Therapy is designed to help clients understand how their unconscious feelings and thoughts affect the way 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, including the therapeutic relationship. Each client, by expressing his or her own story in whatever ways possible to someone who knows how to listen and to give new meaning back, has the opportunity to learn about him or herself 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 reexperience personal history and 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 and 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 in the process of therapy. This phenomenon, known as "transference," offers a rich source of understanding, for it offers the possibility for people to reexperience and rework 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 feelings and experiences that make up a person's own unique relationship history. People find that the therapy can easily extend for several months and even years but there is no prescribed length of treatment. And of course, this depends on the frequency of treatment. When the client feels they have accomplished the desired goals and have thoroughly discussed this with their therapist, then a termination date can be set and agreed upon.

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