

Gloria Dykstra, MA, LMHC
Licensed Mental Health Counselor
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2207 NE 65th Street
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DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

It is a pleasure to welcome you as a new client. In order to acquaint you with the office policies, I have written a brief description of procedures and related therapy information. Provision of this information and acknowledgement of its receipt are required by Washington State Law. As a Washington State Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LH60735584) I must inform you of your rights as a mental health consumer and to provide you with information related to my professional qualifications, therapeutic orientation, treatment methods, and business practices in order to assist you in selecting a counselor who best suits your needs and purposes. This document is provided to you for this reason. Signing this form establishes our contract for therapy services.

Training and Degrees

I have a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Washington, in Sociology. I also hold a Master of Arts Degree (MA) in Existential-Phenomenological Therapeutic Psychology from Seattle University.

Counseling Orientation

Psychotherapy provides the opportunity and framework to focus on your concerns and goals for change. This involves the careful examination of different dimensions of the self, from personal psychology, physical health, and relationships, to the impact of the social and political contexts within which our lives are led. I see counseling as an opportunity to critically examine the multiple facets of our experience and encourage my client's to be open to conversation about much more than their 'mental' health. I also feel privileged to work with clients of many different ethnicities, religions, nations of origin and cultures. As we are all bearers of culture and history I enjoying creating a counseling space in which these important features of our lives are honored and utilized to inform my client's pursuit of well-being.

I believe that effective counseling occurs when thoughtful and honest conversation occurs between client and therapist. This work is collaborative in nature; we determine the aims of our time together. As a clinician, I practice an open ended approach determined by the needs of my clients. I believe it is crucial to honor the role of critical dialogue in supporting the capacity to commit to the matters that deeply move us. This type of counseling relationship is an important step in enacting critical inquiry and dialogue in our everyday lives. I encourage all my clients to ask any questions they may have about therapy whenever they arise. Taken as a whole, this experience can lead to insight, inspiration, and positive change.

Choosing a Counselor and Termination

Part of what can make therapy effective has to do with our relationship. You have the right to choose a counselor who best suits your needs and purposes. If you feel that my approach is not right for you, let me know. We can discuss the possibility of alternative methods and

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approaches, and whether your discomfort has to do with the issues you came to therapy for. If we do not seem to be able to work together I'm happy to help facilitate a referral that meets your needs, should you want that. You may seek a second opinion from another mental health practitioner, and you may terminate therapy at any time. It is every client's right to disengage from counseling with or without notice to the treatment provider. However, I request notification and recommend one final meeting to discuss termination as well as counseling goals and progress.

Miscellaneous Considerations

As per the standard practices outlined by both Washington State law and the Codes of Ethics espoused by the American Counseling Association (ACA), American Psychological Association (APA) and the American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA), it is my duty to discuss other avenues in which your confidentiality and rights outlined by HIPPA may be at risk. One particular example which has become more prescient is the use of online reviews of healthcare professionals. As I owe a duty of confidentiality to all of my clients I request that you refrain from placing reviews of our work together online. Online reviews make it difficult for me to ensure your confidentiality. Should you choose to write a review, it is standard practice of mine that I refrain from responding, commenting, or engaging with that review. This statement is intended to ensure you are fully informed about any risks online reviews of our work together may place upon your confidentiality rights.

Confidentiality

There is a legal privilege in the state of Washington protecting the confidentiality of the information that you share with me. As a professional, I can assure you that I strive to maintain the strictest ethical standards of confidentiality. There are legal exceptions to client confidentiality. The following situations are those in which the information you have shared with me may be shared with others:

- 1) If you sign Consent to Release Information form.
- 2) If you are a minor, I may discuss with your parents or guardians some of the information from counseling. If you are a minor and a victim of a crime, I may testify at an inquiry concerning the crime.
- 3) If you and your partner are both seeing me for couples counseling, I may, at my discretion, discuss information with your spouse that you have revealed to me, unless you specifically indicate that certain information is confidential.
- 4) In the event of a medical emergency, information deemed necessary for treatment may be released.
- 5) In the event of a threat of harm to oneself or someone else, if that threat is perceived to be serious, the proper individuals must be contacted. This may include the individual(s) against whom a threat is made. A counselor is not required to treat as confidential a communication that reveals the contemplation or commission of a crime or harmful act.

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- 6) In the event of suspected abuse of a child, dependent adult or elder, proper authorities must be contacted. The abuse does not have to be personally witnessed by the counselor.
 - 7) If you register a complaint with the Washington State Department of Health, information will be released as requested or required by the State to resolve the issue.
 - 8) If ordered by a judge or other judicial officers, information regarding your treatment must be disclosed.
 - 9) If an attorney in the state of Washington duly subpoenas your records, they will be released unless you file a protection order within 14 days of the subpoena.
 - 10) In the event of a client's death or disability, information will be released as authorized by the client's personal representative or beneficiary.
- When it is possible, we will discuss any exceptions to confidentiality as they arise.

Consultations

I regularly consult with a supervisor regarding clients with whom I am working. This allows me to serve you better, gaining other perspectives and ideas that may help you reach your goals. These consultations are obtained in such a way that confidentiality is maintained.

Your Rights

As a mental health consumer, your rights are safeguarded by the Counselor Credentialing Act, legislation that protects public health and safety by establishing a process to follow should your counselor engage in acts of unprofessional conduct. The State also mandates that you be informed of statute **RCW 18.19.060** that reads:

“Counselors practicing counseling for a fee must be registered or certified with the department of licensing for the protection of the public health and safety. Registration of an individual with the department does not include a recognition of any practice standards, nor necessarily implies the effectiveness of any treatment.”

The purpose of the Counselor Credentialing Act (Chapter 18.19 RCW) is *a)* to provide protection for public health and safety; and *b)* to empower the citizens of the State of Washington by providing a complaint process against those counselors who would commit acts of unprofessional conduct. Should you believe that I have been unethical in our work and still believe so after discussing your concern with me, you may contact the state:

Department of Health—Counselor Programs
P.O. Box 47869
Olympia, WA 98504-7869
360.664.9098

Emergencies

If you have an emergency and need to speak with me, please call and leave a message on my voicemail (206-399-5422.) Be sure to leave your name, location, and telephone number. Please

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be aware that I am usually able to return calls within 24 hours. If your concerns are urgent and require immediate attention, please call:

-911

-The Crisis Clinic - 206-461-3222

-The Suicide Help Line – 1-800-273-TALK

-The Trans Life Line – 877-565-8860 (www.translifeline.org)

-The Trevor Project – 1-866-488-7386 (LGBTQ youth – ages 13-24)

-Or go to the nearest hospital emergency room. Please do not hesitate to move to any of these options if you cannot get through.

Payment and Scheduling Policies

My fee is \$110.00 for individuals and \$120.00 for couples and families per fifty-minute session. I ask that you pay at the time of your appointment. I periodically raise my fee to adjust for increases in the cost of living and doing business. Therapy may be discontinued for non-payment. Please feel free to discuss fees or payment options with me at any time. Because I want to remain affordable to those who are seeking counseling, I do reserve slots for clients who have limited income or who are experiencing financial hardship—a fee arrangement will be determined at the end of the first session. Payment in the form of cash or check is to be made at the beginning of each session unless other arrangements are made.

The frequency of our meetings will be arranged by mutual agreement. Typically I meet with clients once per week. If you are unable to keep your appointment, please call me at least 24 hours in advance to avoid being charged for a session. Exceptions to the charge are made if we can mutually agree on a time to meet later in the same week. Please be aware that insurance companies will not reimburse for missed psychotherapy sessions, making you responsible for the entire fee. If you are late, I will still stop at our regular ending time in order to keep my schedule and you will still be charged for the full session. I will do my best to offer an alternative session if you cannot make your scheduled time. You will not be charged for vacations and other planned absences. I take vacation a few times a year and observe major holidays. I will inform you well in advance of my time away from the office.

Because the use of text and email has become standard communication practice for many, I have adopted several strategies to ensure that your confidentiality remains secure. I will discuss, with your input, different measures we may take to verify your identity. As such, we will agree on a method to ensure I can verify your identity to ensure you are indeed the person with whom I am in contact. The use of a mutually agreed upon password, is one particular method, for example. Again, I encourage all my clients to use email or text to deal with scheduling concerns only. Phone call or face-to-face appointments are the preferred channel through which your protected health information is shared.

Third Party Payors (Insurance, Managed Care, Crime Victims Compensation):

