

How to Get the Most Benefit from Counseling

You have decided that what you have going on in your life is big enough or difficult enough to seek help. Great first step. This takes initiative, courage and strength. Now the hard work begins as you dig in and proactively take charge of your life.

Counseling generally occurs on a weekly or bi-weekly basis for 50 minutes. That leaves approximately 6,670 waking minutes a week for you to intervene in your own life with the help, support, suggestions, ideas, etc. that you receive in your counseling sessions. That means you are the single most powerful, influential and available source of change and growth in your life. When you are stuck or overwhelmed or overburdened however, a counselor can lend just enough encouragement, support and help to get you through to make use of your own power for your own good.

Here are some suggestions to get you moving along in the right direction and to make the 50 minute session carry forward.

1. Keep an open mind and heart in session
2. Journal outside of session
3. Take notes in session if you hear or talk about something you want to think about more or follow up on
4. If you receive an assignment from your therapist, be sure to do it, or journal what self talk, thoughts and feelings are causing you to be hesitant or avoidant about doing it
5. Be willing to take risks
6. Be willing to step outside of your comfort zone
7. Be willing to experiment with vulnerability
8. Keep your appointments
9. Show up on time for appointments
10. If you want to avoid coming to session, realize this is probably an indicator that important work is being in your done in your life, it's just uncomfortable, feel the fear and dive in! **KEEP YOUR APPOINTMENT**
11. Use session time wisely, follow your therapist's cues on this
12. Realize that as counseling begins and in the early stages, things may start to feel worse before they get better as you dig into life and expose stuff you have been keeping buried or at bay
13. Get adequate sleep
14. Get adequate and balanced nutrition
15. Drink enough water
16. Get some exercise (walking and stretching are easy and free)
17. Stay in touch with the people who love and support you
18. Breathe deeply
19. Realize you can stop counseling any time you wish
20. Finish well, in other words, have a conversation with your therapist about finishing rather than just disappearing

Policies

The Limits of Confidentiality

- Counselors recognize that trust is a cornerstone of the counseling relationship. Counselors aspire to earn the trust of clients by creating an ongoing partnership, establishing and upholding appropriate boundaries, and maintaining confidentiality. Several situations require professional counselors to disclose confidential client information:
- Abuse – if we have reason to believe that a minor child, elderly person, or person with a disability has been abused, abandoned, or neglected, Enrichment must report this concern or observation to the appropriate authorities.
- Health Oversight Activities – If the Texas Board of Professional Examiners of Professional Counselors is investigating a clinician that you have filed a formal complaint against, Enrichment may be required to disclose protected health information regarding your case.
- Professional Harm – If you disclose sexual contact with another mental health professional with whom you have had a professional relationship, Enrichment is required to report this violation to the licensing board. You have the right to anonymity in the filing of this report.
- Judicial and Administrative Proceedings as Required – If you are involved in a court proceeding and a court subpoenas information about the professional services provided you and/or the records thereof, Enrichment may be compelled to provide the information. Enrichment will not release your information without attempting to notify you or your legally appointed representative.
- Serious Threat to Health or Safety – If you communicate to your therapist an explicit threat of imminent serious physical harm to yourself or others and I believe you may act on this threat, we have a legal duty to take the appropriate measures, including disclosing information to the police. In both cases, we will disclose only what we believe is the minimal amount of information necessary.

FEES

The fee for each counseling session (approximately 50 minutes) is \$110, payable at the time of each appointment unless other arrangements are made as outlined below. You may pay by cash, check, credit or debit. There is a \$30 fee for all checks returned for nonpayment. *If there are two instances of returned checks, all future payments must be paid with cash or by credit or debit.* It is the policy of Enrichment to evaluate fees annually in January. Fees are subject to increase at this time. You will have a one month notice if your fee will be adjusted.

INSURANCE

You are ultimately responsible for your fee, your health insurance may pay a portion of the fee. It is your responsibility to file with insurance. I can provide you with receipts for paid sessions at your request.

APPOINTMENTS, CANCELLATIONS AND NO-SHOWS

At the conclusion of your initial interview you and your therapist will agree to a schedule for additional appointments. Because consistency is an important part of the counseling process, the appointment time you schedule is reserved for you and is not available to anyone else.

If you are unable to keep a scheduled appointment, you must notify your therapist a minimum of 48 hours in advance (Monday 8:00 a.m. through Friday 5:00 p.m.). Monday cancellations must be made on the preceding Thursday to avoid having to pay for the canceled or missed appointment. Insurance will not pay for missed appointments, therefore, your liability for a missed appointment or late cancellation will be the entire fee you have contracted with your therapist. If there are two instances of missed or short notice (less than 48 hours) cancellations, all future appointments must be paid for at the time of scheduling. If you arrive late, your appointment will still end at the scheduled time.

EMERGENCIES

Enrichment Training & Counseling Solutions, P.C. does NOT provide emergency services. If you find yourself experiencing a mental health emergency please contact DePaul at 254-776-5970, or call 911 emergency services.

FINANCIAL AGREEMENT:

I understand and agree to the financial policies stated above, and to pay the contracted fee at the end of each counseling appointment. If you take a break from counseling for more than 2 months, your fee is subject to change and you may be asked to complete new intake paperwork.

SOCIAL MEDIA

While I appreciate the invitation to friend or follow you on social media, the Code of Ethics that governs my profession prohibits me from interacting with you on social media. I do have a professional face book page that offers ideas and tips for living wholeheartedly as well as words of encouragement. The QR code on the back of Enrichment business cards will link you to the Enrichment Facebook page, or you can link to it from the icon on the EnrichmentTCS.com website.

About Marriage and Family Therapists

A licensed marriage and family therapist (LMFT) is a mental health professional who provides professional therapeutic services to individuals and groups that involve the application of family systems theories and techniques. Services may include marriage therapy, sex therapy, family therapy, child therapy, play therapy, individual psychotherapy, divorce therapy, mediation, group therapy, chemical dependency therapy, rehabilitation therapy, diagnostic assessment, hypnotherapy, biofeedback, and related services.

A licensed marriage and family therapist holds at least a master's degree in marriage and family therapy or its equivalent, and also must complete 3,000 hours of supervised experience in the field of marriage and family therapy services.

For more information about marriage and family therapists, visit the website of the Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists at www.dshs.state.tx.us/mft or call (512) 834-6657.

Notice of Court Related Fees

If you require my services for testimony or as an expert witness in court the following fees will apply:

1. \$1000 per day to cover my time and the cancellation of a day's worth of clients
2. \$200 dollars an hour for records and testimony preparation billed in 15 minute increments
3. Mileage reimbursement at the government sanctioned rate

Payment for billable hours as identified in points 1 and 2 must be made in full 14 days in advance of the scheduled court date.

If court is cancelled with less than 7 days' notice, the full fee of \$1000 per day scheduled will still be owed and an additional fee for the same amount per day will be required for securing my time on any additional dates.

Mileage reimbursement will be billed after the court date. If additional billable hours accrue after payment is made for my time to appear in court, these hours will be billed at the same time as the mileage is billed.

Credit Card Processing and Storage Information: If you will be paying for services by credit card, we use Square for our credit card processing. Square offers a secure way to store your account information for easy processing of fees. Once your card information is entered into the square secure platform, this paper will be shredded, an electronic copy of this document will be kept in our secure medical record keeping system.

Below are the terms which you have agreed to upon intake:

- Your card will be processed for your session fee at the rate of \$100 per 50 minutes at the end of every session.
- If sessions cancelled within less than 48 hours on business days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and holidays) and no shows will be charged the full session fee.
- Storage of credit/debit card information provided on the intake paperwork and stored in your medical record will have the card information blacked out leaving only the last 4 digits of the card number exposed.
- You have agreed on the intake paperwork if you completed the credit card form to allow Enrichment to store your card information in the secure Square platform and the secure medical record.
- You have agreed on the intake paperwork if you completed the credit card form to pay the full fee for short notice cancellations or if you fail to show for a scheduled session.

Enrichment Appointment Cancellation, Reschedule and No Show Policy

- I understand that Enrichment requires a 48 hour notice of cancellation or reschedule.
- I understand that there are no exceptions to this 48 hour policy.
- This 48 hour notice must occur Monday through Friday between 8:00 am and 5:00 p.m. excluding holidays.
- Email, text message and phone call are acceptable methods of cancellation.
- Monday appointments must be cancelled on or before the Thursday prior.
- Tuesday appointments must be cancelled on or before the Friday prior.
- Full fee is charged for short notice cancellations, short notice reschedules and no shows.

HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices Statement

Notice of Information Practices and Privacy Statement For Enrichment Training & Counseling Solutions, P.C.

- **How We Collect Information About You:** Enrichment Training & Counseling Solutions, P.C. (Enrichment) and its employees and volunteers collect information through a variety of means including but not necessarily limited to Your intake information, Counseling Notes, phone call records, email records, and voice mails, that is either required by law, or necessary to process facilitate your care or other requests for assistance through our organization.
- **What We Do Not Do With Your Information:** Information about your situation and medical conditions and care that you provide to us in writing, via email, on the phone (including information left on voice mails), contained in or attached to intake documents, or directly or indirectly given to us, is held in strictest confidence.
- We do not give out, exchange, barter, rent, sell, lend, or disseminate any information about clients who request or actually receive our services that is considered patient confidential, is restricted by law, or has been specifically restricted by a patient/client in a signed HIPAA consent form.
- **How We Do Use Your Information:** Information is only used as is reasonably necessary to process your request for services or to provide you with health or counseling services which may require communication between Enrichment and other health care providers, service providers, insurance companies, and other providers necessary to: verify your medical information is accurate; determine the type of mental health care services you need including.
- If you request or receive assistance through us and provide information with the intent or purpose of fraud or that results in either an actual crime of fraud for any reason including willful or un-willful acts of negligence whether intended or not, or in any way demonstrates or indicates attempted fraud, your non-medical information can be given to legal authorities including police, investigators, courts, and/or attorneys or other legal professionals, as well as any other information as permitted by law.

- Information We Do Not Collect: We do not use cookies on our website to collect data from our site visitors. We do not collect information about site visitors except for one hit counter on the main index page (www.enrichmenttcs.com) that simply records the number of visitors and no other data. We do use some affiliate programs that may or may not capture traffic data through our site. To avoid potential data capture that you visited the Enrichment website simply do not click on any of our outside affiliate links.
- HIPAA is an acronym for "Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act." HIPAA was enacted to ensure the privacy and confidential handling of medical information for all patients in the U.S. It applies to all medical and mental health service providers.