



Policies for Wellspring Counseling

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ORGANIZATION

Wellspring Counseling is a not-for-profit organization that provides Christ-centered, results-oriented, professional counseling to individuals (children, adolescents and adults), couples, families and groups.

Wellspring Counseling is located within Old Cutler Presbyterian Church, giving us spiritual guidance and grounding. We have a supportive relationship with the church staff and its members. Wellspring Counseling is a pending 501-c3 (not-or-profit) organization in Miami.

All of the Wellspring counselors follow the ethical and legal standards of their licensing boards, including continuing education. They are also members of professional organizations such as the American Association of Christian Counselors, the International Association of EMDR practitioners (EMDRIA), and the National Association of Social Workers.

As a group practice, we also have professional consultation, personal support and accountability among our counselors. In addition, we participate actively in the broader Miami Community of professionals in the fields of Health, Recovery and Faith.

PHILOSOPHY

Christian therapy works to help people to improve their feelings, relationships or lifestyles from the framework of a Biblical world-view. The Christian counselor offers holistic support to the client during the healing process, considering spiritual, emotional and physical factors. The Christian counselor and client have the added advantage of drawing upon the comfort and guidance given by the Holy Spirit. Wellspring counselors work within the spiritual framework of the client, respecting the client's spiritual inclinations.

APPOINTMENTS

Individual and family sessions last 50 minutes, and EMDR sessions last up to 80 minutes.

If the outside door to the office hallway is locked, please ring the doorbell. Once you are inside the hallway, you may wait in the reception room. Feel free to knock once on your counselor's door so that he/she will know that you have arrived.

You are required to pay the full hourly fee for a failed appointment not cancelled 24 hours in advance. This is to allow your therapist time to schedule someone else who may need to come in.

TELEPHONE CALLS

You may leave a message for your therapist at their work number. Lengthy telephone consultations may be billed at your therapist's standard hourly rate for professional service.

EMERGENCIES

In an emergency, call 911.

If you need to urgently consult with a counselor, and your therapist is unavailable, you may do one or more of the following.

- Contact another Wellspring counselor (see numbers listed above).
- Call the Switchboard of Miami at 305-358-4357 to receive referrals to various local services (i.e. mental health services, rent assistance, utility assistance, food, prescriptions, medical, shelter).

FEES

The standard rate for services is \$110 an hour (50 minutes) and \$140 for an EMDR session (typically booked for 1 ½ hours). Group rates are \$20 per session (typically 1 1/2 hours).

If you have a need for a reduction in fees, you may discuss your situation with your counselor. He/she may be able to reduce the fee, depending on our current case-load of reduced fee clients. You may also apply for financial support from our scholarship fund. Your therapist can provide you with these application forms. Your therapist may also be willing to arrange a payment plan or to space out your sessions to accommodate your budget.

We do not accept insurance payments. However, if your insurance pays for out-of-network counseling you may be able to collect reimbursements for fees. We are all licensed practitioners and are willing to provide a receipt for you to turn in to your insurance for reimbursement.

If you are helped in this process of counseling and desire to contribute to the Wellspring Scholarship fund, please do so. This fund allows us to reduce our fees for the many people who are in need of counseling but are unable to pay full fees. Checks should be made to “Wellspring Counseling”, with “scholarships” in the memo portion. You may receive a tax deductible receipt for this upon request.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND FILES: NOTICE OF PRIVACY POLICIES AND PRACTICES

We will treat with great care all the information you share with us. That is why we ask you to sign a “release of records” form before your therapist consults with anyone regarding your case. In general, we will tell no one what you tell us. We will not even reveal that you are receiving treatment. In most situations, your confidentiality (that is, your privacy) is protected by state law and by the rules of our professions. We will do everything within the confines of the law to protect your confidentiality. Federal and State laws governing confidentiality can be quite complex. There are many legal exceptions that may require that your therapist break your confidentiality. The most common cases in which your therapist may be required to break confidentiality include child/elder abuse, serious threat to health or safety, court ordered treatment, or judicial proceedings. Also, according to HIPAA regulations, please be informed that cell phone, skype, or other electronic conversations may not be considered confidential.

It is your legal right that our sessions and your therapist’s records about you be kept private. Your therapist will maintain a Clinical Record file on your case, in a locked file, which is the property of Wellspring Counseling. You may examine and/or receive a copy of your file *if* you request it in writing *and* the request is signed by you (and it would not harm you to receive it). There may be a charge for writing reports or copying materials.

Wellspring counselors may share some information about you, in professional consultation with other Wellspring counselors if necessary. Current Wellspring counselors include, Christine Schlottman, LMHC, Tova Kreps, LCSW, Martha Sullivan, LMHC, Karen Chalmers, PMT, Marisol Weaver, IMH, and Kay Gackle, IMT.. Also, our bookkeeper, Deniece Branson sees the names on checks which are deposited. Office personnel are bound by our same confidentiality agreement, under a QSOA (Qualified Services Organizational Agreement). If you are uncomfortable with your therapist sharing any information with any of these specific people, please tell your therapist.

Lastly, because we often get referrals from the community in which we live and work, we may see you in social settings. Generally, your therapist will not acknowledge that he/she knows you at all unless you greet him/her first, or you have reasons to know each other in other contexts (such as church, school, etc.). Please let your therapist know how you prefer to handle such situations. If you are seen with your therapist in the process of coming in or out of the office at church, you will generally be treated as a church friend (of which we have many), not a client.

TERMINATION OF SERVICES

Our hope is that you and your therapist will agree together to terminate your contract when you have met your goals in therapy. Generally, the door is always open to resume a therapy contract or to schedule single sessions for specific issues.

You have the right to withdraw from treatment at any time without it being held against you in any way. It is our experience that people often have seasons in their lives during which therapy is helpful. Feel free to come, go or return to therapy as is most helpful to you.

If you do not show up for an appointment for two sessions in a row, your therapist will consider your contract for therapy to have ended (you will no longer be an “active client”). You will be expected to pay for the missed sessions. You may, however, feel welcome to resume services at any time. Obviously, we would prefer you simply cancel appointments and/or talk directly with your counselor if you have reservations about continuing in therapy.

If your therapist terminates services to you for some reason, he/she will explain the reasons and also try to provide referrals to you for other comparable professionals in the community.

Client Bill of Rights

You have the right to:

- Get respectful treatment that will be helpful to you.
- Have a safe treatment setting, free from sexual, physical, and emotional abuse.
- Report immoral and illegal behavior by a therapist.
- Ask for and get information about the therapist’s qualifications, including his or her license, education, training, experience, membership in professional groups, special areas of practice, and limits on practice.
- Have written information, before entering therapy, about fees, method of payment, insurance coverage, number of sessions the therapist thinks will be needed, substitute therapists (in cases of vacation and emergencies), and cancellation policies.
- Refuse audio or video recording of sessions (but you may ask for it if you wish).
- Refuse to answer any question or give any information you choose not to answer or give.
- Know if your therapist will discuss your case with others (for instance, supervisors, consultants, or students).
- Ask that the therapist inform you of your progress.