



Working Agreement for Counselling Services

The information in this document forms part of our agreement for working together. If you have any questions about the agreement then please let me know. This agreement was last updated on 25 September 2023.

1. Confidentiality

I am committed to ensuring that your privacy is protected. All conversations are confidential between us/Hanno Blue Counselling, however, there are certain situations where I have ethical and legal obligations to share information with other professionals, safeguarding services or the police. These are:

- If you share information with me which leads me to believe that there is a risk of serious harm to a child or a vulnerable adult, I am required by law to take action to safeguard these people from harm. If I identify a possible safeguarding concern, I will tell you this and work with you as much as is appropriate in the situation. I may be required to contact adult or child safeguarding services or – if there is an immediate risk - the police.
- If I am concerned that you or someone else (other than above) are at risk of serious harm, or I have concerns about your safety or well-being, I may contact your GP or another named health professional involved in your care if you have one. Signing this working agreement will confirm that you agree to this contact.
- In the rare situation that you should you tell me anything related to terrorism, money laundering the proceeds of drug trafficking, I have a legal obligation to share it. Also, The Road Traffic Act 1988 permits the police to require information relating to the identification of the driver of a vehicle involved in a road traffic offence.
- I receive regular clinical supervision of my work where I discuss the work I am doing with my clients. This is in adherence to the policies and ethical standards of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). The anonymity of my clients is maintained except in exceptional circumstances such as a safeguarding situation.

2. Record Keeping

I keep records of our sessions, including anonymised written clinical notes and information about you, all securely held. The information is not suitable for use in legal proceedings and I reserve the right to resist legal requests to produce these in court. Any report made will be restricted to details of attendance dates and numbers of sessions.

I will also not share any information about our sessions with third parties unless there is a need to breach confidentiality due to a criminal act or limitations of confidentiality as outlined above.

I will hold information about you and the anonymised clinical notes for five years, as required by my insurance company. After this, I will delete all your information, including clinical notes.

3. Counselling Sessions

Regular Sessions

Counselling sessions will normally be at weekly intervals on the same day and at the same time. Each session will last for 50 minutes. These 50 mins are often referred to as an "hour" – a therapeutic hour. Regular attendance is important if counselling is to be effective. I do not specify a fixed number of counselling sessions; as the counselling progresses you can decide for yourself and in discussion with me how many sessions you feel that you need. We will review your progress at distinct stages to help determine the therapeutic goals and duration of our work together.

When you feel you are coming to the end of your counselling, we might arrange a different frequency of sessions, e.g. fortnightly. We might also discuss and agree to work differently e.g. being more solution focussed in your sessions. If we both think it might be helpful, I might introduce some of my coaching tools which I will have mentioned in our initial consultation.

If you arrive at your counselling session and I suspect you are under the influence of alcohol or drugs, I reserve the right to end the session and you will be requested to leave.



Ending Sessions

The end of your counselling is a time to review and confirm what has been learned, to express any feelings and thoughts and to look forward to the future. When you start to think about ending please mention this to me so that we can work towards this together. Endings are important events in life. It is acknowledged that finishing counselling may bring up memories of other endings in your life that have been difficult or painful. We can work through this together if this is the case.

You may give feedback at any time to me or at the end of your sessions, if you so wish. We will review how we are working together at regular intervals where the counselling extends over a number of months.

I reserve the right to terminate our sessions at my discretion, for reasons including but not limited to late fee payment, conflict of interest, or your needs being outside of my scope of practice or competence. If I do terminate the sessions, for whatever reason, I will also attempt to ensure a smooth transition to another therapist by offering you referral details.

4. Payment and Cancellations

Payments

The initial consultation is free and without obligation. In this session will agree the fee for your counselling sessions and what payment method best suits you. Payments can be made by bank transfer, payment links (sent in advance) using your debit/credit card or cash on the day. Payments are required before the session, which can be in person at the start of the session. Invoices are only provided if requested and these can be emailed after the session.

The fee agreed for your sessions will last for up to 12 months, after which time I reserve the right to review them as part of my annual review. Any increase in fees will be discussed with at least 4 weeks' notice.

Holidays, Cancellations and Missed Appointments

If you have to cancel a counselling session, I request 24 hours' notice – please email me or call/message. **If you cancel a session with less than 24 hours' notice, or if you do not attend without prior notice, I will request that you still make the agreed payment for the missed session as I will have held that time for you.** Payments may be waived in exceptional circumstances, at my discretion.

If you miss a counselling session without letting me know, I will contact you to confirm that you will be attending your next session. If you miss two consecutive sessions without letting me know, I will assume that you are currently unable to commit to regular counselling and I will close your client folder and release your weekly session.

I will let you know in advance if I am unable to attend an agreed session. I will try as much notice as possible for holidays or other unavailability. In the event that I am suddenly unavailable on the day of your session, I will call and let you know. In extreme circumstances, and if for any reason, I personally cannot contact you, then a member of my family, my supervisor or another counsellor colleague will be given permission by me to access my client details and contact you. Your contact details would only be accessed by one of these people if there is no other alternative option.

5. Audio Recording of Sessions

From time to time, I may ask you if I can audio record session(s) for the purpose of training, supervision and continued professional development and to enable me to reflect on my work with you. Your confidentiality and privacy will not be infringed in any way and you can decline or stop the recording at any time without it affecting the counselling. The recording will be kept securely by me and erased once it has been used for the purpose it was required. Please tick the box at the end of the working agreement if you are happy for me to record specified sessions with you.

6. Working Online or by Telephone

It is important for the counselling session to take place just between us in a secure, uninterrupted place. Both parties agree to make no video recording of an online session. If I believe that there is serious risk of harm to you or others, I will consider reporting this in accordance with the above procedures, and for this reason, I will always ask for your location if we are working online or on the telephone.



Hanno Blue Counselling

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For online counselling sessions, please ensure that you secure your computer and emails against unauthorised viewing by third parties. It is recommended that you only use a private computer and not a work or public computer. Please ensure you keep your anti-virus protection up-to-date. I will undertake to do the same.

The privacy statement for the technology that we are using for the counselling session will give you information about how that particular technical platform holds and processes data. Please ask me if you are unsure of the technology used.

Technology breakdown arrangements – should you experience a technical issue which prevents you from emailing or working online as agreed, please contact me on 07859 936518 with as much notice as possible. I will phone you if I experience a technical breakdown or if, within 5 minutes of the scheduled session, if I have not reached you online.

7. Professional Practice

I hold a Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling, awarded by the Counselling and Psychotherapy Central Awarding Body (CPCAB).

I am a registered member of the [British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy](http://www.bacp.co.uk) and my membership number is 396025. The BACP provide a set of ethical standards and a framework that I work to and as such I commit to things like regular reviews of my practice and continued training/professional development. I also ensure that I only work with clients who are within my level of competence and should I feel unable to support you, I will always try and signpost or refer you to other places/ counsellors.

I have professional insurance in place.

Hanno Blue Counselling is part of Hanno Blue Ltd who is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office and a Data Protection Policy is in place in accordance with the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation.

8. Your Responsibilities & Contact Outside of Sessions

When we begin therapy, we are both responsible for honouring this agreement and the therapeutic contract. I will expect you to attend our scheduled sessions on time and to be prepared to discuss any issues you may want to focus on.

Please keep mobile phones on silent or switched off so as not to interrupt the session. During sessions we will be building a therapeutic relationship, which is a professional and not a social one. Our contact will be limited to our sessions or during working hours. Should we meet each other by chance outside of our sessions, (e.g., in a shop or the city centre), to protect your confidentiality and our professional relationship, I will not initiate contact. I may smile at you but will not say hello unless you respond first. I will not discuss the conversations we have in private outside of your sessions. My professional stance is that once you are a client, you will always be a client.

Our relationship is professional, and our contact will be limited to the therapeutic sessions, emails, and phone calls as needed. If your calls or emails become too frequent, I will let you know, and we will discuss an alternative solution.

In the event of an emergency, such as wanting to hurt yourself, call 999 or ring Samaritans for free on 116 123 (UK only). I regularly check my messages and email (except on the weekends), and I will return your call as soon as possible, but I do not offer a crisis service, so you cannot rely on reaching me if you are feeling suicidal or homicidal.

9. Contract

Client: I agree that I have had sufficient time to read and carefully consider the above agreement and I have asked any questions I needed answering. By signing this agreement, I understand and agree to the terms of the agreement. I understand that there are limitations to confidentiality required by the law and I understand my rights and responsibilities as a client, and my therapist's responsibilities to me. I agree to undertake therapy with Julia Phippard and consent that she/Hanno Blue Ltd can hold personal and sensitive information about me for therapeutic purposes.



Hanno Blue Counselling

Julia Phippard, Humanistic Counsellor, BACP Registered Member 396025
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Additional Agreement:

I agree to sessions being recorded in future

Client Name (Print): _____

Client Signature: _____

Date: _____

Therapist Name (Print): _____

Therapist Signature: _____

Date: _____

Office Use Only:

Client Number: _____

Fees agreed per session: _____

Session frequency/date/time: _____