

Therapy Agreement

Terms of our working together

This agreement is for the benefit of both of us to begin to establish a healthy therapeutic relationship. The details included are guidelines in order that you know what to expect and so that the counselling relationship is beneficial and respectful.

About Me

I am a qualified counsellor (Accredited) and I work within the ethical guidelines of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) of which I am a registered member. My registration number is 193165.

Confidentiality

You can be assured that everything you share with me during our work together will be treated as highly confidential.

However, there are some limits to confidentiality which you need to be aware of:

1) In very rare cases I may be legally or ethically obliged to break confidentiality; for example, where I consider your welfare or the welfare of others to be at risk. This would include you disclosing information that someone (including yourself) is in danger, or you disclose to me your intent of committing a serious criminal offence, such as, but not limited to, terrorism, money laundering, people trafficking or drug running, at which stage I would be required to break confidentiality in accordance with the BACP Ethical Framework and UK Law.

2) This may also apply if I learn of someone else who may be being harmed or in danger or is planning to harm others. I will intend to discuss with you of my (admittedly very rare) intent to break confidentiality of our work before I do so, but you need to be aware that the law may require that I take action first and without your consent or knowledge.

3) In accordance with BACP guidelines I am required to attend regular supervision. This is to discuss my practice and my case load and to check that I'm working to my best, in keeping with ethical principles, and dealing with dilemmas that may occur. I will, from time to time, discuss your case and our work together with my supervisor and I will refer to you only by your first name (or another name if you prefer).

4) If I am unable to communicate directly with clients because of illness, an accident, a serious family emergency, or my death, I have appointed a trusted colleague to contact current clients and support them in making alternative arrangements, if the client wishes. This colleague is a counsellor and will be bound by the confidentiality set out above. They will have access to your contact details and appointment schedule, but not to any confidential notes.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Confidentiality & Use of Digital Systems

I am registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), which means I work in line with UK data protection law (UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018). This requires me to be open with you about what information I collect, how it is used, and how it is protected. My registration number is **ZA315593**.

If you have any concerns about how your data is handled, you are always welcome to contact the ICO at www.ico.org.uk or by phone on **0303 123 1113**.

What information I collect and why

I only collect information that is needed to support our work together safely, ethically, and effectively.

Name and date of birth

This helps me accurately identify you and keep clear and appropriate clinical records.

Contact details (address, email, and phone number)

I use these details to communicate with you about appointments. I usually send an email reminder 48 hours before your session, although I am happy to use text reminders or no reminders at all, depending on your preference. We will decide together what feels most helpful for you at our first meeting.

GP and emergency contact details

These are collected in case I ever become seriously concerned about your safety or wellbeing. If that were to happen, I may need to contact your GP and/or emergency contact. Wherever possible, I would aim to speak with you first so you are aware of what is happening and why.

Data storage, retention & your rights

Your personal data and clinical records are stored securely and handled in accordance with UK data protection law (UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018). I keep records for **seven (7) years**, in line with professional indemnity insurance requirements. After this time, they are securely deleted.

You have the right to:

- Request access to your personal data (free of charge, in a format that works for you)
- Ask for corrections if anything is inaccurate
- Request that your data is transferred to another provider, where appropriate
- For the purposes of UK data protection law, the data controller is: Anita Dunford

Clinical Records

As part of providing safe and thoughtful therapeutic care, I keep brief clinical notes after each session. These are not detailed transcripts of what is said, but anonymised reflections that help me to hold continuity in our work and practise responsibly. I dictate or write my session notes using **WriteUpp**, a secure, GDPR-compliant system designed for healthcare professionals. This allows me to store information safely and manage records in line with professional and legal requirements.

Confidentiality and how your information is used

Your information is stored securely and is only accessed when it is needed for clinical, professional, or legal reasons. I do not share your personal information with third parties without your consent, unless there is a serious concern about safety or a legal requirement to do so. If this were ever to arise, I would aim to talk it through with you wherever possible, so you understand what is happening and have space to ask questions.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) support tools

Some people find themselves using AI-based tools or chatbots for emotional support, reflection, or guidance between sessions. These tools are separate from the therapy I offer and are not part of our therapeutic relationship.

AI systems do not know you in the way a therapist comes to understand you over time. They do not hold clinical responsibility, cannot reliably assess risk or crisis, and may sometimes give responses that sound confident but are inaccurate or not suited to your situation.

It is also worth being mindful that anything shared with AI platforms may be stored or processed in ways that fall outside the confidentiality and protections that apply within therapy.

For these reasons, AI tools should not be relied upon as a replacement for professional mental health support or for help in moments of crisis.

I remain fully responsible for the care I provide to you. My thinking and clinical decisions are grounded in professional training, ethical practice, and supervision, and are never delegated to AI systems.

If you do choose to use AI tools, you are very welcome to bring this into our sessions. We can think together about what it adds, what it might take away, and how it sits alongside your own ways of understanding your experience. This is offered with openness and curiosity, never judgement.

Delays and Cancellations:

Each session is 60 minutes duration. If for any reason you need to cancel or rearrange any sessions, I request a minimum of 24 hours' notice to enable me to offer the appointment to somebody else who may need it. If a cancellation is made with less than 24 hours' notice this will be classed as a short notice cancellation and will be charged the full rate.

If for any reason you are late arriving the session will finish at the booked finish time. I will ring and email you 5 minutes after the start of the session if I have not heard from you. I will wait for a further 10 minutes before declaring it a missed session.

If you give no notice, or do not attend, your appointment will be deemed as a DNA (Did Not Attend) and will be charged at the full rate.

Whilst every effort will be made to adhere to the planned sessions unforeseen circumstances or illness may require that I cancel or rearrange a session.

Private Health Insurance (Bupa)

I am a registered therapist working with **Bupa**, and some clients choose to access their therapy through their Bupa private health insurance policy.

As part of this arrangement, an **excess is payable by all clients**, as set by your individual insurance policy. This is paid directly to me.

If you are ever unsure about what your policy covers, or how the excess applies in your case, I would encourage you to contact **Bupa directly**, as they will be able to give you the most accurate and personalised information.

Breaks and Holidays

I take regular breaks and holidays as part of my self-care.

I have a break from mid – February to mid - March each year. I am happy to discuss this and how we work around this.

I will inform you as soon as possible of any additional breaks during the remainder of 2026.

Bank Holidays - I do not work on Bank Holidays and will offer an alternative appointment to clients who attend sessions on Bank Holidays.

On-Line Working - Considerations

Please contact me in advance if you wish to arrange an online session and I will send you a link to access this service. I use secure GDPR-compliant online platform. In case of any disruptions due to the internet, it is advisable to keep your mobile nearby but on silent. I will phone you on your mobile if there are any disruptions. Please endeavour to find a suitable place that allows you to focus on the work and speak freely during the counselling session. Please would you ensure that you are wearing appropriate clothing for online sessions.

Refreshments and Online Considerations.

Drinks are provided, or you are welcome to bring your own, but please refrain from eating as this can be disruptive and take away attention from what is being discussed. This also applies to online sessions.

Behaviour

I will not proceed with a session if a client attends under the influence of alcohol or non-prescription drugs or uses threatening or offensive behaviour. Clients are requested to respect the premises and property.

Contact between sessions

Contact between sessions should be limited to booking or rearranging appointments. Therapeutic issues should be saved for during your sessions, due to confidentiality / privacy reasons.

My mobile is 07704 631975 and my email is anita@claritycounsellingilkey.com. My phone is switched off between the hours of 6:30pm and 08:30am. I will return calls and emails as soon as possible and certainly within 24 hours (*with the exception of weekends*). I do not accept personal social media friend requests.

Terms Updated April 2026