

Helen Mitchell, Pg.Dip, MBACP (Accred)

**Working Agreement:** These terms and conditions form a contract between us for the therapeutic work that we will engage in together. Please read through them, and we will discuss them in our first session. Your decision to proceed with therapy will then be taken as consent that you agree with the following.

**Initial Session:** Our initial session will be an opportunity for you to express what brings you to seek counselling at this point and to name your expectations for the work ahead. I offer both short-term and long-term counselling and we can discuss what your needs might be as well as exploring together whether I am the right person to support you. If we decide that I am not the counsellor for you, I may be able to point you in the right direction for alternative support.

**Practicalities:** A counselling session lasts for 60 minutes and our intention will be to meet on a weekly basis at the same time and on the same day. There may be occasions on which this alters but it will be to the convenience of both parties.

**Cancellations:** If you need to cancel a session, please try to give as much notice as possible. Any cancellations with less than 24 hours' notice will be charged the full fee.

**Confidentiality:** Confidentiality is a core ethical principle within a counselling relationship, and I endeavour to treat any information that you share with me, with the utmost respect and consideration. However, there are some exceptions. Firstly, if you were to say anything that indicated risk of harm either to yourself or to another person, then I would attempt to explore the implications of this within the session, but it may be that together we might look to what external support we could turn to if this is not achievable. Where appropriate and where you are willing, I would hold a note of your GP. I would not contact your GP without your consent and only where appropriate. Secondly, if there is any reference to acts of terrorism or money laundering, then I am legally obliged to declare these. And thirdly, to ensure competence and best practice, I am required to attend regular supervision during which I discuss my client work with my supervisor who also abides by the same ethical framework. I do not mention any personal identifying details, but I do explore themes and I look at how the relationship is working therapeutically – in so doing, my intention is to enhance the work that we do together. Any notes that I might keep of our sessions together are anonymised and kept in a locked cabinet. For me to act as your counsellor, I will need to hold and process the information that you have provided to me (such as your name, email address etc). I shall hold this information in accordance with my policies and procedures, which are available on request.

**Fees:** I charge £50 for each 60 minute session. Payment is to be made in cash or cheque on the day or by bank transfer within 24 hours of the session time.

**Contact between sessions:** Contact between sessions usually only takes place as a means of rearranging or confirming sessions, and I will try to respond to any communication from you within 24 hours of receiving it. Edinburgh is a small city and there is always the possibility that our paths might cross out with the session. In this instance I would not acknowledge you unless you had



indicated to me that this would be acceptable. I would also like to make it clear that I will not accept invitations from clients to join any Social Media Sites.

**Professional Bodies:** I hold a Post-Graduate Diploma (with Distinction) in Counselling and Psychotherapy and a COSCA Certificate in Counselling. I am an Accredited Registered Member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and I am bound by their Ethical Framework which can be accessed here:

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/media/3103/bacp-ethical-framework-for-the-counselling-professions-2018.pdf>

I also hold Professional Protection and Public Liability Insurance with the Psychologists' Protection Society.



I look forward to meeting you and beginning our work together.

#### **COVID-19 Addendum:**

As far as possible, all efforts have been undertaken to minimise the risks from COVID-19. By deciding to begin face to face sessions, it will be assumed that you, the client, feel safe enough to do so.

Please arrive promptly for your session. This allows time for the cleaning of the premises between sessions and minimises the chances of overlap with others in the building. I can provide the name of a café nearby if you arrive early and need somewhere to wait.

If, prior to the session, either of us develops symptoms of COVID-19 then we will notify the other and the session will take place either by telephone or online video. Symptoms are currently listed as a continuous cough; fever/high temperature (37.8C or greater); loss of, or change in, sense of smell and taste (anosmia).