

## OUTPATIENT SERVICES CONTRACT

*PATIENT COPY - THIS COPY IS FOR YOU TO KEEP!*

Welcome to our practice. This document contains important information about our professional services and business policies. Please read it carefully and jot down any questions you might have so that we can discuss them at our next meeting. When you sign the patient info sheet acknowledging your receipt of this document, it will represent an agreement between us.

THE ADVANCED THERAPY CENTER (ATC) provides treatment for clients and training for professionals. Treatment will be provided by Dr. Candia Smith, DMH, and her technicians and trainees. Platinum level is available, for an additional charge, if one wants only to be seen by Dr. Smith.

### NEUROTHERAPY SERVICES

Neurotherapy is not easily described in general statements. It varies depending on the personalities of the clinician and patient, and the particular problems you bring forward. There are many different methods we may use to deal with the issues that you hope to address.

Neurotherapy, like all forms of therapy, can have benefits and risks. With Neurotherapy, there are times that symptoms may become more intense before better. We continually evaluate our methods to minimize this potential. However, should it happen that your symptoms intensify, it usually means we are on the right track and your system is simply fighting back.

Our first session will involve an evaluation of your needs. Often this session will include the quantitative EEG (QEEG). After the QEEG is analyzed, we will offer you a first impression of what our work will entail as well as a proposed treatment plan should you decide to continue with therapy. You should evaluate this information and consider your own opinions of whether you feel comfortable working with ATC. Neurotherapy involves a large commitment of time, money, and energy, so you should be very careful about the therapist you select. If you have questions about our procedures, we should discuss them whenever they arise. If your doubts persist, we are happy to help you set up a meeting with another mental health professional for a second opinion.

### PSYCHOTHERAPY

Since therapy often involves discussing unpleasant aspects of your life, you may experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness, and helplessness. On the other hand, psychotherapy has also been shown to have benefits for people who go through it. Therapy often leads to better relationships, solutions to specific problems, and significant reductions in feelings of distress. But there are no guarantees of what you will experience.

Psychotherapy may include the specific trauma technique known as EMDR (eye movement desensitization and reprocessing). EMDR can help reduce the phenomena known as triggering that brings back old, painful experiences as if they are present now. During EMDR treatment, every effort is made to limit the negative aspects of revisiting old traumas; however, there may be brief experiences that are uncomfortable.

## MEETINGS

We normally conduct an evaluation that will last from one to three sessions. This evaluation often includes a session of brain mapping, called a QEEG. During this time, we can both decide if ATC is the best fit to meet your treatment goals. If Neurotherapy or psychotherapy is begun, we typically schedule one 50-minute session (one appointment hour of 50 minutes duration) per week at a mutually agreed upon time. Some sessions may be longer or more frequent, with most sessions ranging from 25 minutes to two hours. Neurotherapy is most effective when conducted more than once per week. Once an appointment hour is scheduled, you are expected to pay for it unless you provide 24 hours advance notice of cancellation.

## PROFESSIONAL FEES

Our hourly fees range from \$195 to \$350, depending on which clinician is working with you. In addition to therapy appointments (Neurotherapy sessions range from \$110 to \$350), we charge for other professional services provided which may include report writing, telephone conversations lasting longer than five minutes, attendance at meetings with other professionals you have authorized, preparation of records or treatment summaries, and the time spent performing any other service you may request of us.

If you become involved in legal proceedings that require our participation, you will be expected to pay for our professional time—even if we are called to testify by another party. Because of the difficulty of legal involvement, we charge \$400 per hour for preparation and attendance at any legal proceeding.

## BILLING AND PAYMENTS

You will be expected to pay for each session at the time of service unless we agree otherwise. You may pay by cash, check, VenMo (Candia-Smith, picture of a baby girl with green EEG cap), Zelle (candia.smith@comcast.net), or credit card. A 3% convenience charge will be added to all credit card payments. Payment schedules for professional services can be agreed to when they are requested.

If your account has not been paid for more than 60 days and arrangements for payment have not been made, we have the option to use legal means to secure the payment. This may involve hiring a collection agency or going through small claims court. If such legal action is necessary, all associated costs will be included in the claim. In most collection situations, the only information we release regarding a patient's treatment is his/her name, the nature of services provided, and the amount due. We will also discontinue services provided.

## INSURANCE REIMBURSEMENT

For us to set realistic treatment goals and priorities, it is important to evaluate what resources you have available to pay for your treatment. If you have a health insurance policy, it will usually provide some coverage for mental health treatment. We will complete forms and provide you with whatever assistance we can in helping you receive the benefits to which you are entitled; however, you (not your insurance company) are responsible for full payment of our fees. You are responsible to determine exactly what mental health services your insurance policy covers.

You should carefully read the section in your insurance coverage booklet that describes mental health services. If you have questions about the coverage, call your plan administrator. Of course, we will provide you with whatever information we can based on our experience. We will be happy to help you in understanding the information you receive from your insurance company.

Due to the rising costs of health care, insurance benefits have increasingly become more complex. It is sometimes difficult to determine exactly how much mental health coverage is available. Please contact your insurance company with your questions. Insurance companies pay for our services as “out of network providers.” You need to check your benefits in this regard. Many insurance plans do not reimburse for Neurotherapy.

For your assistance in assessing your benefits, these are the CPT codes used at ATC for our services:

Assessment: 90791

Neurotherapy: 90876

Psychotherapy: 90834 or 90837

QEEG acquisition: 95816

Digital analysis of EEG: 95957

You should also be aware that most insurance companies require you to authorize us to provide them with a clinical diagnosis. Sometimes we have to provide additional clinical information such as treatment plans, summaries, or copies of the entire record (in rare cases). This information will become part of the insurance company files and will probably be stored in a computer. Though all insurance companies claim to keep such information confidential, we have no control over what they do with it once it is in their hands. In some cases, they may share the information with a national medical information databank. We will provide you with a copy of any report we submit, if you request it.

It is important to remember that you always have the right to pay for our services yourself to avoid the problems described above.

## CONTACTING US

We are often not immediately available by telephone. While we are usually in our office between 10 AM and 6 PM Tuesday through Saturday, we will not answer the phone when we are with patients. When we are unavailable, our telephone is answered by voice mail that we monitor frequently. We will make every effort to return your call on the

same day you make it, except for weekends and holidays. If you are difficult to reach, please inform us of some times when you will be available. If you are unable to reach your therapist and feel that you can't wait for us to return your call, follow the instructions on our voice mail service.

Dr. Smith can be reached at an encrypted email address for client use only: [Dr.Smith@advancedtherapycenter.org](mailto:Dr.Smith@advancedtherapycenter.org)

Ellen Kruse can be reached for scheduling concerns at [Ellen@AdvancedTherapyCenter.org](mailto:Ellen@AdvancedTherapyCenter.org)

If we will be unavailable for an extended time, we will provide you with the name of a colleague to contact, if necessary.

## PROFESSIONAL RECORDS

The laws and standards of our profession require that we keep treatment records. You are entitled to receive a copy of your records, or we can prepare a summary for you instead. Because these are professional records, they can be misinterpreted and/or upsetting to untrained readers. If you wish to see your records, we recommend that you review them in our presence so that we can discuss the contents. Patients will be charged an appropriate fee for any professional time spent in responding to information requests. We maintain records for seven years after each treatment ends or seven years after the client has become 18 years of age.

## MINORS

If you are under eighteen years of age, please be aware that the law may provide your parents the right to examine your treatment records. It is our policy to request an agreement from parents that they agree to give up access to your records. If they agree, we will provide them only with general information about our work together, unless we feel there is a high risk that you will seriously harm yourself or someone else. In this case, we will notify them of our concern. We will also provide them with a summary of your treatment when it is complete. Before giving them any information, we will discuss the matter with you, if possible, and do our best to handle any objections you may have with what we are prepared to discuss.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

In general, the law protects the privacy of all communications between a patient and a therapist, and we can only release information about our work to others with your written permission. But there are a few exceptions.

In most legal proceedings, you have the right to prevent me from providing any information about your treatment. In some proceedings involving child custody and those in which your emotional condition is an important issue, a judge may order our testimony if he/she determines that the issues demand it.

There are some situations in which we are legally obligated to take action to protect others from harm, even if we have to reveal some information about a patient's treatment. For example, if we believe that a child, elderly person, or disabled person is being abused, we must file a report with the appropriate state agency.

If we believe that a patient is threatening serious bodily harm to another, we are required to take protective actions. These actions may include notifying the potential victim, contacting the police, or seeking hospitalization for the patient. If

the patient threatens to harm himself/herself, we may be obligated to seek hospitalization for him/her or to contact family members or others who can help provide protection.

These situations have rarely occurred in our practice. If a similar problem occurs, we will make every effort to thoroughly discuss it with you before taking any action.

We may occasionally find it helpful to consult other professionals about a case. During a consultation, we make every effort to avoid revealing the identity of our patients. The consultant is also legally bound to keep the information confidential. If you don't object, we will not tell you about these consultations unless we feel that it is important to our work together.

While this written summary of exceptions to confidentiality should prove helpful in informing you about potential problems, it is essential that we discuss any questions or concerns that you may have at our next meeting. We will be happy to discuss these issues with you if you need specific advice, but formal legal advice may be required. The laws governing confidentiality are quite complex, and we are not attorneys.

Your signature on the patient information sheet, supplied separately, indicates that you have read the information in this document and agree to abide by its terms during our professional relationship.

Candia Smith, DMH, BCN, QEEG-D  
PSY 12502