

Privacy Notice

Your trust in me is a very important part of the counselling process and I take the privacy of your personal data very seriously. I provide this privacy notice because you have the right to know how I (the Data Controller) collect, store, protect and use your personal data. As a Data Controller I am registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) www.ico.org.uk: registration number ZA541102.

WHAT INFORMATION DO YOU KEEP?

Once we have agreed to work together I will ask you to complete a Counselling Agreement and Client Information Form. This will include the following:

Your name
Your address
Telephone number
Email address
Doctor's contact details

In addition to this, I will keep a brief record relating to the content of our sessions and dates we have met. I will also keep any emails and texts sent between us.

HOW DO YOU STORE MY DATA AND FOR HOW LONG?

The Counselling Agreement and Client Information Form and the hand-written notes from our sessions are stored in a locked document case that only I access. In the unlikely event that I become incapacitated during our work together and I am unable to contact you myself, our Counselling Agreement and Client Information Form would be passed to my Clinical Supervisor so that she would make contact with you on my behalf.

Unless you request otherwise, I will keep your personal data for five years following the end of our work together after which it will be securely destroyed. The main reason for this is to support the work with clients who may choose to return to counselling during this time. Emails and texts exchanged during our work will usually be deleted once our work has ended.

After our initial consultation, if you decide not to proceed with counselling I will ensure all your personal data is deleted within three months. If you would like me to delete this information sooner, please do let me know.

WILL DATA BE SHARED?

Although I treat all information disclosed as confidential, there are circumstances in which your personal data may be shared with other agencies.

Good therapeutic practice requires me to use appropriate regular supervisory support and any details my Clinical Supervisor receives are also treated as confidential. However, there are limitations to confidentiality and, in the rare event of having to break confidentiality, I would use the following criteria:

If, in my opinion, a client is a danger to themselves or others.
If, in my opinion, a young person under the age of 18 or a vulnerable adult is at risk of harm.
Under a legal requirement e.g. the client is involved in terrorist activity or drug money laundering.
If ordered by a court of law.

HOW DO I SEE WHAT INFORMATION YOU ARE KEEPING ON ME?

As a client you have the right to request a copy and explanation of your personal data and this request should be made in writing. The data will be given to you free of charge.

As a client you have the right to request correction or erasure of your personal data and these requests should also be made in writing. If you believe there is an inaccuracy in your record, you can ask for it to be corrected, with my agreement. Should there be a disagreement about what would be the correct record then I would include a record of your objections.

Requests for erasure are usually agreed if our work has ended. However, there are circumstances where a counsellor can refuse to comply with this request, for example, to comply with a legal obligation or in the public interest. If the work is on-going a request for erasure would usually mean the end of counselling as I would be unable to work effectively or safely without the ability to hold your personal data.

Updated: 18th January 2021