

Empower Therapy for Women, LLC

Office 9, 716 Xenia Ave
Yellow Springs, OH 45387

Welcome to Empower Therapy for Women, LLC! We are truly honored that you have entrusted us with your care! **While this document is quite lengthy, it contains very important information about our office policies.** We ask that you read through it carefully, and ask your provider any questions you might have.

Financial Policy

Payment: Payment is due at the time of the service. Payment may be made by check, cash or major credit or debit card. For convenience, we can also simply bill the credit card that we have on file for you at each appointment. A fee of \$30 will be charged to your account for any returned checks.

Fees: For individual therapy (either in-office or teletherapy), your initial visit is 60 minutes and is \$180. Follow-up visits are 45 minutes and are \$150. Longer or shorter visits are prorated from this basic fee.

The rates for Group Psychotherapy differ based on the specific group. They are as follows:

- Out of the Blue: Recovering from Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders: \$300 for 6 appointments series (90 minutes each)
- Healing a Broken Heart: Infidelity Recovery Group: \$60/90-minute appointment
- New Leaf: Divorce Survival Group: \$60/90-minute appointment

Cancellations: A minimum of 24-hours notice is required for rescheduling or cancellation of an appointment. **Cancellations within 24 hours will be charged a \$75 cancellation fee. No-shows (no communication prior to missing the appointment) will be charged the full fee.** In these situations, we will charge the credit card that we have on file to reserve your appointment. If you are late to your appointment, we will meet with you for the remainder of our allotted time, but will charge the entire amount of the missed appointment.

Please understand that this policy is not meant to be harsh or in any way a reflection of how your provider feels about you or your work together. Simply put, we have found this policy to be necessary in order for us to stay in business. We feel it is important to hold ourselves equally accountable and to the same standard. Therefore, if your provider ever cancels without giving you 24-hours notice (using the preferred method of communication that you selected on your Intake Form, through either direct contact or by leaving a message), or is more than 15 minutes late to your appointment, we will not charge you for your next visit.

If you must cancel or reschedule an appointment, please call our office at 937-662-9080. If it's after regular business hours, or the appointment clerk does not answer, you may leave a message canceling or asking to reschedule the appointment on their confidential voicemail. If you originally scheduled the appointment on our website, you may also cancel/reschedule the appointment online up to 24 hours in advance.

Requested Forms and Reports: We are sometimes asked to complete forms and reports for clients. If the form takes time outside of a session to complete, you will be charged based on our standard hourly fee for the time it takes.

Unpaid Accounts: Clients with a balance due will be notified by the office manager by phone, or mail. Please be aware that any overdue accounts that are older than 90 days will be turned over to collection.

Professional Services

At our practice, we provide individual and group psychotherapy in our office and/or through the internet (known as teletherapy). The psychological techniques that might be used by your psychotherapist will depend upon the personality and preferences of you and your provider, as well as the nature of the problem for which you are seeking treatment. There are many different methods that we might use to help you to achieve your goals, the most common of which involve dialogue, emotional exploration, interpersonal feedback, awareness-building and physical exercises, such as relaxation training.

Individual Therapy: You will typically spend the first 1 to 2 visits as your provider evaluates your goals, and formulates an understanding of your daily life and your current barriers to those goals. Based on this information, she will then work with you to create a treatment plan aimed at helping you to reach your goals. Once you have agreed on a plan, you will then work on the plan together. Your provider will check in with you regularly regarding your progress, and to address any issues that might be getting in the way of your progress. Once you have achieved your goals, your provider will likely discuss ending therapy (referred to as termination). Sometimes, you and your provider might agree to meet once or twice more after termination for a 'booster' visit, in order to ensure that you are maintaining your progress.

The duration of therapy is something that is difficult to predict in advance. Some clients may get the help they need in order a few sessions, while others may choose to continue therapy for several months. You have the right to ask questions about anything that happens in therapy. Your therapist is always willing to discuss the rationale for therapeutic approaches and to consider alternatives that might work better. You can ask about your therapist's training for working with your concerns, and you can request that we refer you to someone else if you decide that your therapist is not the right therapist for you. You are free to leave therapy at any time.

Group Therapy: Group therapy has been found to be just as effective as individual therapy for treating a range of conditions. In many situations, it can be preferable as it provides a supportive environment of individuals facing similar feelings or stressors. However, group therapy is not appropriate for every client. Before joining a group, the group facilitator will speak with you and determine whether this treatment is appropriate for you.

For group therapy, the setup of each group is different. For structured groups (such as Out of the Blue), each meeting has a highly specific and prepared agenda that includes a mixture of psychoeducational teachings, in-group exercises, and homework assignments that are conducted by each group member. These groups have a set number of meetings and are 'closed', meaning that you will start and end with the same group members. Our unstructured groups (such as The Healing a Broken Heart, and New Leaf Groups) have no pre-set agenda, exercises and homework. Group members are free to share and listen to each other's experiences, with the facilitation of a therapist. However, in order to ensure that group members are able to provide and receive optimal support from each other, all members are asked to abide by certain 'ground rules'. These groups are 'Open', meaning that new members may join any time that space becomes available. Members are requested to commit to attending at least 4 meetings, but may continue as long as they and the group facilitator find it helpful.

Benefits and Risks of Treatment: Psychotherapy can have benefits and risks. Since therapy often involves discussing unpleasant aspects of your life, you may experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness, and helplessness. However, these feelings tend to be transient. Making changes in your behaviors or beliefs can be difficult, and can sometimes be disruptive to the relationships you already have. You may find your relationship with your therapist to be a source of strong feeling. At times, you may feel that you are not making enough progress. We encourage you to discuss any feeling that may arise during these difficult times.

On the other hand, psychotherapy has also been demonstrated to have many benefits for people who undergo treatment. Therapy often leads to a significant reduction in feelings of distress, better relationships, solutions to specific problems, an enhancement in overall functioning in different areas of life, and greater sense of life satisfaction and fulfillment. Most people who take these risks find that therapy is helpful, and your therapist will do everything she can to help you minimize risks and maximize positive outcomes. That being said, there are no guarantees of what you will experience or the outcome of therapy.

Alternatives to Treatment: There are other options for treatment outside of therapy. Some individuals prefer to treat their symptoms using psychomedications, which have been demonstrated to provide relief from distress, but may also produce unwanted side effects. Some individuals prefer to seek counseling from a religious or spiritual figure, or to participate in community support groups. Others prefer to use self-help books, seminars or apps to aid in their own self-healing. If you feel like you might prefer any of these options, talk to your provider as they can assist you with providing referrals or psychoeducational resources.

How To Get the Most Out Of Therapy: Unlike a typical visit with other sorts of doctors, psychotherapy requires very active effort on your part, both during your appointment and in your daily life, in between appointments. Your provider will likely ask you to complete assignments, make changes in your behavior, or try out new strategies for dealing with situations that are causing you distress. It is not unusual for people to find that, though they very much want to feel better, they also find themselves struggling to find the motivation to complete the agreed upon work outside of appointments, or find a part of themselves feeling resistant to it. This is a very common experience! If this does happen to you, we highly encourage that you speak with your provider about it. Most clients find that by discussing what's going on, they can work with their provider to come up with a workable solution and start moving forward.

Communication Between Appointments: We do not provide 24-hour or emergency therapy services. Although we will make every effort to be available to you if crises arise, you cannot depend on our staff to be available in emergency situations. If you have any urgent concerns between appointments, you can call our office number and either speak with the receptionist or leave us a message. While we check our voicemails regularly and try to respond as quickly as possible, but there is no guarantee that it will be checked within a short time frame. If you are unable to reach us, and feel you must talk to a professional immediately, it is suggested that you call TCN Behavioral Healthcare which is available 24 hours a day (376-8701).

Litigation/Court Proceedings: If you are in a divorce or study litigation, or involved in the court system in any other manner, you need to understand that we are legally prohibited by the State of Ohio from making any sort of recommendation concerning custody or parenting issues, or to testify in court concerning opinions on issues involved in the litigation. By signing this disclosure statement, you agree not to call your therapist as witness to any such litigation. This is considered to be a conflict-of-interest, and has been found to be damaging to the therapeutic relationship. Only court-appointed experts, investigators or evaluation, who do not have a pre-existing relationship with you, can make recommendations to the court on disputed issues concerning parental responsibilities and custody. Our staff, however, is always willing to write letter to jurisdictions regarding a client's attendance in psychotherapy when requested by the client.

Confidentiality

The law protects the privacy of all communications between a client and a psychotherapist; it is by the Ohio law under the same umbrella as doctor-patient privilege. In most situations, we can only release information about your treatment to others if you formally sign a written authorization form that meets

certain legal requirements imposed by the State of Ohio. There are other situations that require only that you provide written, advanced consent. Please review in the attached Notice the uses and disclosures that require your authorization and the ones where neither your consent nor authorization is required. It is important that we discuss any questions or concerns that you may have now or in the future regarding your confidentiality. The laws governing confidentiality can be quite complex, and in certain situation, formal legal advice may be needed.

Professional Records: As mandated by HIPAA, we keep your Protected Health Information (PHI) in two sets of professional records. One set constitutes your Clinical Record, such as the reason you're seeking therapy, a description of the ways in which the problems impacts your life, your diagnosis or presenting problem, the goals that you and your provider have established, your progress towards those goals, your medical, social and treatment history, any past treatment records that we receive from other providers, reports of any professional consultations, your billing records, and any reports that have been sent to anyone.

In addition, we keep a separate file which contains your Psychotherapy Notes. These notes are for your provider's use and are designed to assist them in providing you with the best treatment. While the contents of the Psychotherapy Notes vary from client to client, but they typically include a general description of your conversation with your provider, their analyses of these conversations, and how they impact your work together. They also contain particularly sensitive information that you may reveal to your provider that is not required to be included in your Clinical Record. We keep your Psychotherapy Notes in a separate from your Clinical Record.

HIPAA provides you with several rights with regard to your Clinical Record, and disclosure of protected health information. Please read and sign the attached notice regarding HIPAA. After you have reviewed it, your provider will answer any questions you might have about it.

Confidentiality of our employees: All professional and administrative staff members of our practice have been given training about protecting your privacy and have signed an agreement that they will not release any information outside of the practice. In order to provide you with the best care, at times we might find it helpful to consult with other mental health professionals or experts in the field about your treatment. When we do consult, we will make every effort to disguise your identity. The professionals that we consult with are also legally bound to keep the information that we share confidential. We will note all of our consultations in your clinical record.

Referrals or Consultation with Other Healthcare Providers: Because our mind and body are connected, most mental health issues have a physical component. Therefore, it is not unusual for us to recommend that you consult with another healthcare providers like your physician, OB/GYN, midwife or psychiatrist to assist in providing you optimal healthcare. Also, if we feel it is in your best interest, we may also request permission from you to discuss your healthcare with your other healthcare providers, or to make recommendations that we feel would benefit you. You have the right to refuse anything that is suggested, or to decline the request to speak to your other providers, without being penalized in any way.

Multiple Relationships: Ethical standards require that we do not socialize with our clients. However, particularly if you live in Yellow Springs, you may encounter us around town. If we do see you out, we will non-verbally acknowledge you, but will not engage in conversation with you, unless you initiate it. This will help to protect your confidentiality or privacy.

Social Media: It is our clinic policy that our providers do not become Facebook friends with our clients. This is to ensure that we have a clear boundary in our professional relationship. **Please do not attempt to communicate with your provider through Facebook.** Our clinic does have a Fan Page on Facebook, and you are welcome to Like the page in order to receive professional updates and links to blog postings.

However, bear in mind that Commenting, Sharing or Liking any of our updates will be available to the public, and will compromise your confidentiality.

Empower Therapy for Women Consent for Treatment

I hereby give my permission to receive treatment and related service from the staff of Empower Therapy for Women. I acknowledge that the risks and benefits of each proposed treatment, other alternatives, and of no treatment have been explained to me. I understand that this consent is for the duration of my treatment at Empower Therapy for Women, unless revoked by me in writing. I understand that I may revoke this consent at any time and that I must sign and date the revocation.

Client Name (please print): _____

Client Signature: _____ Date: _____

I hereby revoke my consent for treatment:

Client Signature: _____ Date: _____

Documentation by staff to develop alternative approaches collaboratively with client:

Staff Signature: _____ Date: _____