

Elizabeth Call, PsyD

LICENSED CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST

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Information for Clients

I hope that the following information provides clarity and that it will help us to identify and discuss potential issues before they arise. Although some of these matters deal with potentially anxiety-provoking subjects, it is important to consider them carefully; if any questions or concerns arise, please bring them to my attention.

Office Hours and Availability:

A typical intake is 50 minutes. Therapy sessions are either 50 minutes in length for a regular session or 75 minutes (a session and a half) for an extended session. EMDR sessions (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing) are often scheduled for a 75 minute session. Intakes and EMDR can be done virtually. Medicine assisted psychotherapy sessions, on the other hand, are generally scheduled for 3 hours in the office, COVID numbers permitting.

Scheduled or unscheduled telephone calls of a therapeutic nature over ten minutes, report or letter preparation and writing, and my attendance at meetings will be prorated and billed at the hourly rate. Incidental phone contact is, of course, not charged.

Pre-Covid, I was typically on vacation for around 4 weeks in the latter part of Summer and generally twice during the year for 1-2 weeks at a time. Hopefully, some form of that schedule will resume. I am also committed to continuing education and teaching and therefore attend numerous weekend conferences over the course of a year which, travel permitting, I will resume in-person as well. During my vacations and time away I will leave the name and telephone number of a covering therapist to contact in an emergency or to see in my absence.

Emergency Procedures:

Under usual circumstances I am able to return phone calls within 48 hours. In the event that you experience what you consider to be an emergency, I will make every effort to return your call in a timely fashion. However, please note that I **rarely check my voicemail after 6 p.m.** Since I may not receive your call until the next day, we may need to make specific plans for the possibility of an emergency. **In general, you should contact the nearest hospital emergency room if necessary.**

Billing Procedures:

It is customary practice among psychologists to ask that clients honor a **48 hour notice of cancellation (2 days)** to avoid being billed in full for the missed session. Circumstances do arise that necessitate a cancellation every now and then through no fault of anybody involved; this policy is not meant to be punitive. Many professionals have such a policy because when you schedule an appointment, that time is reserved exclusively for you. Other people who want that time may not have it and are turned away; all the expenses of holding that time for you stand whether you are present in the office or not; meetings or other personal or professional commitments are arranged around your scheduled time; and it is usually impossible to fill the session at the last minute.

Exceptions to the policy for missed sessions vary among professionals depending on life circumstances and what allows each to feel comfortable. In my practice, exceptions are a death in the family or situations in which coming to an appointment would put either of us at risk, e.g., driving in a snowstorm or sickness which include symptoms of COVID. If you prefer not to come to the office or if either of us wishes, we will meet via Zoom for Telehealth. Please raise any concerns if a situation arises that feels unfair and we will discuss it.

I do not bill insurance companies directly nor am I an in-network provider for an insurance company. If your policy covers services with an out-of-network psychologist, your insurance may well cover a portion of the bill. I recommend that you contact the mental health department at your insurance company (a

number usually printed on your insurance card) and ask what your specific benefits are for an out-of-network psychologist.

Payment for sessions can be made through Venmo (elizabeth call@elizabeth-call) or by bank or personal check mailed to my office (263 Concord Avenue, Cambridge, MA, 02138). You may either pay me in full each session or I will bill you at the end of each month. The bill or receipt that I give you contains all the information usually required by insurance companies for reimbursement. You may then submit the claim directly to your insurance company.

Considerations for adjunctive EMDR:

A consultation for EMDR generally consists of one or more initial 50 minute interviews and at least one 75 minute EMDR session. During the initial interview, we talk about your history, reasons for seeking EMDR and your goals for treatment and we plan the first EMDR session. It is important to know that EMDR is different from other therapies in that both the therapist and the client usually talk less. Also, EMDR often continues to work after the session. It is helpful to notice any changes in thoughts, images or feelings and to remember these for subsequent sessions. If you are having difficulty after an EMDR session, please call me or your primary therapist. Finally, I cannot become your primary therapist for ongoing individual therapy if you have been referred to me for adjunctive EMDR by your primary therapist.

Considerations for adjunctive Ketamine Assisted Psychotherapy (KAP):

Please make sure you have read, understand and signed the informed consent for KAP work if we decide to use KAP in our work together. That document outlines risks and benefits, contraindications and general information about ketamine assisted psychotherapy.

The process is as follows:

1. Intake interview (50 min. via zoom) I would like to get a broad overview of your life and begin to plan the KAP session by answering questions about KAP,

gathering history and identifying themes that may emerge in the process. We will also look at what you would like to change or better understand in the course of treatment. Setting an intention is an integral part of medicine work.

2. Medical evaluation (75 min. via zoom or in-person) with one of our prescribers who will assess your readiness for KAP and make sure there are no contraindications for your use of ketamine. If everything looks good, the prescriber will call the prescription in to one of our compounding pharmacies: either Maida Pharmacy in East Arlington, or AC Apothecary in Newton. The pharmacy will mail the prescription to you or you may pick it up, depending on COVID policies at the time and what is most convenient for you.

3. Make sure all paperwork is in my hands and all questions are answered before the session.

4. Schedule a 3 hour KAP in-person session and bring the prescription with you. Make sure to have a driver available to take you home. Do not schedule anything after the session, but instead plan to have a quiet day of reflection with writing, art, nature, and comforting activities after your session.

Confidentiality:

In general, the confidentiality of all communications between a licensed psychologist and a client is protected by law and I can release information about our work to others only with your written permission. However, there are some exceptions to this rule:

1. Professional consultations: As is the general practice in my profession, I consult with professional colleagues to enhance the clinical services I provide. In these consultations I make every effort to ensure confidentiality by presenting material in such a way that will not reveal your identity. Consultants are also legally bound to maintain confidentiality. Such confidentiality also pertains to therapists who provide office coverage during my vacations.

2. Insurance reimbursement: You may be aware that insurance companies have the right to require a clinical diagnosis and occasionally a treatment plan or

summary. In rare cases the company may require the entire record. This information thus becomes part of the insurance company records.

3. Situations involving potential harm to self or others: I am legally and ethically required to take action to protect others who have been specifically identified from threatened harm. However, should such a rare situation occur, I would make every effort to discuss fully such matters with you first, before taking any action.

Similarly, if you threaten harm to yourself and we are unable to make a reasonable contract for safety, I am legally and ethically required to take action to protect you and ensure your safety. Again, it always will be my intent to work with you to find agreed-upon solutions.

If I have reason to believe that a child under the age of 18 is suffering serious physical and/or emotional injury as a result of abuse or neglect, I must file a report with the appropriate state agency. The same is true if I learn that an elderly or disabled person under your care is suffering or dies as a result of abuse or neglect.

4. Legal proceedings: Although communication between a psychologist and a client is treated as confidential, there are times when a judge can order me to testify or reveal information. Examples include child custody and adoption cases, court ordered evaluations, malpractice and disciplinary proceedings, and cases in which the client has raised the issue of her or his mental health as part of a legal defense. Unless you grant written permission, I will refuse to provide any information unless required to do so by court order.

The laws of confidentiality are complex and are not exhaustively treated in this overview. Therefore, if your individual circumstances dictate a need to understand these laws more fully, please consult with an attorney.

HIPAA (Notice of Privacy Practices) and your Records:

You have likely received some version of a HIPAA document at any doctors office visit. All health care providers are required by federal and state law to maintain the privacy of your health information. We are also required to give you notice about our privacy practices, legal duties and your rights concerning your

health information. Please see the accompanying HIPAA document for a fuller explanation about how your health information can and cannot be used.

You have a right to know what has been written about you and a right to a copy of any material in a formal record or report. I will share with you my thoughts regarding any aspect of our work together. In a case where the termination of our work together has already occurred, I might ask that you come in to discuss the content of written material requested. If I believe that the written material will have a serious negative impact if revealed, I might ask your permission to forward the material to an appropriate person whom you designate.

Information and informed consent for Telemental health:

Telemental health, is live two-way audio and video electronic communications to enable therapists and clients to meet outside of the office setting, as we have all learned in past months.

Although Telemental health is performed over a secure communication system that is almost impossible for anyone else to access (mine is a HIPPA compliant ZOOM business account), any internet based communication is not 100% guaranteed to be secure. So legally I need you to know and agree that Elizabeth Call will not be held responsible if any outside party gains access to your personal information by bypassing the security measures of the communication system.

Also, it's important to know that there are potential risks to this technology, including interruptions and technical difficulties. vThus, either of us may discontinue the Telehealth sessions at any time if it is felt that the video technology is not adequate for the situation.

That said, the laws that protect privacy and the confidentiality of client information also apply to Telemental health, and no information obtained in the use of Telemental health that identifies you will be disclosed to other entities without your consent.

I will send you a link the day of the virtual session we have scheduled. When you log on, you will have to be admitted to the session from a "waiting

room”, then unmute and activate the video in the bottom left hand corner of the screen. I will then “security lock” the session through a setting on my screen. This protects us from unauthorized intrusions.

Telemental health services are completely voluntary and you may withdraw consent at any time. None of the telemental health sessions will be recorded or photographed on my end and this document indicates that you agree as well not to make or allow audio or video recordings of any portion of the sessions.

If there is an emergency during a telemental health session, I may call emergency services and/or your emergency contact.

If the video conferencing connection drops while we are in a session, we will find a secondary way to contact each other such as using our cell phones.

It is important to note that Notice of Privacy Practices (HIPAA) and all office policies and procedures apply to Telemental health services.

In-person Office Considerations and COVID-19 guidelines:

If we have agreed to meet in-person for future sessions, it is always a temporary agreement and subject to change if either of us would feel more comfortable not being in the office. If there is a resurgence of the pandemic or if other health concerns arise, for example, either one of us may decide that we meet via Telehealth if possible or delay our in-office appointment.

If you decide at any time that you would feel safer staying with, or returning to Telehealth services, I will respect that decision. Reimbursement for telehealth services, however, is also determined by the insurance companies and applicable laws, so that is an issue we may need to discuss.

By coming to the office, you are assuming the risk of exposure to the coronavirus. This risk may increase if you travel by public transportation, cab, or ride-sharing service.

In order to minimize exposure:

- We will only keep an in-person appointment if we are both symptom free.
- Please take your temperature before coming to your appointment. If it is elevated (100 Fahrenheit or more), or if you have other symptoms of the coronavirus, please notify me and cancel the appointment or proceed using Telehealth. If you wish to cancel for this reason, I won't charge you the normal cancellation fee.
- Please wait in your car or outside until I text you for our appointment. You may then come in, wash your hands or use hand sanitizer, and come to my office. The office will be ventilated and there will be a HEPA filter running at all times.
- Please adhere to the safe distancing precautions we have set up in the building. We will keep a distance of 6 feet and there will be no physical contact.
- Everyone will wear masks in all common areas of the office at all times.
- We will take steps between appointments to minimize our exposure.
- If you have a job that exposes you to those who are infected, you will let me know.
- If your commute or other responsibilities or activities put you in close contact with others, you will let me know.
- If a resident of your home tests positive for the infection, you will let me know right away and we will then begin or resume treatment via Telehealth.
- If you come to an appointment and I see that you have symptoms, we will end the session right away and can follow up with Telehealth.

If you have tested positive for the coronavirus, I may be required to notify local health authorities that you have been in the office. If I have to report this, I will only provide the minimum information necessary for their data collection and will not go into any details of the reason for our visits. By signing this form, you are agreeing that I may do so without an additional signed release. If I, or anyone in the building, tests positive for the coronavirus, I will notify you so that you can take appropriate precautions.

Your Responsibilities:

If we agree to work together, I expect that you will attend sessions on a regular basis. Another essential piece of our working relationship is that we have an open and honest communication about all aspects of our work together. I understand that it often takes time for trust to develop in order to discuss certain concerns freely. I expect and welcome your feedback about what is useful and helpful and what you think might be changed for the better. You have the right to question any aspect of your experience with me and to obtain a consultation or second opinion at any time. The success of this process depends on collaboration.

Finally, I hope that you will end your psychotherapy at a time that we have agreed in advance with at least one termination session. Goodbyes are an important part of this process.

Thank you for taking the time to read this important information and for thoughtfully considering the issues raised. Please sign and return the signature page to me indicating that you have read and understand this material.

Elizabeth Call, PsyD
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