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**Informed Consent:**

Therapy is a relationship that works in part because of clearly defined rights and responsibilities held by each person. This frame helps to create the safety required to take risks and the support to become empowered to increase wellness. As a client in psychotherapy you have certain rights that are important for you to know about because this is your therapy—with the goal of your well-being. There are also certain limitations to those rights that you should be aware of. As a therapist, I have corresponding responsibilities to you.

**My Responsibilities to You as a Your Therapist**

**1. Confidentiality**

You have the right to confidentiality in therapy. I cannot and will not tell anyone else what you have told me, or even that you are in therapy with me without your prior written permission. I will always act to protect your privacy even if you do release me in writing to share information about you. You may direct me to share information with whomever you choose, and you can change your mind and revoke that permission at any time. I may legally speak to another health care provider or a member of your family about you without your prior consent, but I will not do so unless the situation is an emergency (Health Care Information Act of 1992).

You are also protected under the provisions of the Federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). This law insures that confidentiality of all electronic transmission of information about you. Whenever I transmit information about you electronically (for example, sending Crime Victims Reparation (CVR) applications), it will be done with special safeguards to ensure confidentiality.

If you elect to communicate with me by email at some point in our work together, please be aware that email is not completely confidential. All emails are retained in the logs of your or my internet service provider. While under normal circumstances no one looks at these logs, they are, in theory, available to be read by the system administrator of the internet service provider. Any email I receive from you, and any responses that I send to you, will be kept in our electronic data system as part of your therapy records.

**The following are legal exceptions to your right to confidentiality. I would inform you of any time when I would need to put these into effect:**

I. If I have good reason to believe that you will harm another person, I will attempt to inform that person and warn them of your intentions. I must also contact the police and ask them to protect the intended victim.

II. If I have good reason to believe that you or someone you know is abusing or neglecting a child or vulnerable adult, I must inform Child Protective Services (CPS) within 48 hours and Adult Protective Services (APS) immediately. If you are between the ages of 16 and 18 and you tell me that you are having sex with someone more than 5 years older than you, or sex with someone in a position of authority over you (ie. teacher, coach, ecclesiastical leader), I must also report this to CPS. I would discuss this with you before I take action.

III. If I believe that you are in imminent danger of harming yourself, I would explore all available options with you for staying safe. I may legally break confidentiality and call the police or the county's crisis team if we are unable to identify plans that assure your safety.

IV. If you tell me of the behavior of another named health or mental health care provider that informs me that this person has either; a) engaged in sexual contact with a client/patient, including yourself or b) is impaired from practice in some manner by cognitive, emotional, behavioral, or health problems, then the law requires me to report this to their licensing board. I would inform you before taking this step.

## **2. Record Keeping**

I keep very brief records, noting only that you have been here, what interventions occurred in session, and the topics we discussed. I do not provide records to third parties (excluding CVR applications, per your request). However, you have the right to have a copy of your file at any time (under the provisions of the Health Care Information Act of 1992). I maintain your records in a database only accessible to myself and clinical supervisors. The Rape Recovery Center staff are confidential communicators, and we are protected by Rape Shield Laws—which were created to protect clients and providers' confidentiality. As such, we do not release client records to third parties. Should you be interested in obtaining proof of services or copies of your own records to keep for yourself or to distribute to other entities, you will need to speak to me directly, and/or submit a request in writing. I am able to provide a proof of services letter within 24 business hours' notice. Should you request your full records, I will need up to one week to compile the documentation.

## **3. Diagnosis**

Diagnosis are technical terms that describe the nature of your symptoms/challenges and can indicate whether treatment should be short or long term. The Rape Recovery Center focuses

on treating symptoms specific to sexual trauma as opposed to pathologizing clients. If a third party such as CVR requires a diagnosis for payment of treatment and other benefits, I will discuss it with you. All of the diagnoses come from a book titled the DSM V; I have a copy in my office and you are welcome to borrow it in order to learn more about any diagnosis used to describe your symptoms.

#### **4. Other Rights**

I will always attempt to explain or discuss any treatment approaches we use in our work together. Additionally, you have the right to ask questions about anything that happens in therapy. I am always willing to discuss how and why I am using a specific approach, and to look at alternatives that might work better. You are also welcome to share ideas about what you think would be helpful for you. At any time you can ask me about my training for working with your concerns, and can request that I refer you to someone else if you decide that I am not the right therapist for you. You are free to leave therapy at any time.

#### **5. Fees**

The Rape Recovery Center does not charge a fee for services. Nevertheless, the center accepts monetary donations in any amount at anytime—meaning clients may donate what they are able to. There is a “donations” box in the waiting area/front desk and/or you can make a donation through our website at [www.raperecoverycenter.org](http://www.raperecoverycenter.org). The average cost of a psychotherapy session is \$75. We do not bill insurance, but do provide referrals to our community partners should you wish to use your insurance to cover therapy costs. No client will ever be turned away for inability to pay for services.

#### **My Training and Approach to Therapy:**

I have a Master’s Degree in Social Work from the University of Utah and have been a Certified Social Worker since May 2018. Furthermore, I have been a Certified Advanced Substance Use Disorder Counselor since June 2017, and I am also a Sexual Assault Counselor. I am Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing (EMDR) trained, and I may include some of the skills I have learned from this training in our sessions together. My training is primarily focused on developing self-compassion and self-awareness, and promoting self-understanding, love and acceptance through cognitive and experiential humanistic approaches, mindfulness, trauma specific treatment modalities, and mind-soul-body connection. I would be happy to discuss any of these techniques with you, or point you to readings and literature to better understand the emphasis of each approach.

My personal philosophy on therapy and trauma work emphasizes stabilization techniques, such as coping skills, mindfulness and distraction tools. My approach has a foundation that you, the client, are the only one who has the capacity to access the healing you need. My “job” is to be there for you unconditionally, while we explore places of your psyche

and/or life that may have not been explored before – perhaps due to feeling very strong emotions. I may suggest ideas about certain skills or methods to promote healing. I like to work with each client to find what will work best for us as a team. My job is not to tell you how to live your life and/or what to do to “fix” whatever you think your problems are, but my job is to be there, unconditionally, to serve as a companion through the rediscovery and redefinition of your values, life, and yourself. I do this by providing a space of unconditional love, acceptance and compassion that allows us to access, explore, grieve, and accept experiences you have lived. My techniques are likely to include dialogue, interpretations, cognitive reframing, awareness and mindfulness exercises, noticing body sensation/reactivity, mind-soul-body connection, providing feedback and sharing observations on the “here-and-now,” visualization, journaling, self-care, exploration of bio-psycho-emotional-social-spiritual factors, and occasionally readings, videos, or assignments outside of session. In addition, I incorporate evidence-based practices to promote and nurture healing and our therapeutic relationship.

If I propose a specific approach to therapy that may have special risks attached, I will inform you of the risks and discuss the benefits of what I am suggesting. I may suggest that you consult with a physical health care provider regarding somatic treatments and will be glad to discuss with you the pro’s and con’s of various options. I may also suggest that you participate in a therapy or support group as part of our work together. If another provider (therapist, doctor, etc.) is working with you, I will need a release of information from you so that I can collaborate with that person about your care.

I do not have social or sexual relationships with clients or former clients because that would not only be unethical and illegal, it would be an abuse of the power dynamic that exists between therapist and client. It is important to mention that this includes any social media channel (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, etc.). If we come across each other, outside of the Rape Recovery Center, I won’t approach you or acknowledge I know you, unless you approach me first. This is to protect your privacy and avoid the need for you to disclose our therapeutic relationship to whoever is accompanying you.

Therapy has potential emotional risks. Approaching feelings or thoughts that you have tried not to think about for a short or long time may be painful. Changes are difficult in general. Consequently, making changes in your beliefs, and way of relating to yourself or others, may not only be difficult but also scary - and sometimes disruptive to the relationships you already have. You may find your relationship with me to be a source of strong feelings, some of them painful at times. It is important that you consider carefully whether these risks are worth the benefits of changing certain aspects of your life. Most people that take these risks find that therapy is helpful.

In the initial stage of our work, we will create a treatment plan—or rather, identify goals for our work together, and a plan for reaching those goals. We will review these goals periodically, and make decisions together about when therapy should end. Sometimes clients

need a higher level of care than the services available to them at the Rape Recovery Center. If this is the case, we will discuss options for outside providers, and coordinate together on next steps. I am not able to work with a client that is seeing another therapist—this is Rape Recovery Center policy and we adhere to it strictly based on treatment efficacy.

I am occasionally away from the office due to trainings, meetings, vacation and/or illness. I will tell you well in advance of any lengthy absences, and give you options for getting support while I am away. If I am ill, the Rape Recovery Center will contact you as soon as they are able to reschedule your appointment. I am not a crisis therapist, and the Rape Recovery Center does not offer crisis therapy. Should you need support services during a crisis, our 24 hour crisis line is always available to you 801.467.7273. Additionally, the University Neuropsychiatric Institute offers 24 hour a day support services through their crisis line 801.587.3000. If you need additional assistance outside of our scheduled sessions together, please utilize these services.

### **Your Responsibilities as a Therapy Client**

Our therapy sessions together will last 50 minutes. We will begin our sessions on the hour, and end 10 minutes before the hour. This allows me time to document our work together and follow up on anything related to our session. Please be at the center 5-10 minutes prior to your session start time so that we can begin and end on time. If you need to cancel an appointment, please do so with 24 hours notice so that I can schedule other clients during that time. If you no-show for two sessions in a row and do not respond to my attempts to reschedule, I will assume that you have discontinued therapy and will make the space available to another client.

If you are unhappy with your therapy services, I hope you'll discuss it with me so that I can respond to your concerns. I will take such feedback seriously, and will address it with care and respect. If you believe that I have been unwilling to listen and respond, or that I have behaved unethically, you can contact my direct supervisor Laura Baumgart, Rape Recovery Center Clinical Director, at 801.467.7282 ext. 214.

### **Client Consent to Psychotherapy**

I have read this statement, had sufficient time to be sure that I considered it carefully, asked any questions that I needed to, and understood it. I understand the limits to confidentiality required by law. I consent to the use of a diagnosis if needed for treatment and/or benefit purposes. I understand my rights and responsibilities as a client, and my therapist's responsibilities to me. I agree to undertake therapy with Martha Mendes CSW, ASUDC. I know I can end therapy at any time I wish, and that I can refuse any requests or suggestions made by Martha. I am over the age of thirteen.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_