

CONSENT IN CHRISTIAN COUNSELING

Christian counselors do not presume that all clients want to or will be receptive to explicit Spiritual interventions in counseling. We obtain consent that honors client choice, receptivity to these practices, and the timing and manner in which these things are introduced: prayer for and with clients, Bible reading and reference, spiritual meditation the use of biblical and religious imagery, assistance with spiritual formation and discipline, and other common spiritual practices.

I, _____, want and consent to Christian counseling to be incorporated into counseling work. This will include prayer, reference of scriptures, and encouragement of your faith.

Christian counseling, at its best, is a spirit led process of change and growth, geared to help others mature in Christ by the skillful synthesis of counselor-assisted spiritual, psycho-social, familial, bio-medical, and environmental interventions.

Here, at God's Way CC, we follow the Christian Ethics produced by the American Association of Christian Counselors. You can read all about Christian Counseling Ethics at www.aacc.net.

The client will be informed about the stages of counseling which include: The Initial Phase of treatment which is all about observation, assessment, evaluation, including history taking. The client will be asked what he/she would like to accomplish in therapy.

The Middle Phase of treatment includes: achieving goals, facilitate understanding of family dynamics and each member's role in the system, building closeness in the family by active listening skills, what messages each person is getting, feeding that back and learning how to communicate back from a place of peace rather than from chaos.

The Late stage of therapy is where the client consolidates his/her gains made in therapy. Clients will know when they are living out of lies and chaos, and when they are living out of peace and truth. They will be able to relate to others without being defensive. The client will have learned new ways of interacting. Losses will be worked through and integrated. Family members will have learned to be authentic, as well as integrated, and function in a more adaptive and intimate way. After this stage the therapist may no longer be needed. However, should future issues arise, the door is always open.

Securing Informed Consent

Christian counselors secure client consent for all counseling and related services. This includes the video-Audio-taping (for purposes of training interns)of client sessions, the use of supervisory and consultative help, the application of special procedures and

evaluations, and the communication of client data with other professionals and institutions.

Christian counselors take care that (1) the client has the capacity to give consent; (2) we have discussed counseling together and the client reasonably understands the nature and process of counseling; the costs, time and work required; the limits of counseling; and any appropriate alternatives; and (3) the client freely gives consent to counseling, without coercion or undue influence.

Consent for the Structure and Process of Counseling

Christian counselors respect the need for informed consent regarding the structure and process of counseling. Early in counseling, counselor and client should discuss and agree upon these issues; the nature of and course of therapy; client issues and goals; potential problems and reasonable alternatives to counseling; counselor status and credentials; confidentiality and its limits; fees and financial procedures; limitations about time and access to the counselor, including direction in emergency situations; and procedures for resolution of disputes and misunderstandings. If the counselor is supervised, that fact shall be disclosed and the supervisor's name and role indicated to the client.

Consent from Parent or Client Representative

Christian counselors obtain consent from parents or the client's legally authorized representative when clients are minors or adults who are legally incapable of giving consent.

Documentation of Consent

Christian counselors will document client consent in writing by professional service contract or consent form, the standard now required in most professional therapy relations, or by case note at the very least.

Date ____/____/____ Client's Signature _____

Date ____/____/____ Christian Counselor Signature _____