

# INFORMED CONSENT FOR PSYCHOTHERAPY

Dr. Jan Martin Dunn, PLLC

LMFT-S, LPC-S, LCDC

13355 Noel Road, Suite 1100

Dallas, Texas 75240

Phone: 214.890.6637

[www.drjandunn.com](http://www.drjandunn.com)

**GENERAL INFORMATION** The Texas Boards of Examiners of Professional Counselors and Marriage and Family Therapists were established by the legislature to protect the public. In fulfilling their missions, the Boards enacted rules governing the practice of counseling and marriage & family therapy. These rules require that a therapist provide prospective clients with sufficient information about therapeutic process so that the client can make an informed decision whether or not to enter therapy. At a minimum, the information should describe:

- I. **CONFIDENTIALITY** All information you share will be treated with great care. It is your legal and ethical right that sessions and records about you are kept private. It will not even be revealed to anyone that you are receiving treatment from me except in specific instances listed below. If there is someone that should be contacted (such as a child's teacher), you will sign a special form before contact is made.
  
- II. **LIMITS OF CONFIDENTIALITY** In all but a few rare situations, your confidentiality (that is, your privacy) is protected by state law and by the rules of the profession. Here are the most common cases in which confidentiality is NOT protected:
  - A. If I believe a child has been or will be abused, neglected, or engaged in sexual activity with an adult, I am legally required to report this to authorities.
  - B. If I believe an elderly or disabled person has been or will be abused or neglected, I am legally required to report this to authorities.
  - C. If I perceive that you make a serious threat to harm yourself, the law requires me to try to protect you. This may include telling appropriate legal authorities about the threat as well as your emergency contact person.
  - D. If I perceive that you make a serious threat to harm another person, the law requires me to try to protect that other person. This may include telling appropriate legal authorities about the threat as well as that other person.
  - E. If you know of someone who is HIV+ and infecting the population and you talk about it, I am compelled to report.
  - F. If you were sent to me by a court for evaluation or treatment, the court may expect a report from me. If this is your situation, please inform me before you tell me anything that you do not want the court to know. You have a right to tell me only what you are comfortable sharing.

- G. If I am served a subpoena from any attorney as a result of our therapeutic relationship, I will produce the requested information because I am required to do so by law. I may be required to only show the court my records or to both show records and testify in court.
- H. Licensing complaints
- I. In connection with billing efforts; processing third party payers
- J. Please understand that I may occasionally be unavailable due to illness, disability, or vacation. If it becomes necessary, I will release appropriate information to the therapist that I have chosen to be on call.

III. **THE THERAPEUTIC PROCESS** Therapy is a joint effort between the therapist and the client, and results cannot be guaranteed. No promises are made as to the results of treatment or of any procedures provided by this therapist. Progress depends on many factors including your motivation, effort, and other life circumstances such as your interactions with family, friends, and other associates.

Therapists are expected to provide services to clients only within the boundaries of their competence and to maintain competence and improve their skills and knowledge through continuing education and other activities.

Therapists are expected to acknowledge, be sensitive to, and respect the diversity of values, attitudes, opinions, and culture of clients.

Therapists are expected to avoid engaging in any behavior that is discriminatory, harassing, or demeaning to others.

Therapists are not to exploit clients or impair objectivity in their professional role.

Therapists occasionally may need to consult with other professionals concerning their areas of expertise in order to provide the best treatment for you. Information about you may be shared in this context; however, your name will not be used.

Therapists occasionally accidentally run into a client outside of the office setting. If this happens, the therapist will NOT acknowledge the client first. Your right to privacy and confidentiality is of the utmost importance, so it will not be jeopardized. However, if the client acknowledges the therapist first, the therapist will be happy to briefly speak to the client. However, they will not engage in any lengthy discussions that should be held in the therapy office.

BY SIGNING BELOW I AM AGREEING THAT I HAVE READ, UNDERSTOOD, AND AGREE TO THE ITEMS CONTAINED IN THIS DOCUMENT.

Signature of Client \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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