



THERAPIST-CLIENT AGREEMENT: PREMARITAL COUNSELING

Introduction

Welcome! I am glad that you are here. Regardless of the stage of your relationship, the brave step you and your partner are currently taking by seeking counseling will serve you well as individuals and as a couple. An intimate relationship is the greatest investment of a lifetime and requires a significant amount of dedication and love. It is the most rewarding AND the most challenging endeavor any of us will embark upon. Your being here and reaching out for support says nothing about deficiency and everything about your humility, wisdom and care for each other. I believe that couples like yourselves that choose to take this brave step *before* they commit more deeply to one another are setting themselves up, in the best way possible, for a lifetime of shared meaning and connection. The paragraphs that follow outline important aspects of the process as well as your rights and responsibilities as my clients. I hope that if you will have any questions, you will not hesitate to ask.

The Process

The primary method that I use in helping couples is known as Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT). It is recognized by the APA (American Psychological Association) as the “gold standard” in couple therapy and is supported by extensive research. A major APA study found that the large majority of couples (More than 80%) experience significant improvements in relationship satisfaction by working with a therapist trained in EFT. Most importantly, Follow-up studies conducted with those who participated in EFT showed **the positive effects of the treatment continued for years after the therapy concluded.**

This process involves understanding how despite your best attempts you are often unable to communicate openly and find emotional comfort and support in one another, especially when challenges arise (life transitions, difficult topics, etc.) Therefore, the process of connecting and communicating involves engaging with yourselves and one another in a more vulnerable way, and this begins to happen right here in the safety of my office. Sharing openly and vulnerably is *the* skill and tool that you will be learning and exploring together with me as the “guide by your side”. As this becomes more familiar and safe, you will have an increased confidence and ability to do it outside my office, in the real time experience of your daily relationship. The amount of time this takes depends on many variables including the level of distress the relationship is in, how long you have been caught in a cycle of disconnection and the individual backgrounds of

each partner. Please know, that there *is* a process here; a well-traveled and documented process that has been experienced by tens of thousands of couples.

Our goal: Growing as individuals and a couple; Strengthening our ability to deepen our relationship and connect; To fully embrace the joy of being with each other and trust in the confidence to repair and strengthen our bond whenever there is a rupture.

Video

In order to facilitate your process, EFT (Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy) clinicians often record their sessions. The goal of this is for the clinician to review the session, slow it down and gain better insight into the dynamic that is unfolding before his eyes. The clinician will sometimes view the session with another EFT clinician to gain an additional “pair of eyes”. While this is standard EFT practice, I understand that there are couples that are not comfortable with their sessions being recorded. If this is you, please place your initials in the lines provided below.

Otherwise, you permit me to use the recordings to review sessions and allow me to show segments to other licensed professionals for clinical purposes. Any consultant viewing the tape will be a licensed therapist bound by the same confidentiality and ethics laws as myself. The identity of the couple is NEVER revealed. The contents of the videotaped sessions and the feedback are kept completely private and confidential.

In no way will opting out of consenting for this video recording affect your getting assistance for yourselves. If at any time during the treatment process you wish to stop the recording, you may do so and still continue treatment without any impact on the care you receive. All confidential material (written or in digital format) will be protected and handled as set forth in the regulations and restrictions of Federal HIPAA regulations. Please initial here if you **DO NOT** consent to the recording of your sessions to facilitate the therapeutic process _____.

Confidentiality and Records

While working as a couple, anything either of us tells Rabbi Bloom individually, whether on the phone or in an individual meeting, may not be held as confidential, and at Rabbi Bloom’s discretion MAY BE shared with the spouse/partner during a subsequent couple session.

The goal of psychotherapy, either individual or couple therapy, is for the sole purpose of the amelioration of psychological distress and the process of psychotherapy depends on trust and openness during the therapy sessions.

Therefore, it is understood by both parties at any point in their relationship that if they request my services as a psychotherapist, they are expected NOT to use information given to me during the therapy process against the other party in a judicial setting of any kind.

Appointments and Cancellations

Appointments will ordinarily be **50 minutes** in duration, once per week at a time we agree on, although some sessions may be more or less frequent as needed. The time scheduled for your appointment is assigned to you and you alone. If you need to cancel or reschedule a session, I ask that you provide me with a **notice of 48 business hours. If you miss a session without canceling, or cancel without giving me a 48 hour notice, I charge my standard fee.**

Cancellations within the first half of the fee period (24-48 hours) are charged at half.

Cancellations made within 24 hours of the appointment are charged at full fee. I will then try to find another time to reschedule the appointment.

In addition, you are responsible for coming to your session on time; if you are late, your appointment will still need to end on time.

Professional Fees

The standard fee for a session is \$250 and sessions are 50 minutes long. There are a number of ways to process payment including cash, check and credit card. **If a credit card is used a 3.5% processing fee will be added. Regardless, of form of payment, when booking a session, you will be asked to put a credit card on file to reserve the appointment.** You can then choose to use that as a form of payment or cash, check or bank transfer at end of our session together. All payments are made prior to or immediately following the session. **We agree to Rabbi Bloom's policy of charging us at his standard fee of \$250 if we fail to cancel within 48 business hours of the appointment.**

By signing below, we agree to accept therapy services from Rabbi Bloom and accept full responsibility for payment for such services.

Client _____ Date _____



Email _____

Client _____ Date _____

Email _____