

Thank you for contacting me. I wish to share information about our talking therapeutic process. I believe it's important that psychotherapy/counselling is as helpful and effective as possible and that whilst my clients are responsible for any choices and decisions they make, I will offer the support and encouragement to facilitate this process by working in a non-directive approach, using the basis of my training (psychodynamic) as well my experience and continued professional development training.

**Initial Appointment.** If it is possible, I like to offer as close to a 1 hour duration for our first session, giving us the opportunity to mutually decide whether we may agree to work together in a therapeutic process to support your needs and issues. You may wish to meet more than one therapist before deciding whom you would like to work with. The issues we discuss are confidential\* and I work within the framework of the B.A.C.P. Ethical Framework for Practitioners and have regular supervision.

**Duration.** When we agree to work together, the regular on-going psychotherapy/counselling sessions will last for 50 minutes and takes place on the same day and time each week (flexibility may be possible if required). The therapeutic contract between us is open ended process and deciding to discontinue your psychotherapy process can be made at any time and will usually be shared in the sessions and discussed in order to work towards an end date.

**Fees.** My usual fee for a Couples therapy session is £ xxx and during our initial consultation session we have the opportunity to talk through the session fee and come to a mutual agreement. I accept payment by cash of cheque at the end of each session. *Electronic bank payments are to be paid either prior to the session or within 24 hours of the session.* If during your counselling process your financial circumstances change and you feel it is likely to affect your commitment to the work, we can discuss this.

**Missed sessions.** Your therapy session appointment is allocated to you personally. If you need to cancel a session, I will try to offer a mutually re-arranged date during that week. If this isn't possible, my usual cancellation fee is 50% of your regular session fee. Fees are payable in full for fortnightly or monthly session arrangements, if the client cancels their planned session. I would be grateful for notice of cancellation in advance, if this is possible. For planned periods of absence during your therapeutic process, we can discuss and agree a reduced fee to secure your regular session slot during your absence.

I will always endeavour to give you ample notice of my absences and holidays - which are not charged. In the unlikely event that I am suddenly unable to attend a session or continue counselling a session, either myself or a professional, experienced colleague will contact you to discuss (please read "Professional Will" paragraph of my Digital Policy document overleaf).

**Confidentiality and Safety \*** - BACP regulations also include strict confidentiality within the counselling room. However, if I have reason to believe that you could seriously harm yourself, or others, or where there is a legal requirement (e.g. child safe-guarding, acts or threats of terrorism), I am obliged to break our confidentiality agreement. Wherever possible, your permission will be sought before I contacted anyone else, such as a doctor, or if any other public service should be informed of the risk. Likewise, your safety is my first concern and I will take a decision to end a session prematurely, if I think that you are under the influence of alcohol or any non-prescribed drug during the session.

Kindest regards, **Jo Turner**

**Data Protection**

I comply with the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and I am registered with I.C.O. It is common practice as a psychotherapist to keep brief notes on our sessions, destroying all documents at the end of the therapy process. The personal contact details are kept separately from brief clinical notes (which contain only initials) and are held in a secure environment. Paperwork and emails are not shared with anybody else.

**Digital Policy**

I include a Digital Policy within my contract especially due to the use of social media and technology in our everyday lives and the potential impact on our therapeutic relationship. I am trained and adhere to the boundaries of my practice in keeping the content of therapy sessions confidential. I wish to make clear my position on our mutual use of digital communication.

**Email.** I am not currently using an email encryption programme, so any emails we share may be vulnerable to viruses or human error. Subsequently, it is recommended to be thoughtful about what you include in emails to me. Please provide me with the most suitable email address for our communication and update me on any changes. Emails are retained in the logs of Internet Service Providers and could be vulnerable to viruses and unintended forwarding or replication. If you are concerned about confidentiality, then I suggest that phone communication is used and I am able to answer phone calls during usual office hours on weekdays.

**Text messages.** Texting to update on timings and brief questions can be useful and it is not advised for use for lengthy messaging of a confidential nature.

**Phone and Skype/Video Conferencing software.** I use telephone/Skype/V.C. on a needs basis, e.g. home move, working abroad, long break. I make every effort to use video conferencing software that is recognised to be adequately encrypted. When engaging in video conferencing and phone calls, we both agree not to use any recording devices for remote sessions. It is crucial that you are sure your environment from which you are making the call is safe and secure. We will of course discuss these issues should we decide to work in this manner.

**Social Media.** I currently maintain a private FaceBook account for personal reasons and a Linked-In account for professional use. I aim to keep my FaceBook as private as possible and it would not be appropriate to be FaceBook “friends” with former or current clients. I appreciate that there can be overlap across social networks and if something came to light, we would need to raise it and discuss in our therapy session.

**Google.** It is likely that you will have Googled me before you make contact. Whilst I acknowledge that Googling others is now a generally accepted aspect of daily life, I wish to avoid encountering information about you that does not come directly from you during our sessions. In general practice I do not Google my clients before or during our therapy process. It is of course your choice whether you wish to Google me and if your search raises any questions for you, then I would request you speak to me at the earliest opportunity to discuss in our therapy session.

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**Emergency requirements**

For urgent requirements, I am unable to provide emergency services. Should you experience an emergency please contact either the emergency services or if you are feeling suicidal The Samaritans can support you on: **116 123.**

**Professional Will - in the event of my unplanned absence from our therapy process.**

I wish to protect my clients from any undue concern should there be the unlikely event that I am unable to attend sessions due to an unplanned event. I have in place a procedure which enables a trusted and experienced psychotherapist to make contact with you, if it was necessary. Please could you read the paragraph below and sign to agree to receive this service.

**I authorise and approve the using and sharing of my name and contact details by an authorised and responsible person approved by Jo Turner, my psychotherapist, only in the event that Jo Turner is unable to attend or continue my therapy process following an unscheduled absence.**

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**Client signature**

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**Date**