

INFORMED CONSENT for COUPLES THERAPY***Confidentiality***

All communication with your practitioner is held in the strictest confidence. Nothing will be disclosed to any person(s) without your written consent. There are, however, limits to confidentiality:

- 1) Your practitioner determines that you are in imminent danger to yourself or others,
- 2) You are involved in any legal/court issues and your medical records are subpoenaed,
- 3) If matters involving minor children (under 18 yrs. old) are to be communicated to parents for treatment and/or safety purposes.

Patient cases are discussed with clinical supervisors and other clinical consultants at HRI&C, strictly for professional purposes. Your identity and any revealing information about you are delicate and we respect your rights to confidentiality and privacy. Please discuss any concerns or questions with your practitioner.

Benefits and Risks of Psychotherapy

Psychotherapy may help you improve your emotional well-being, develop healthier coping skills, gain greater self-awareness, and work toward your personal goals; however, outcomes cannot be guaranteed. During therapy, you may experience temporary emotional discomfort as difficult thoughts, feelings, or memories are explored.

Telephone Consultation

Telephone calls that are therapeutic in nature will be charged at the prevailing rate in thirty-minute increments. There is no charge, for brief telephone calls to set appointments or discuss minor matters.

Appointments

Professional fees are charged for time. The time reserved for your appointment is set aside for you and you alone. Cancellation or rescheduling of appointments requires at least 24 hours' notice. **Missed or cancelled appointments will be charged at the prevailing rate.** Emergencies are accepted. If you are 20+ minutes late on your appointment and are not able to inform HRI&C, your appointment will be considered cancelled, and charged accordingly.

Professional Fees

The fees for professional in-person services are to be paid up front before the session. For new clients, payment is required 24 hours prior to the appointment. The fees for professional online services are due before the appointment can be confirmed. When 3rd party payment is applicable, you are responsible for each payment to HRI&C. Depending on your insurance policy and carrier, our services are reimbursable and we can assist you in completing reimbursement forms. If an unpaid balance occurs, HRI&C reserves the right to pause services until the balance is settled.

Emergencies

If you believe that you have an emergency, a practitioner will respond to your emergency within 24 hours, or prior to your next scheduled appointment. For all serious emergencies that require more immediate medical attention, we advise you to proceed to Al Amal Hospital, Al Awir/Rashid Hospital. Please call 998.

NABIDH (If you would like to opt out, fill the form from the reception and send to nabidh.optout@dha.gov.ae)

"I agree that healthcare provider(s) involved in my care at this facility will access my health information through the Health Information Exchange System (NABIDH) in accordance with the Laws of the United Arab Emirates, Emirate of Dubai Legislation and Dubai Health Authority Policies."

What to Expect

Couples therapy focuses on identifying patterns in communication, interaction, and emotional responses that contribute to conflict, disconnection, or unmet needs. Each partner will be expected to:

- Engage honestly and respectfully.
- Explore their own feelings, values, and behaviors.
- Participate in exercises and discussions aimed at improving the relationship.

Outcomes vary; some couples strengthen their bond, while others gain clarity that separation may be the healthiest path. The couple therapist's role is to support both of you in navigating this process.

Risks of Couples Therapy

Couples therapy can be deeply meaningful, but it also involves emotional risk. These risks may include:

- Sessions may bring up painful emotions, memories, or unresolved conflicts.
- The relationship may feel more strained before it improves as difficult issues are explored.
- Long-standing patterns may be challenged, creating temporary discomfort or instability.
- Disclosures in session may change how partners view each other.
- One or both partners may feel vulnerable, misunderstood, or emotionally overwhelmed.

Risks Related to Breakups or Divorce

Because couples therapy increases clarity, honesty, and emotional awareness, it may also lead to realizations about the future of the relationship. This can include:

- Greater awareness of incompatibilities or unmet needs.
- The decision by one or both partners to separate or divorce.
- Emotional distress associated with considering or initiating a breakup.
- Practical stressors such as changes in living arrangements, parenting responsibilities, or finances if separation occurs.
- Feeling grief, loss, anger, or uncertainty as the relationship shifts.

While these outcomes can be painful, therapy aims to help partners navigate them respectfully and with emotional support. Part of the therapeutic process may involve helping each partner understand their needs clearly—sometimes resulting in rebuilding the relationship, and other times in ending it with mutual clarity and reduced conflict.

Who is the Client?

In couples therapy, the couple is considered the client. However, since the therapist maintains a confidentiality policy that respects individual disclosures, each partner's privacy is protected within the therapeutic relationship.

Contraindications for Couples Therapy

Some situations make couples therapy ineffective or inappropriate. These include:

- Active addiction by one or both partners.
- Ongoing physical, emotional, or sexual abuse.
- An active, undisclosed affair where one partner refuses to disclose or end the affair.
- Severe untreated mental illness that interferes with participation.
- Coercive control or fear-based dynamics between partners.

In such cases, the couple's therapist may recommend pausing couples therapy or transitioning to individual therapy before resuming joint work.

Limits of Couples Therapy

Couples therapy has limitations, including:

- It cannot guarantee reconciliation.
- It cannot force a partner to change or remain in the relationship.
- It is not effective without honesty, emotional risk-taking, and commitment from both partners.
- Therapy may not succeed if partners attend with the intention of proving the other wrong.
- Deep issues such as addiction, abuse, or betrayal may require concurrent individual therapy.

Audio/Video Recording & UAE/Dubai Legal Restrictions

To protect the privacy and safety of the therapeutic process, recording of any kind is strictly prohibited. Under UAE and Dubai law, it is illegal to film, photograph, or record another person without their explicit consent.

Court Involvement, Legal Requests, and Conflicts of Interest

Therapy is a clinical service focused on emotional and relational healing. It is not a legal service and should not be used for court advocacy, evidence gathering, or testimony.

To maintain neutrality, protect confidentiality, and uphold ethical boundaries:

- I will not participate as a witness in court cases involving either partner.
- I will not provide testimony, statements, or written reports intended for use in legal proceedings (including divorce, custody disputes, or any litigation).
- I will not offer opinions on guilt, innocence, parenting capacity, or any legal matters.

Serving as a witness or providing evaluative statements creates a conflict of interest and compromises the therapeutic alliance. The couple therapist's role is to support emotional wellbeing—not to influence legal outcomes.

If legal documentation or expert evaluation is required, the couple's therapist will refer you to professionals whose role is specifically designated for legal assessment or court involvement.

Our Pledge

The health professionals at the Human Relations Institute & Clinics DMCC consider your welfare to be of the highest priority. Therapy can be a painful process and you have chosen to entrust us with your most valuable possession – the health of your personality and your relationships. We take such trust with the finest care possible.

This is an acknowledgement that I have read and understood the policies of the Human Relations Institute & Clinics DMCC and have been given the document on the Patient's Rights and Responsibilities by the front desk.

Name of Client or Responsible Party: _____

Signature: _____ *Date:* _____ *Time:* _____

Mental Healthcare Professional Declaration

I have adequately explained the treatment policy to the client. I have permitted time and opportunity for the client to ask questions and all questions have been answered to the best of my knowledge.

Name of the Mental Healthcare Professional _____

Provisional Diagnosis _____

Signature: _____ *Date:* _____ *Time:* _____

Witness Statement

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the client on the treatment policy and informed consent form. I confirm that the individual has given consent freely.

Name of Witness: _____

Signature: _____ *Date:* _____ *Time:* _____

