



## **Tidalstone Counselling Services**

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## **INFORMATION AND CONSENT**

Welcome to Tidalstone Counselling Services, where we offer in-person and offsite telehealth counselling. We look forward to working with you and want to ensure that you have a positive counselling experience. This document is to inform you of our policies, our legal and ethical obligations, as well as to make you aware of confidential issues and risks that may arise during our sessions together. Please read this carefully and feel free to ask if you have any questions.

### ***Philosophy and Approach***

At Tidalstone we work with a person-centred approach that focuses on the strengths and abilities that each individual possesses. Key to our way of working is a respect for the individual, and creating a strong, positive therapeutic relationship with our clients. This therapeutic relationship is based upon respect, communication, safety and trust. Our goal is to help each client to face their challenges, and support them in taking courageous steps towards the changes that they would like to make happen in their lives. This client-centred approach is demonstrated in our empathy and unconditional regard, which promote a safe environment where positive strategies can be explored and encouraged.

Possible benefits of therapy may include relief from feelings of helplessness, anxiety, depression or grief. Improvements in relationships with yourself and others may also increase the satisfaction in your life. While the goals in counselling are to help people with their lives, it is still hard work, and may feel uncomfortable and difficult. Sometimes, symptoms may worsen before they get better as you work through challenging issues. Likewise, new symptoms may come up during the course of therapy. When new behaviours are created, they can upset old relationships. Therapy does not always solve the problems that you hope for. The best chance for reaching success is when there is support and a strong therapeutic relationship.

Your participation in counselling is entirely voluntary. If the Tidalstone counsellors are not the right counselling fit for you, we will do our best to help you find support that is. Our goal is to support you as you take the decisions that are right for you.

### ***Confidentiality***

The Tidalstone counsellors are ethically and legally obligated to keep your personal information and the contents of our therapy sessions strictly confidential. Your privacy is important to us, so any information about your appointments will not be shared with anyone outside of our office. Without revealing any identifying details, information may be shared with another Tidalstone counsellor for the purpose of consultation, so as better to support your therapy.

#### ***Limitations to Confidentiality***

Counsellors are required by law to report to the appropriate authorities if there is physical, psychological or sexual abuse, or neglect, of a child under the age of 18. Reporting is required whether the behaviour in question is occurring now or happened in the past. As well, regardless of the client's age, we are obligated to report if there is reason to believe that the client's, or another person's, safety or life are in jeopardy. If a judge subpoenas a counsellor to testify in court or to release the contents of a file, the counsellor is required to do so. Please Note: If you request to have your file information transferred to another professional, such as your lawyer, doctor, or school counsellor, administration, we require that you sign a release of information form prior to the transfer. As well, if you would like us to discuss your therapy with another care provider, a release of information form must be signed first.

If you are **over the age of 18, then only you can book and/or cancel your appointments**. If you would like another person, (ie. spouse, parent, sibling, etc.) to be able to book/cancel appointments on your behalf, please list their name(s) and their relation to you below:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ **Please Note:** The people listed above will only have access to information regarding the times and dates of your appointment;. Any other information regarding the content or nature of your appointments will not be shared.

## ***Appointments***

Counselling services at Tidalstone are by appointment.. Sessions are 50 minutes in length, leaving 10 minutes for the counsellor to update your file. Since continuity of treatment is vital to therapy, we encourage you to plan ahead in scheduling your appointments.

### *Cancellations and Missed Appointments*

We understand that unforeseen events such as car problems, traffic considerations, business meetings, illnesses, and childcare issues (to name a few) can occur. However, since your counselling requires your therapist to reserve a significant amount of time exclusively for your benefit, we have a policy regarding cancellations and missed appointments that is fair to you, your counsellor, and other clients who need appointments. You are free to refuse and/or withdraw from counselling at any time but because your appointment is reserved for you, **it is necessary to charge your regular fee for appointments that are not cancelled at least 24 hours in advance or are missed**. Charges for late cancelled and missed appointments often cannot be submitted for health insurance reimbursement.

## ***Online Technology***

Tidalstone Counselling Services uses active risk management when using online technology. Using online technology has its risks and it is important to understand those. We have chosen to use an online platform that is based in Canada and meets all provincial and national standards of security. All information is kept within Canada and our computers and files are kept secure and password-protected. We have password-protected wifi and encourage you to use caution if on a public network. There are possible ways to hack online hosts such as Skype, Zoom, doxy.me, Google Hang Out and Facetime, which is why we recommend using the platform we suggest. It is entirely your choice as to the way in which you feel safe communicating, but you should understand the risks associated with this method.

## ***Fees***

Tidalstone Counselling Services operates on a fee for service basis. Fees must be paid in full **prior to the beginning of each appointment** unless alternate third party payment arrangements have been made in advance. The fee covers the counselling session as well as preparation time and record keeping. Tidalstone's fees are very competitive with those charged by other therapists in the community, at a rate of \$115 (HST included) per 50 minute session.

Counselling services may be covered on personal health care plans. It is important that you contact your provider prior to your first session to see if they cover services provided by Registered Counselling Therapists (RCTs). Each provider is different in their coverage, and it is the client's responsibility to investigate if they have coverage or not.

Payment for services can be made by cash, e-transfer or credit card.

Additional Fees may be charged for

- Photocopying
- Reports and letters written on behalf of clients
- Reprinting receipts (Please retain receipts for insurance claims as they can be claimed as medical expenses on your income tax.)
- A \$5 fee will be charged for a statement of account
- Transferring your file to another agency

If extenuating circumstances require that a fee for the session is to be deferred, the fee must be paid as soon as possible or on your next appointment. Accounts not paid due to late cancellations or missed appointments will have the outstanding fees charged to your credit card on file within 24 hours.

Credit Card Payment: Visa / MasterCard

Number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

*I understand that any outstanding amount on my account will be processed after 24 hours on this credit card.*

It is important that you have read and understand the above information. If this is the case, please sign below. If you have any concerns or questions, please discuss them with the counsellor before you sign. In an effort to keep information confidential and to facilitate communication for the most effective treatment, Tidalstone Counselling Services will keep a copy of your records for 10 years in our locked archive filing cabinets. If you end your counselling and return at a future date, or see a different counsellor at Tidalstone, the file will be reactivated.

I have read and understood the above information. I agree to abide by its terms. I understand and give my consent to receive services from a counsellor at Tidalstone Counselling Services.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## ***Future Opportunities***

Do you wish to be contacted about:

Tidalstone workshops and classes?

- Yes, I wish to be contacted about workshops and classes offered by Tidalstone.
- No, I do not wish to be contacted about workshops and classes offered by Tidalstone.

Tidalstone events?

- Yes, I wish to be contacted about Tidalstone events.
- No, I do not wish to be contacted about Tidalstone events.

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, please provide us with your e-mail address.

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_