

Robin B. Risler, Psy.D., CAADC
Licensed Psychologist
255 South 17th Street, Suite 1307 Philadelphia, PA 19103

Introduction to Services and Consent to Treatment

Welcome to my practice. I am providing you with the following information to answer many of the questions people typically have when beginning psychotherapy, and to specify the most essential policies and procedures that are specific to my work. Should you have any questions, comments, or concerns about this information, please do not hesitate to share them with me.

Services Offered and Things to Know about Psychotherapy

Psychotherapy is not easily described in general statements. It varies depending on the personalities of the psychologist and patient, and the particular concerns you are having. There are many different ways I may work with you to address the difficulties that you are experiencing, although my primary approach to therapy is relational-psychodynamic one. This approach focuses on the exploration of often-unconscious feelings, wishes, fears, and beliefs that you hold about yourself and other people. These unconscious processes develop early in childhood through your interactions with important people in your life and often play themselves out in your current relationships. I will help you to become more aware of particular patterns in your life and how they fit into the context of your life, both past and present.

I believe the most healing aspect of any therapy is the relationship that develops between us. I see therapy as a collaborative process, which unfolds over time. My hope is that through our work together you will not only resolve your initial concerns, but therapy will also help you to overcome past hurts and allow you to experience yourself and your relationships in new and enlivened ways. Therapy is not like a medical doctor visit. Instead, it calls for an active effort on your part. In order for the therapy to be most successful, you will have to work on things we talk about both during our sessions and at home. I will offer services specifically designed to help you. The services may include individual, couples or marital, family, or group psychotherapy. If it appears that you will benefit from medication, then I can arrange for you to see a local psychiatrist who will evaluate your need for medication and will provide brief check-up appointments to monitor your response to medication.

Psychotherapy is a process designed to help you function and live more fully and with greater overall satisfaction. At times during the course of therapy, we may discuss less pleasant aspects of your life, which may cause you to experience painful emotions such as sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness, and helplessness. It is important to know that this is part of a larger process aimed at facilitating healing, and helping you to process through the more difficult experiences of your life. Psychotherapy has been shown to have many benefits that I believe outweigh the temporary discomfort. Therapy often leads to better relationships, solutions to specific problems, and significant reductions in feelings of distress. There are, however, no guarantees about what will happen during the process.

Our first few sessions will involve an evaluation of your needs. By the end of the evaluation, I will be able to offer you some first impressions of what our work will include, should you decide to continue with therapy. You should evaluate this information along with your own opinions of whether you feel comfortable working with me. Therapy involves a large commitment of time, money, and energy, so it is important that you select a therapist that you feel you can work with. It is valuable to keep me informed of your thoughts regarding our process, and any feelings that arise in relationship to our work or me, so that treatment can be tailored in the most helpful way possible. If at any time you wish to end treatment, it is important that you discuss this with me, and allow us at least one session to talk about your decision.

Office Charges

In order for us to set realistic treatment goals and priorities, it is important to evaluate what resources you have available to pay for your treatment. My fee is \$200.00 per session. I am aware that for full time students this fee may not be possible without the help of family members. If your family is not able to help with costs, I am willing to talk with you about a

sliding scale fee, which may be available depending on how many other people I am currently seeing at a reduced fee. If you have a health insurance policy, it will usually provide coverage for mental health treatment. I do not directly participate with your insurance plan, which means that I am considered an “out-of-network provider.” You are responsible for full payment of my fees at the time of service. Depending upon your plan, your insurance company may subsequently partially reimburse you for out-of-network treatment. If you expect your insurer to cover some of the cost of services, I will assist you, as a courtesy, by providing a copy of the billing statement; however, you remain the primary contact person for the insurance provider.

Health Care Insurance

Many health insurance policies cover office visits with a psychologist who is Out-of-Network. If you desire to use Out-of-Network reimbursement, you are responsible for payment at the time of your appointment. I will provide you with a bill that you can then submit to your insurance provider for reimbursement. Please refer to the Fee Policies document for further information regarding this process. I suggest that you acquaint yourself with your policy’s benefits as to what is or is not covered.

Appointment

Sessions are 45 minutes in length. You will be given a regular appointment time, which will be reserved for you on a weekly basis. It is important that you keep your appointment. Cancellations interrupt and at times impede your progress in treatment. You will be responsible to pay for your regular appointment, unless you provide 48 hours notice of cancellation or unless we both agree that you were unable to attend due to circumstances beyond your control. I will also accommodate you in the event of inclement weather or travel by offering phone sessions. It is important to note that insurance companies do not provide reimbursement for cancelled sessions. If you would like to reschedule a cancelled session during the same week, I will attempt to accommodate your request.

Confidentiality

Psychotherapy and counseling relationships between doctor and patient are most effective when built upon a foundation of trust. Because trust is so important, everything that you share with me will remain confidential. I am required by law to make exceptions to a pledge of confidentiality in the event of immediate danger to you or another, in cases of child abuse, and in other rare circumstances regulated by the Mental Health Procedure Act. A listing of these circumstances is available upon request

Courtroom and Other Legal Testimony

In order to provide the most effective and confidential services, and to avoid unethical dual relationships, I will not be a witness on your behalf in courtroom proceedings or in deposition or discovery.

Telephone and Emergencies

If you need to reach me between regularly scheduled appointment times, you can leave a message at (610) 246-5459. The voicemail at this number is confidential. I check these messages regularly, and will make every effort to return your call on the same day you make it, with the exception of weekends and holidays. If you are difficult to reach, please inform me of some times when you will be available. Most of our work will take place within the sessions. Occasionally, issues may arise about which you would like to contact me between sessions. I do not charge for telephone contact of 15 minutes in length or less. For conversations in excess of 15 minutes, I will charge (based on your hourly fee) for the percentage of a regular psychotherapy hour that is used.

In emergencies, if you are unable to reach me and feel that you can’t wait for me to return your call, contact your family physician or the nearest emergency room and ask for the psychologist or psychiatrist on call. You can also call 911. Please leave me a message about the emergency as soon as possible.

If I will be unavailable for an extended time, I will provide you with the name of a colleague to contact, if necessary.

Professional Consultation

I welcome your requests to confer with your psychiatrist, physician or other persons relevant to your treatment. You will be asked to give your written permission for me to network with other professionals also involved in your care. I will honor your requests to limit the scope of disclosure of your confidential information during such consult.

Robin B. Risler, Psy.D., CAADC
Licensed Psychologist
255 South 17th Street, Suite 1307 Philadelphia, PA 19103

I, _____ agree to enter into treatment with Dr. Robin Risler. I have read the materials given to me discussing my rights to privacy, the fee schedule, and information regarding treatment. I agree to pay _____, the agreed upon fee for treatment, and understand that sessions I miss without giving 48 hours notice will be charged to me.

Print Full Name

Signature

Date