



## APEIRON WELLNESS CENTER

**Apeiron Wellness Center, PLLC**  
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### **Informed Consent**

Dear Client,

The client and counselor relationship is a unique one, and for the time we spend together to be maximized, each one of us should be aware of our rights and responsibilities. This policy list once was very short. Due to experiences over time, the counselor has found it necessary to communicate clearly and in a detailed fashion the rights and responsibilities of both the client and the counselor. Communicating a mutual understanding of what is expected in a relationship and then living up to it is a healthy therapeutic process in itself. Your signature at the bottom of this form signifies that you have read and understand the professional relationship and mutual responsibilities between the client and counselor.

### **Reading and Understanding the Counselor Policies**

This is a service agreement between client and counselor and contains important information regarding the professional services and business policies of **Apeiron Wellness Center, PLLC**. Please read it carefully. We will be pleased to discuss any or all of these policies with you. **Prior to initiating services, you will be required to sign the last page of this document and return it to your counselor indicating that you have read and understand our service agreement.** The Service Agreement is subject to amendment. You will be informed of any changes and given the opportunity to review and approve them. You may request a copy of this agreement for your records.

### **Clinical Services**

Typically, a client calls a therapist for services when his or her life or relationship has become unworkable in some way, and/or they are experiencing some type of distress. Sometimes clients have an idea of why things aren't working, and sometimes they don't. Whatever is going on, a licensed counselor is trained to help people cut through the fog so they can understand what is going on and create a path to lessen or end the distress.

The first step in this process is the intake and initial evaluation and assessment with the therapist, which is 90 minutes long. In this initial session Your counselor will obtain information primarily through an intake form and interviews. In some cases, the assessment and evaluation will go beyond the first session, and may require several 50-minute sessions in addition. By the

end of the evaluation process he will be able to offer some initial impressions of his understanding of your situation and make recommendations regarding a course of treatment.

During this evaluation and assessment period a client should decide whether he or she is comfortable working with Your counselor, as being comfortable with your therapist is the most important consideration and is directly correlated to whether or not therapy is likely to be successful. Therapy involves a large commitment of resources including your time, money, and energy, so you should be careful about the therapist you select. If you have any questions about Your counselor's approach or assessment, he will be pleased to discuss them with you. If your doubts persist and he or you feel that a second opinion or different treatment course would be more helpful, your counselor will be happy to discuss the matter with you and/or assist you in securing a consultation with another mental health professional if needed, as therapists understand that they are sometimes not a "fit" for an individual, couple, or family.

## **Therapy**

Psychotherapy is not easily described in general statements. It varies depending on the personality of both the therapist and the client and the particular problems which one is experiencing. There are a number of different approaches, which can be utilized to address problems effectively. However, it is not like presenting yourself to a medical doctor and having him or her do all the work. Therapy is an interactive treatment process which requires a very active effort on both the part of you and the therapist. In order to be most successful, you will have to work both during our sessions and at other times in between sessions. Psychotherapy has both benefits and risks. Risks sometimes include experiencing uncomfortable levels of unpleasant feelings. It may require recalling unpleasant aspects of your life history. Psychotherapy has also been shown to have benefits as it often leads to a significant reduction of feelings of distress, improved relationships and contributes to the resolution of specific problems. However, there are no guarantees of potential outcome.

## **Relationship or Marital Therapy**

Your counselor begins this process by meeting initially with a couple in a 90-minute assessment session. At the end of this session he is often able to assess the relationship and inform the couple of how serious he thinks the problem is, and what will be involved in bringing it to health, or if it is even possible to bring it to health. A treatment plan and potential course of action will be discussed at that time, which may include individual sessions in addition to couple's sessions. It should be noted that sometimes during couple's therapy, one or both individuals may conclude that they do not want to work on the relationship and will decide to divorce.

Information obtained in joint sessions generally cannot be released without authorization by both individuals. Also, sometimes Your counselor meets with couples together as well as individually. Although he does his best to keep the information in the individual sessions confidential, he is human and may slip up and reveal information one spouse may have wanted to remain private from the other. Also, since asking a therapist to "keep a secret" from the other individual he is working with creates all sorts of difficulties with the therapeutic alliance that is so important to the success of the process, your counselor asks individuals not to reveal things to

him that they would not want their spouse or partner to know. Please see the section on confidentiality.

### **Family Therapy**

In family therapy, one or more family members may be seen in a single session, or in a longer session divided into segments to address both individual family member's needs as well as the overall family's needs. Often, assessments of each family member needs will precede the beginning of family services, or take place soon after the beginning of the services.

### **Confidentiality**

You have the right to confidential mental health care *except* in cases where the therapist believes you might cause harm to yourself, to someone else, or if child or elder abuse/neglect is suspected. In these cases, the therapist has a duty by law to file a report with the appropriate authorities. Also, therapists are required to testify when commanded to do so by a court ordered subpoena.

If you run into your counselor outside of the office, he or she will not acknowledge you. We do this to ensure your right to confidentiality. However, if you want to greet, visit with, or introduce your counselor to your friends or family as a friend or your therapist, that is up to you. Your counselor lets his clients take the lead in these situations.

### **Social Media Policy**

This document outlines my office policies related to the use of social media. Please read it to understand how we conduct ourselves on the internet as mental health professionals and how you can expect us to respond to various interactions that may occur between us online.

If you have any questions about anything within this document, we encourage you to bring them up when we meet. As new technology develops and the internet changes, there may be times when we need to update this policy. If we do so, we will notify you in writing of any policy changes and make sure you have a copy of the updated policy.

#### **Friending**

We do not accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking site (Facebook, LinkedIn, Google Plus). We believe that adding clients as friends or contacts on these sites can compromise your confidentiality and our respective privacy. It may also blur the boundaries of our therapeutic relationship. If you have questions about this, please bring them up when we meet and we can talk more about it.

#### **Interacting**

Please do not use messaging on Social Networking sites such as Twitter, LinkedIn, or Facebook to contact me. These sites are not secure and we may not read these messages in a timely fashion (and often do not get notification at all from the site that they have been sent). Do not use wall postings, @replies, or other means of engaging with me in public online if we have already established a client/therapist relationship. Engaging with me in this way could compromise your confidentiality. It may also create the possibility that these exchanges become a part of your legal medical record and will need to be documented and archived in your chart.

Please do not use SMS (mobile text messaging) unless we have already determined the parameters of this, and you have signed a contact form acknowledging that texting is not HIPAA compliant. As a general rule, texting is only appropriate for confirming appointments, letting me

know you are running late, etc., and not appropriate for lengthy conversations about your treatment needs.

If you need to contact me between sessions, the best way to do so is by phone. Direct email at [adrian@seekthegrey.com](mailto:adrian@seekthegrey.com) is second best for quick, administrative issues such as changing appointment times. See the email section for more information. Please remember that my phone is typically not answered after hours, unless we have agreed that we would do so. We are also not an emergency services provider, so please call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room in the event of an emergency.

### **Use of Search Engines**

It is not a regular part of my practice to search for clients on Google, Facebook, or any other web search engine or social media site. Extremely rare exceptions may be made during times of crisis. If we have a reason to suspect that you are in danger and you have not been in touch with us via our usual means (coming to appointments, phone, or email) there might be an instance in which using a search engine (to find you, find someone close to you, or check on your recent status updates) becomes necessary as part of ensuring your welfare. These are unusual situations and if we ever resort to such means, we will fully document it and discuss it with you when we next meet.

### **Business Review Sites**

You may find my practice on sites such as Yelp, Healthgrades, Yahoo Local, Bing, or other places which list businesses. Some of these sites include forums in which users rate their providers and add reviews. Many of these sites comb search engines for business listings and automatically add listings regardless of whether the business has added itself to the site. Please be aware that we do not add myself to these sites, therefore this will be the case if you see me listed. Please also know that my listing is not a request for a testimonial, rating, or endorsement from you as my client. While we often are sent clients through referrals from other practitioners and current or former clients, we do not ever seek public testimonials in regards to my services. Again, this is to protect your privacy. Nor do we want you to feel pressured to recommend me in any regard for my professional services.

Of course you have the right to express yourself on any site you wish. But due to confidentiality, we cannot respond to any review on any of these sites whether it is positive or negative. We urge you to take your own privacy as seriously as we take my commitment of confidentiality to you. Remember that even web content that is deleted is still archived for review and can be accessed by others. Including your friends, loved ones, and employers. You should also be aware that if you are using these sites to communicate indirectly with me about your feelings about our work, there is a good possibility that we may never see it. My hope is that you will feel comfortable enough with me to share any concerns you may have directly with me, so we can work to resolve them together, whenever possible.

Remember that confidentiality means we cannot tell people you are my client, without your informed consent. You are more than welcome to tell anyone that we are your therapist or how you feel about treatment we have provided to you, in any forum of your choosing.

If you do choose to write something on a business review site, we hope you will keep in mind that you may be sharing personally revealing information in a public forum that will be archived even if deleted. We urge you to create a pseudonym that is not linked to your regular email address or friend networks for your own privacy and protection.

### **Location-Based Services**

If you use location-based services on your mobile phone, you may wish to be aware of the privacy issues related to using these services. We do not place my practice as a check in location on various sites such as Foursquare, Gowalla, Loopt, etc. However, if you have GPS tracking enabled on your device, it is possible that others may surmise that you are a therapy client due to regular check-ins at my office. Please be aware of this risk if you are intentionally “checking in,” from my office or if you have a passive LBS app enabled on your phone.

### **Email**

We prefer using email only to arrange or modify appointments. Please do not email me content related to your therapy sessions, as email is not completely secure or confidential. If you choose to communicate with me by email, be aware that all emails are retained in the logs of your and my Internet service providers, and not all providers use encrypted servers. While it is unlikely that someone will be looking at these logs, they are, in theory available to be read by the system administrator(s) of the internet service provider. You should also know that any emails we receive from you and any responses that we send to you become a part of your legal record.

### **Conclusion**

Thank you for taking the time to review my social media policy. If you have any questions or concerns about any of these policies and procedures regarding our potential interactions on the internet, do bring them to my attention so we can discuss them.

We will provide you with a form to sign stating that you have read and understand my social media policy. Any changes we make to this policy will be provided to you, with the opportunity to sign an updated agreement regarding those changes.

(Policy adapted from Dr. Keely Kolmes [drkkolmes.com] with permission.)

### **Subpoenas**

Clients should consider whether or not they want to issue a subpoena for a therapist to testify in court. The process is always expensive to the client, and there is no guarantee that what the therapist will say will be of benefit to the client’s case. In some cases, a therapist’s testimony may be detrimental to the client’s case. This is why the decision to subpoena a therapist should be seriously considered.

If the counselor is subpoenaed to be in court regarding an issue with a client, this will necessitate that he/she/ze clear his/her/hir schedule to be “on call” for the court appearance. The charge for this is a minimum nonrefundable fee of \$1000, payable in advance, regardless of whether the counselor actually ends up testifying or appearing in court, or how many minutes he is there. The first \$1000 applies to a maximum of four hours of his time at an out-of-office courtroom rate of \$250 per hour. Expenses he may incur such as parking, making copies, travel time, and time spent preparing the copies will be charged at an appropriate rate and are in addition to the \$1000 minimum fee. If he is required to be on call beyond the first four hours for a court appearance, a second \$1000 minimum fee will be incurred, even if he must remain (on call) one minute, one hour, or all four hours beyond the first four. In other words, a \$1000 minimum fee will be charged for any portion of a four-hour time slot in which the counselor is required to be “on call” to testify in court, whether he ends up testifying or not.

If a client wants the therapist to speak, meet, or correspond in any way with their or another attorney or person, the client will be billed for the therapist’s time.

**Crisis policy.**

The counselor sees clients by appointment during normal business hours Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 6:15 p.m. (he will see clients by appointment after 6:30 p.m. weekdays and on weekends at an after-hours rate.) If you have a crisis during business hours, call the counselor and make an appointment and he will make every effort to fit you in. If for any reason the counselor is unavailable or you experience a crisis outside of business hours, call 911 for assistance.

**Telephone and e-mail counseling.**

The counselors at Apeiron Wellness Center do have an e-mail addresses, which are available (firstname@seekthegrey.com). However, psychotherapy cannot be conducted by e-mail. Appointments can be scheduled or canceled by e-mail. Lengthy e-mails, if they are read or responded to will be charged at the appropriate hourly rate. Please do not assume that any e-mail sent will be read immediately as there are times when Adrian is out of the office for several days at a time. He may not check e-mail when he is not in the office.

Whether in crisis or not, a client may occasionally want to discuss an issue on the phone or by Internet with the counselor. For this service the counselor charges a minimum \$35.00 fee, which includes up to 15 minutes of Internet or telephone counseling. If the call goes beyond that period of time, the client will be billed at a rate of \$35.00 per 15-minute increments in addition. Health insurance companies do not reimburse for this type of contact therefore the client will be personally responsible for the fee.

**Other Issues**

Occasionally clients ask counselors to fill out forms or write letters for them regarding things like leave of absence, custody issues, etc. The counselor will do this in most cases, however, the client will be charged for the time and expenses involved.

**Discounts and Insurance**

A key part of the mission of Apeiron Wellness Center, PLLC is to provide critical services to underserved populations. To facilitate that goal, we have set aside two special discounts for specific populations.

**LPC-Interns:** \$50 for 50-minute Individual Session; \$60 for 60-minute Family Session

\*LPC-Interns are professionals who have graduated with their Master's degrees and are working on accruing supervised hours of practice for full licensure.

Interns at Apeiron Wellness Center are all under the direct supervision of Dr. Adrian S. Warren, PhD, LPC-S.\*

**Active Duty Military and Veterans:**

\$75 for 50-minute Individual or Family Session

\$100 for 90-minute Prolonged Exposure or Hypnotherapy Session for PTSD

**LGBTQ:**

LGBTQ Youth (13-25) \$25 for 50-minute Individual Session (With LPC-Interns)

LGBTQ Youth and Families (13-25) \$40 for 60-Minute Family Session (With LPC-Interns)

**Insurance**

As of March 11, 2009 we no longer accept health insurance assignments. Clients wishing to use health insurance may request a receipt from the counselor, and may then file the insurance themselves in order to receive some reimbursement. Clients may wish to contact their health insurance company and find out what, if any, coverage is available for out-of-network mental health providers.

**Rescheduling, Arriving Late, Arriving Early, When YOU are sick ...**

Some clients may arrive early for their scheduled appointment. Please make yourself comfortable in the waiting area.

If you are sick and must miss an appointment, or experience a dire personal emergency, the counselor may forfeit the missed appointment fee, at his discretion, on a case-by-case basis.

We respect your time and make every effort to remain on schedule throughout the day, although on rare occasions emergencies arise. If an emergency arises that would mean a significant wait of 15 minutes or more, a client will be contacted by phone or text of the delay, and may be asked to reschedule.

## CONSUMER COMPLAINTS

A PERSON WHO PROVIDES PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING SERVICES TO CLIENTS MUST BE LICENSED, UNLESS EXEMPTED BY STATE LAW.

A CONSUMER WHO WISHES TO FILE A COMPLAINT AGAINST AN INDIVIDUAL LICENSED BY THE BOARD MAY CALL: 1-800-942-5540

OR

MAY VISIT: [www.dshs.state.tx.us/counselor](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/counselor)

OR

WRITE TO:

TEXAS STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS OF PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS

MC1982

PO BOX 141369

AUSTIN TX 78714-1369

### Payment for Service

**Apeiron Wellness Center, PLLC** (also referred to here as “The Center”) has agreed to see you for mental health counseling at a rate of \$\_\_\_\_\_ for an individual, and \$\_\_\_\_\_ for couples or families per 50-minute session, the last 5 minutes of which are spent to schedule the next appointment and pay. Rates for all other stand-alone services are kept up-to-date on the website ([www.seekthegrey.com](http://www.seekthegrey.com)). **Payment is expected at time of service, and we accept credit cards, checks, cash, and Paypal.** The center agrees to maintain this rate for 6 months from the first date of service, at which time the rate may be revisited and subject to change. Clients arriving up to 15 minutes late will receive the remaining time left for the allotted appointment, but will pay the full hourly rate. **Clients arriving 16 minutes late or later will be regarded as a no-show and will be charged for the missed appointment.**

If a session lasts longer than the appointed minutes scheduled, there will be an additional charge for each 15 minutes thereafter, at a rate of \$2.50 per minute for individuals, and \$2.80 per minute for couples, \$3.00 for families, unless the counselor waives the fee.

In some cases, a client may end up owing the Center for services. In this case, the client agrees to pay the remaining balance immediately. If your account is more than 60 days in arrears, the business office of Apeiron Wellness Center, PLLC will refer the account to its attorneys or to a collection service. If such legal action becomes necessary, the cost of bringing the procedure will be included in the claim.

PLEASE NOTE, information pertinent to any such claim or action in most cases would be the name, the nature of the services provided, the amount due and perhaps correspondence about the bill in question. No confidential information will be revealed.

### Finally ...

By signing this form, you agree that you have read and understand these policies. You also agree that you are financially responsible for any fees that are accrued for yourself or members of your family, including dependents who may or may not be over the age of 18, while under the care of Apeiron Wellness Center.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Client Name & Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Spouse/Partner # 2 Name & Signature (if applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Counselor Name & Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Adrian S. Warren, PhD, LPC-S (Supervising)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date