



What You Should Know About Counseling

What is counseling?

The word “counseling” is interchangeable with the word “therapy”.

Counseling is a relationship in which a professionally trained person (therapist) helps you to better understand yourself and solve problems. Seeking counseling is not a sign of weakness. Many people find that professional assistance is a mature and positive step toward success.

Counseling takes place in a private, secure, uninterrupted setting.

Counseling is a collaborative process in which the therapist acts as a facilitator so that awareness and change can take place. One goal is for you to learn new skills to help you resolve your current problems and become more capable of solving new problems on your own in the future.

Counseling involves talking about yourself, including your family and personal history as well as your thoughts and feelings.

Counseling is also referred to as “therapy” or “outpatient mental health services”.

What to expect in the first session

After you have scheduled your first appointment, you may find yourself experiencing anxiety and wondering what you will talk about. This worrying is normal. Therapists are aware that meeting with a “stranger” to discuss personal concerns can be intimidating. Remember that your therapist is a trained professional who will work at establishing a comfortable and supportive environment for you. Your therapist will want to focus on you and may ask you a number of questions about yourself, your history and your current problems. An appointment “hour” is typically 53+ minutes and is scheduled on a weekly basis to begin with. Your therapist will also discuss your insurance coverage and/or payment arrangements with you. If the therapist determines that you would benefit from additional services, this will be discussed with you and referral(s) made.

What is expected of you?

To attend sessions and let your therapist know 24 hours in advance if you will need to cancel and/or reschedule an appointment.

To talk openly and honestly about yourself.

To complete tasks or homework assignments.

To let your therapist know if you have questions about the counseling or feel that you are not making any progress.

To let your therapist or the business office know if you are having difficulty paying your bill.

What is a Treatment Plan?

During the course of counseling, the therapist develops a written Treatment Plan which is a plan of action based on the principles, methods and theories of counseling. The Treatment Plan is aimed toward the prevention, treatment and resolution of problems and/or mental health disorders. The plan includes a descriptive statement of each problem and specifies goals, objectives and interventions. The purpose of a written Treatment Plan is to document the course of treatment, provide a structure for measuring progress, and allow for accountability. Client collaboration and cooperation is important for developing and complying with the Treatment Plan.



How is therapy paid for?

Depending on the type of education and experience of the provider, fees can range from \$50 to \$200 an hour. Many people have health insurance that includes some type of coverage for mental health services. You can discuss your coverage with your insurance company, human resource person at your place of employment, or with the therapist. Often, insurance covers a large portion of the fee and you have a co-pay. Managed care insurance plans may require authorization for services. You must sign an Authorization for Treatment and Billing Services form in order for us to bill charges to your insurance plan. If you are uninsured, your insurance does not cover counseling, or you chose not to use your insurance, you are responsible for full payment at the time of service. It is acceptable to discuss payment arrangements (credit card, special arrangements for payments, collection practices) with your therapist. If you would like to use a credit card to pay for services, you must complete a Credit Card Payment Consent form. This allows us to bill your credit card for services rendered. If you would prefer to pay by credit card without our involvement, you can do so by logging onto professionalcharges.com, selecting the "Make A Payment" button and completing the Payment Form. You will need to enter the Lakeview Counseling Tax I.D. number — 383269851.

Charges will appear on your credit card statement as "ProfessionalCharges.com".

Understanding the different types of therapists

Psychiatrists are medical doctors (M.D. after the name). They have completed medical school and a residency in psychiatry. They are able to write prescriptions and administer medication(s).

Psychologists have a Doctorate degree in psychology (PhD after the name) and are licensed to practice in their state. They have completed graduate school, including a doctoral program. They are able to provide a variety of forms of testing and therapy.

Social Workers have completed a Master's degree in Social Work (MSW, LMSW, or ACSW after the name). They are licensed to practice in their state and have unique training in order to provide services for individual and family problems.

All therapists at Lakeview Counseling have completed the following education and training requirements: completion of a Master of Social Work degree or a PhD in Clinical Psychology; completion of a minimum of 5 years postgraduate supervised clinical experience; licensure as a "Certified Social Worker" or "Clinical Psychologist" with the State of Michigan; membership in the National Association of Social Workers or American Psychological Association; acceptance into the Academy of Certified Social Workers; and participation in continuing education activities.

To file a complaint about a therapist, you can contact the State of Michigan, Department of Community Health, or the national association in which the therapist has membership.

What You Should Know About Confidentiality

The security and confidentiality of all records is protected by both Federal and State law. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) outlines regulations related to the release of information about you.

What is protected:

Any information about a person's health, health care or payment of health care — this includes mental health and behavioral health issues; information that identifies a person; information created or received by a covered health



care plan or provider; and all medical records and other individually identifiable health information used or disclosed by a covered entity in any form, whether electronically, on paper, or orally.

Protected health information may not be disclosed by the clinic or a therapist without the informed and voluntary written consent or authorization of the client.

The clinic is required to obtain a client's consent for use or disclosure of client information for purposes of health care treatment, payment and operations.

Any conversations or communications you have with your therapist are private and confidential except under the following circumstances:

- disclosures required by law
- disclosure about victims of abuse, neglect or domestic violence
- emergency circumstances
- identification of the body of a deceased person or the cause of death
- permitted disclosures for public health activities (e.g.: reporting diseases, collecting vital statistics)
- research, generally limited to when a waiver of authorization is independently approved by a privacy board or Institutional Review Board
- oversight of the health care system
- limited law enforcement activities
- judicial and administrative proceedings
- disclosure to avert a serious threat to health or safety; activities related to national defense and security
- case consultation (client name and demographics are not disclosed)
- audited review by your insurance carrier
- malpractice complaint or investigation

Please be aware that psychotherapy notes are held to a higher standard of protection because they are not part of a medical record and are never intended to be shared with anyone else.



Therapist you're seeing: _____

Client Registration (Adult)

LEGAL NAME: _____ Today's Date: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Age: _____

I identify my gender as: _____ Pronouns? _____

My gender assigned at birth: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Street Address: _____ Email address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

BEST Contact Phone Number: _____

Name/age of others living in the home: _____

Employer: _____ Work Phone: _____

Marital Status: _____ Spouse's Name: _____

Spouse's Employer: _____ Phone: _____

Number of Children: _____ Names/Ages: _____

Educational Level: _____ Do you currently attend school? _____

If yes, where: _____ Grade/Major: _____

CONTACT IN CASE OF EMERGENCY:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

PHYSICIAN: _____ PHONE: _____

Date of Last Physical Exam: _____

Were you sick but failed to get medical care in the last year? YES [] or NO []

Did you miss more than ten days of your usual activity last year due to illness: YES [] or NO []

Please list all MEDICATIONS you are now taking. Include those you buy without a doctor's prescription:

| Medication Name | Dosage/ Frequency | Medication Name | Dosage /Frequency |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

Please list any ALLERGIES that you have: _____



Health History

Please mark (X) any illnesses/medical problems you have, or have had, and indicate the year when each started. If you are not certain when an illness started, write down an approximate year.

| Illness | Year | Illness | Year | Illness | Year |
|-------------------------------------------------------|------|----------------------------------------------------|------|----------------------------------------------------|------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol Dependency _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Diverticulosis _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Liver Trouble _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Allergies _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Emphysema _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Migraines _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Epilepsy, Seizure _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Mononucleosis _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arthritis _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Glaucoma _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Pneumonia _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asthma _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Head Injury _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Prostate Problem(s) _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ADD/ADHD _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Heart Attack _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Ringing in the Ears _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bipolar Disorder _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Heart Murmur _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Stomach Ulcer _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bleeding Tendency _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Hepatitis _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Stroke _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cancer/Tumor _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> High Cholesterol _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Tuberculosis _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cataract _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> High Blood Pressure _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Miscarriage _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colitis _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> HIV/AIDS _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Deafness _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Convulsions, Seizures _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Diabetes _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Thyroid _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kidney/Bladder Disease _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Depression _____ | | | |

Have you ever been hospitalized? If yes, please explain: _____

Substance Use History

TOBACCO: Do you currently smoke or use tobacco products? YES [] or NO []
How much? _____ How often? _____
Are you a former tobacco user? YES [] or NO [] If YES, when did you quit? _____

MARIJUANA: Do you currently smoke or use marijuana products? YES [] or NO []
How much? _____ How often? _____
Are you a former marijuana user? YES [] or NO [] If YES, when did you quit? _____

ALCOHOL: Do you currently drink alcohol? YES [] or NO []
If YES, what kind(s)? _____
How much? _____ How often? _____



If you stopped drinking and/or are a recovering alcoholic, when did you quit? _____

CAFFEINE: Do you currently consume caffeine? YES [] or NO []

If YES, what forms(s): Coffee, tea, energy drinks, etc. _____

How much? _____ How often? _____

DRUG USE: Do you, or have you in the past, used:

Cocaine YES [] or NO []

Other Drugs: YES [] or NO []

Have you ever abused prescription drugs? YES [] or NO []

Have you ever taken part in a drug or alcohol treatment program? YES [] or NO []

If YES, please explain: _____

Family Health History

Please provide the following information about your immediate family:

| Family Member | Age if living | Age at death | Status of Health or Cause of Death |
|------------------|---------------|--------------|------------------------------------|
| Father _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Mother _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Brother(s) _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Sister(s) _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Spouse _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Children _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

Illness (indicate which family member(s)):

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Alcoholism _____ | Epilepsy _____ |
| Anxiety Disorders _____ | Glaucoma _____ |
| ADD/ADHD _____ | Heart Disease _____ |
| Bipolar/Manic Depression _____ | High Blood Pressure _____ |
| Blood Disease _____ | Parkinson's Disease _____ |
| Cancer _____ | Rheumatoid Arthritis _____ |
| Dementia/Alzheimer's _____ | Schizophrenia _____ |
| Depression _____ | Suicide _____ |
| Diabetes _____ | Thyroid problems _____ |
| Drug Dependence _____ | Tuberculosis _____ |



Other illness(es): _____

Have you been the victim of sexual assault or molestation? YES [] or NO []

Legal History

Have you ever been arrested? YES [] or NO []

If yes, please explain: _____

Have you ever been on probation? YES [] or NO []

If yes, please explain: _____

Are you currently on probation? YES [] or NO []

If yes, please explain: _____

What Brings You To Counseling?

Please state the reason(s) you are seeking services at this time:

Please mark (X) any of the following symptoms you have, or have had, and indicate the year when each started. If you are not certain when a symptom started, write down the approximate year.

| Symptom | Year | Symptom | Year |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------------------------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Change in Desire for Sex | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Memory Difficulty | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Panic | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hallucinations | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Irritability | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anger/Temper Outbursts | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Tearfulness | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sleep Disturbance | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Unresolved Grief | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appetite Disturbance | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Thoughts of Self-harm | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Interest in Usual Activity | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty Concentrating | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling Hopeless/Helpless | _____ | | |

Other: _____

Have you been involved in counseling before? YES [] or NO []



Please indicate dates (year or your age) and who provided the services: _____

Please indicate any additional information you think is significant: _____

How did you learn of Lakeview Counseling? _____

Please indicate how we may contact you:

Home phone: _____

_____ I give consent to leave messages on my voicemail.

Initial

Work phone: _____

_____ I give consent to leave messages on my voicemail.

Initial

Cell Phone: _____

_____ I give consent to leave messages on my voicemail.

Initial

Email: _____

_____ I give consent to send messages to my email address.

Initial

It is important to be aware that there are uncertainties related to the privacy and confidentiality of electronic communications. It is not advisable to use email or text for emergency situations. Emails and texts maintained as part of the client record. Lakeview Counseling, PC, is not liable for any breaches of confidentiality caused by the client or any third party.

I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE READ AND FULLY UNDERSTAND THIS INFORMATION. I UNDERSTAND THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE COMMUNICATION OF EMAIL AND/OR TEXTS BETWEEN MY THERAPIST AND MYSELF AND CONSENT TO THE CONDITIONS OUTLINED.

Client Name: _____

Client Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____