

Center for Counseling and Psychological Services

Washington University in St. Louis

Informed Consent for Conjoint Therapy

The focus of conjoint counseling is on the relationship. When working in conjoint therapy it is understood that the client is primarily “the relationship” which requires agreement from all parties in order to maintain trust and efficacy. Please read the following information carefully:

1. Fees: Nine counseling sessions are provided free of charge as part of paying the Health and Wellness Fee. These sessions can be divided between individual and conjoint counseling visits. If both students paid the health and wellness fee, the individuals in the relationship are eligible for 9 free visits (not 18) and can be split between the students (e.g. in a couple, 4 sessions counted towards the limit for one student and 5 for the other).
2. Cancellation policy: A \$20 late cancellation fee is charged for missed appointments if notification of cancellation is given with less than 24 hours in advance. If all parties are WU students, only one student account will be charged the fee.

Confidentiality: All information disclosed within sessions is confidential and may not be revealed to anyone without written permission from both parties. Exceptions: If you pose an immediate danger to yourself or to anybody else, we are required to take action to prevent harm. Also, if you describe a situation where a child, an elder, or someone unable to protect themselves is in danger of abuse, we may be required to take action. A court order may also require that information about your counseling visits be released.

3. Full disclosure in sessions: Because the therapist’s allegiance is to the “relationship” and not to any partner as individuals, information shared will not be withheld from any party unless there are clear and obvious safety concerns involved. If during the conjoint therapy process, each partner is seen in an individual session with the conjoint therapist, information disclosed will be considered part of the conjoint counseling relationship. Individuals will be offered every opportunity to disclose the information themselves with guidance from the therapist if needed. If the individual refuses to disclose the information within the conjoint session, discontinuation of conjoint therapy may be considered. Referrals for concurrent individual counseling will also be provided if determined necessary or is requested.
4. Release of records: Since the “relationship” is the client in conjoint therapy, the mental health records belong to all parties. Unless one of the previous mentioned exceptions to confidentiality apply, all parties must provide consent to release conjoint counseling records. If one party does not provide consent, records will not be released.
5. Course of treatment: Length and duration of conjoint therapy sessions will be determined by the therapist and their theoretical approach. Continued participation by all parties is voluntary. Any party may suspend or terminate conjoint therapy at any time in the process.

Note: Conjoint therapy is most effective when all partners make a good faith effort to work on their problems and their relationship. Deliberate dishonesty or deceit, unwillingness to introspect and take responsibility for one’s actions, or lack of interest and motivation to engage in the conjoint therapy process by any partner will undermine the goals of therapy.

Acknowledgement and Consent: We have read and understand this consent. We have been given an opportunity to ask questions about Conjoint Therapy and our questions have been answered to our satisfaction. We hereby understand and agree to the above statements and consent to participate in Conjoint Therapy as described in this Consent Form.

Client Signatures

Date