Heidi Mack, PhD

Registered Psychotherapist

Clinical Supervisor

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*Supervised clinical practice under Dr. Deborah Thompson. Kingston, Ontario.*

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Dear Clients:

Please note the following with respect to your participation in the counseling agreement with Heidi Mack.

**Difference between a Psychiatrist, a Psychologist and a Psychotherapist\*:**

**Who is a Psychiatrist?** A psychiatrist is a medical doctor who is specialized in mental health. They mainly deal with the diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders. Psychiatrists usually prescribe psychiatric medication to treat mental disorders. While many of the greatest therapists in the world are psychiatrists, a typical 21st-century psychiatrist hardly ever gets involved in talk therapy. They mostly use medication and sometimes some other methods such as [Electroconvulsive Therapy](http://www.webmd.com/depression/guide/electroconvulsive-therapy%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) (ECT) to help their patients.

**Who is a Psychologist?** A psychologist is a person who usually holds a doctorate in psychology. Some psychologists offer talk therapy. Others get involved in the diagnosis of mental disorders. Some psychologists do not treat patients. Instead, they offer consultation to organizations and corporations or conduct research or teach at colleges and universities. The term psychologist is a protected term in the US and Canada. In other words, only people who are members of a local regulatory body, such as College of Psychologists of Ontario, may call themselves psychologists. This group of mental health professionals cannot prescribe medication.

**Who is a Psychotherapist?** A psychotherapist is a professional who specifically offer talk therapy for the purpose of treating mental disorders. This title is protected in some jurisdictions. For example, in Ontario, Canada only members of College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO) may call themselves psychotherapists or registered psychotherapists. Members of CRPO usually hold a Master’s degree in psychology or relevant fields. Psychotherapists are not allowed to prescribe medication. When it comes to the treatment of mental disorders, the roles of psychologists and psychotherapists overlap, but, in general, the type of services psychologists offer could go beyond therapy.

\* retrieved from: http://www.pmspeakers.com/what-is-the-difference-between-a-psychotherapist-a-psychologist-and-a-psychiatrist

**Nature and Approach:**

I approach counselling first from a collaborative perspective – with the idea that we are co-creating awareness, respect, understanding and resolution for your presenting issues. This means that you play an important and significant role in the work that we do together. From a broad brush perspective, my approach is to close the gap between what you want/need/value/believe and how you live – as much as possible. I have an eclectic and secular perspective for therapy and draw on philosophies and interventions primarily from feminist, narrative and, human centred perspectives. I hold an unconditional positive regard and acceptance for clients and take an anti-oppression non-­judgmental approach, communicated through empathetic understanding and a deep respect for your own experience and understanding of that experience. I consider the client’s perspective, values, beliefs, needs, and dreams as well as their intuitive knowledge of themselves as the foundation for the direction of therapy. I believe that clients have the capacity and resilience to resolve their own problems and make their own decisions and often need an outsider to witness the process and support consolidation and understanding of their experience.

**Office Location and Parking:**

The office is located at 308 Wellington Street on the top floor. There is an elevator to the second floor but it’s stairs only after that. If this creates an accessibility problem, we can arrange to meet at my home office at 528 Bagot Street. There is parking on the Wellington Street Office for up to three hours, there is free parking on the street at the Bagot Street Office. I am also available to see people by SKYPE or FaceTime on Wednesdays or at other arranged times.

The 308 Wellington Street building itself is sometimes locked on the weekends so if you find yourself waiting outside, please phone or text me at 613 572 1035. There will be an “in session” sign on the window of the exterior door visible from the stairs. If I am in session, please take a seat on the third floor landing and I will call you into the office when I am ready. I work hard to stay on schedule but at times, circumstances prevent this from being possible. I appreciate your patience.

When you arrive, there are two chairs on the landing outside the office. Please take a seat and text me when you arrive.

**Office Hours:**

As a rule, I work Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m. (last session starts at 2:15). On Thursdays I have daytime and evening hours from 10:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. For those travelling from out of town, weekends and other evening sessions can be arranged.

**Fees and Payment, Invoices and Receipts, and Claiming under Insurance:**

The fee for a 55-minute session is $160.00 (plus 13% H.S.T) which totals $180. Relationship counseling (when both parties are present) is billed at $250 for an hour session; $325 for 1.5 hours; $400 for two hours (rare but happens sometimes) plus HST.

I have several spots in my practice for subsidizing and sliding scale fees and can be creative about ways to allow you to get your needs met while also being responsible for some level of payment. Having a clear and committed discussion about this situation with a clear agreement written up is the best way to proceed for clients unable to pay for the full cost sessions.

**Your session fee is due on the day of service.** If a third part is paying for your sessions, please inform them of the dates of your sessions and have them forward payment for the day of your session. Please provide me with their phone contact and email address of third parties.

Payment for first sessions are required by electronic transfer or a cheque dropped off to my office before booking is confirmed.

***Cancellations*:** Sessions must be cancelled 24 hours in advance or will be charged at full fee. This full fee charge will be applied to an account from which I subsidize people’s care who are less able to pay for sessions. Should there ever be an incident where I double book you or make a mistake on your booking, I will offer you a session for free (sickness, inclement weather, and other emergencies exempt both of us from this offer).

Please note that I wait 20 minutes after your session time to consider the session not recoverable. After 20 minutes, I will consider the session a “no show” and a charge will apply.

***Paying for Sessions:*** There are three ways to pay for sessions: 1. cash; 2. cheque made out to ‘Heidi Mack’; 3. Interact Transfer (use the client’s first name in full capitals as the password e.g. HEIDI).

 *Paying each time in the office****:*** There is a flat wooden tray at the entrance of the office, please leave your payment in this tray where you will find your tax/insurance receipt. I will not invoice you if you are paying by session. My preference is to discuss money and payments via email and not during your session time. Please feel free to email me.

*Families who are paying after several sessions:* You will be invoiced by email. Payment is due immediately upon receipt of the invoice and a 4% per month charge will be incurred after the first 7 days without payment. A tax/third party insurance receipt for payment will be emailed to you on the day the payment is made or shortly thereafter. Setting up a retainer with me is also possible should this be easier for your family.

If sending cheques please send to mailing address is 528 Bagot Street Kingston, ON K7K 3C9

**PLEASE NOTE:**

**When claiming my services under third party insurance policies – Dr. Deborah Thompson should be inputted as the supervising registered psychologist. Insured clients will receive a receipt under Dr. Thomspon’s name and uninsured clients will receive a receipt under my name.**

**Confidentiality**

Please note that Kingston is a small town and we will surely see each other out in public. For confidentiality reasons, I will not acknowledge you. Please do not take this personally.

**Limitations of Confidentiality: (as seen on your consent form):**

One of the most important rights of the person seeking counseling is confidentiality. Information revealed by you during counseling sessions will be kept strictly confidential and will not be revealed to any other person or agency without your written permission, with the following exceptions:

*(a) Duty to Warn.* If an individual intends to take harmful, dangerous, or criminal action against another human being, or against himself or herself, it is the counsellor's duty to warn appropriate individuals or agencies of such intentions. Also, any actual or suspected acts of child, elder or disabled person abuse (including physical abuse, sexual abuse, unlawful sexual intercourse, neglect, emotional and psychological abuse) will need to be reported to the appropriate agencies by the counsellor.

*(b) Court Subpoenas’.* When lawyers believe that a client’s counsellor may have valuable information for their case, they will subpoena her/his notes, records, and in some instances, even the counsellor themselves. In general, once a subpoena is served on a counsellor, it must be obeyed or the counsellor can be charged with contempt.

*(c) Consultation.* Information about you may be discussed in confidence, without revealing your identity, with other counselling professionals for the purpose of consultation and providing you with the best possible service.

*(d) Supervision*. If you are covered under third party insurance, a session summary of our work together will be shared with my psychological supervisor Dr. Deb. Thompson on a monthly basis. Dr. Thompson reviews my cases and is up-to-date on our work together.

**Communication:**

I do best with email communication. If you email me and I do not respond within 24 hours, please text me at 613.572.1035 or email again as new emails in particular have been known to go to SPAM.

*Emails:* While I do accept your emails as pieces of narratives that contribute to your story and your processing your story – that is, I welcome reflections and writings to read before I see you for your next session -- I do not counsel by email (or by text) unless we have arranged such a therapeutic process of letter writing. I suggest passwording your word document using your first name in FULLCAPS in order to protect yourself and your story.

**Frequency of Sessions:**

Generally (but not always) clients follow a pattern of seeing me once a week (usually at a regular and scheduled time) until they feel as though they are standing more firmly on the ground. After that, the frequency spreads out to every two weeks or once a month depending on need. After that, sessions are booked on an ‘as need’ basis.

**Our Good Fit and Termination of Service:**

It is my preference that you and I are a good therapeutic match. This means that my competence and skills match your needs and goals as a client and that our way of being is also a good match. Generally, this match is determined in a first communication by email or in our first meeting together. To this end, there is an opportunity for you to have a 20 minute meet and greet session before you begin a therapeutic relationship with me where we discuss your goals and my competence and get a sense of each other. I like to have this meet and greet in person but it can also be done on the phone. I have learned that, like a good fitting pair of jeans, the best work is done when we ‘fit’ well together and I appreciate a chance to make sure this is true for us.

If you ever find yourself in a position to not want me to be your therapist, I would appreciate if you would let me know so that I can give your place to another client waiting for space in the practice. You need not ever explain to me why it is that you are leaving though I welcome feedback whenever it comes to me.

**Clients Under the Age of 18:**

If you are seeking my services, are under the age of 18, and/and you are living with one or more of your parents, I will be unable to see you unless there is a clear consent that your care is either fully disclosed and shared with your parent(s) OR fully confidential with the caveat that your parents know you are seeing me or are paying for my services and accept that they will not be privy to the therapeutic process you are going through. To be clear: This means that either your parents are fully involved in your care and I have your written consent to share the file OR they are not involved in your care at all even if they are paying for my services. I will ask that you sign a consent form that indicates which of these clear choices you are making.

**Our Collaborative Sessional Time:**

Your session time with me is best used by your careful consideration about what you most need from a professional, what can be managed by friends and family support, and what you want to bring to session beforehand. You will often hear me ask you “So, where do you want to go today?” or “How can we best use our time together?” or “what do you need most?” at the beginning of a session. Your coming to session is about your willingness to dive into unfamiliar territory, to tell your story, to learn, to see new things, to be vulnerable. I think of the work we do in session as collaborative. I will open to you, your needs, your pain, your confusion, your fear, your dreams in an inclusive, non judgmental way.

Thank you,



Heidi Mack, PhD

Certified Canadian Psychotherapist