
Maria L. Boccia, Ph.D., D. Min.
Client Disclosure Statement
(Information and Consent for Treatment)

I am pleased that you have chosen me for your counselor. This document is designed to inform you about my background, ensure that you understand our professional relationship, and document your understanding of and consent to treatment.

Background and Training

I hold a Doctor of Ministry degree in marriage and family counseling from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. I have been a research psychologist for over 20 years, and am licensed as a Marriage and Family Therapist and Licensed Professional Counselor. I also am an AASECT-certified and ABCST-certified sex therapist.

I hold a doctoral degree in biology, which had a strong interdisciplinary emphasis in psychology, from the University of Massachusetts. Following this, I received additional training in Child Development during a two-year fellowship in Developmental Psychology at the University of Denver. I also completed a Masters degree in New Testament at Denver Conservative Baptist Seminary in Denver, Colorado. I have served on the faculty in Psychology at Oklahoma Baptist University, in Psychiatry at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, and as a Scientist at the FPG Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I am currently the Director of Graduate Programs in Counseling at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary-Charlotte.

Counseling Services Offered

You can get the most out of our time together if you understand how counseling works and something about how I practice. This is an introduction only, and you may feel free to ask me questions at any time during our work together.

Counseling includes both the development of a trusting relationship between us and the development of goals for your situation and plans to accomplish them. Thus, counseling will include your active involvement and efforts to understand and change your thoughts, feelings and behaviors. You will have to work both in and out of the counseling sessions. Some steps may include homework assignments, exercises, writing in a journal, or observing yourself and practicing new behaviors.

Early in our times together, we will be focusing our efforts on understanding your situation and developing specific goals that will make a positive difference for you. These goals will be your goals, and will need to be realistic ones towards which you yourself can work. I will encourage you, support you, and help you devise appropriate steps that will help you move closer to your goals.

With respect to my theoretical basis for counseling, I am committed to an approach that includes an integration of my Christian faith with compatible psychological perspectives. I am an evangelical Christian, and believe that we are whole persons, with physical, psychological, social and spiritual aspects. Whether we include discussion of the spiritual dimension of life in our time together will be up to you, but I want you to understand that this informs who I am and how I understand others and the nature of and solutions for problems in living. This spiritual perspective is integrated with the perspectives of family systems, psychodynamic and cognitive-behavioral understandings of how people work. These are well-established and researched methods of therapy that are widely respected as being effective.

I will enter our relationship with hope and expectation for positive change. It is important, however, that you understand that there are possible risks as well as benefits of counseling. Risks might include uncomfortable levels of feelings like sadness, guilt, anxiety, anger or frustration, or having difficulties in relationships with other people. Sometimes, relationships with others can take

unaccustomed directions that feel quite awkward at first. That initial awkwardness can occur no matter how you evaluate the balance between the long-term costs and benefits compared to the old ways of relating. Decisions you make regarding these areas of your life will remain your responsibility.

If we work together, we will specify the goals and methods we will use together, identify the risks and benefits of treatment, and make clear the approximate time commitment involved, costs, and other aspects of your particular situation. Before going further, I expect us to have a plan to which we will both agree. Periodically, we will evaluate our progress and, if necessary, change our goals, treatment plan and/or methods.

I work with individuals, couples and families. Clients with whom I work are psychologically and emotionally unhealthy and seek counseling for difficulties due to common life events. This includes people experiencing depression, anxiety, grief and loss, adjustment difficulties, and confusion about identity or life goals as well as issues involving relationships and sexuality. I also work with women who have survived physical, emotional or sexual abuse, rape, or domestic violence. I do not work with people whom, in my professional opinion, I cannot help using the resources and skills I have available, and will in such cases offer referral to another therapist who may be better equipped to help.

Confidentiality

I regard the information you share with me with the greatest respect, so I want us to be as clear as possible about how it will be handled. All information that we share as well as my records of our conversations are confidential. There are three circumstances in which I cannot guarantee confidentiality, either legally or ethically:

- 1) If child abuse is suspected, the law requires I report it to the appropriate authorities.
- 2) If elder abuse or dependent/impaired adult abuse is suspected, the law requires I report it to the appropriate authorities.
- 3) If the therapist believes that the client is in a clear and imminent danger to self or others, other people will be contacted to prevent harm.
- 4) In rare circumstances, therapists can be ordered by a Judge to release information.

In order to provide you with the best possible help, I may consult with other therapists who may have insights that will be of assistance, but only in such a way that your confidentiality is preserved. Otherwise, I will not tell anyone anything about your treatment, diagnosis, history, or even that you are a client, without your full knowledge and a signed Release of Information Form.

Explanation of Dual Relationships

Although our sessions may be very intimate psychologically, it is important for you to realize that we have a professional relationship rather than a social one. Our contact will be limited to the sessions you arrange with me. You will be best served while I am seeing you for counseling if our relationship stays strictly professional and if our sessions concentrate exclusively on your concerns. You may learn more about me as we work together, but it is important for you to remember that you are experiencing me as a professional therapist.

Sessions

I assure you that my services will be provided in a professional manner and will be consistent with accepted ethical standards. Sessions are 50 minutes long. We will decide together on the frequency and appointment times of sessions, which are generally once per week. You are financially responsible for your regular appointment hour and I reserve this time for you. If you miss appointments, without providing me notice 24 hours in advance, you will be charged the fee for a regular session.

Fees, Billing, and Insurance Reimbursement

My fee per session depends on whether you are new or established. I do not contract with insurance companies directly, but you may file for reimbursement if you have out-of-network benefits. If you choose to file for reimbursement from your insurance company, they may require information regarding diagnosis, symptoms, treatment goals and methods. Any diagnosis provided to your insurance company becomes a part of your permanent medical record.

Complaint Procedures

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of our work, this is most effectively and productively dealt with in our sessions together. Please feel free to ask any questions or clarify any confusion you may have about our work. If you think that you have been treated unfairly or unethically by me or any other counselor, and cannot resolve this problem with me, you can contact the North Carolina Board of Licensed Professional Counselors at P.O. Box 1369, Garner NC, 27529, 919-661-0820, for clarification of clients= rights as I have explained them or even to lodge a complaint.

Please read carefully and complete the following section:

Please sign both copies of this form. One copy will be returned to you for your records, and I will retain one copy in my confidential files.

- * I have read these policies and understand and accept them as described.
- * I hereby give my permission and consent to Maria L. Boccia to provide psychotherapeutic treatment to me and/or _____ who is(are) my spouse/child(ren).
- * I understand that I am responsible financially for services rendered and that payment is due in full each session.
- * I understand that I will be charged for appointments not canceled with 24 hours notice.
- * I will pay _____ per session, as agreed upon with the therapist.

Therapist=s Signature

Client=s Signature

Client=s Signature

Date

Date