

Kathleen Dunbar, MA, CHT, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist #MFC 39880

16 Blake Street, San Francisco, CA 94118
(415) 668-5130

web: www.kathleendunbar.net
email: thewildwoods@earthlink.net

PSYCHOTHERAPY AGREEMENT and INFORMED CONSENT

ABOUT THERAPY

Participating in therapy can help you learn new and important things about yourself and others as well as new and better ways of handling feelings or problems. While there are no guarantees, coming to therapy should help you feel better and produce beneficial results. You know therapy is working when you feel less worried, afraid or anxious; problems are being resolved; relationships are improving or you come to feel better about yourself. Sometimes your relationships may change. Sometimes you may feel worse before you feel better. This is part of the therapeutic process and usually means you are making progress. You have the right to ask any questions about any aspects of our work.

You have the right to end therapy at any time. I as the therapist have the right to end therapy if you fail to pay for sessions; or if I believe that it is in your benefit to end therapy.

You have the right to access your records. Ten years after termination of therapy I destroy records.

A therapy session is 55 minutes unless other arrangements are made. Our therapy work together happens during your sessions. I return brief phone calls between Monday and Friday when I am able. If you have an emergency in between sessions, call 911.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Information discussed in therapy is confidential and cannot be disclosed to anyone. Exceptions to this rule are:

- When a person is determined to be a danger to self or others.
- Where reasonable suspicion of child, elder or dependent adult abuse exists.
- During medical emergencies in which a person becomes incapacitated.
- Upon receipt of a valid court order.
- If you sign a release of information for the therapist to share information with specific others.
- If you sign a release of information as part of your insurance form or you are referred by an EAP or managed care company that requests information.
- No secrets policy: If you are attending couples or family therapy, anything you reveal to me outside the earshot of the others in treatment I have the right to disclose at my discretion to the others in the therapy for the benefit of the treatment.
- In the course of treatment I may seek consultation with other professionals. However, I will present this information in such a way that your identity will remain anonymous.

CANCELLATION POLICY, FEES AND PAYMENT

Payment is due at the beginning of each session unless other arrangements are made. Fees will be reviewed every year. You may pay with cash or check. In the event that your check is returned for insufficient funds, you will be charged the bank fee. Cancellations must be made with a minimum of 48-hours notice. **If a session is cancelled less than 48 hours prior to the start time of that session, the regular fee will be charged for the time reserved for you.** If you are using your insurance benefits to pay for therapy, your insurance company will not pay for missed sessions or for late cancellations. Therefore, you will be responsible for the full regular hourly fee of \$150.00.

BODY-CENTERED PSYCHOTHERAPY

A Description

Our physical, mental and spiritual dimensions are all parts of the complex, interactive systems of ourselves. The work I offer shifts away from the cultural paradigm of the separation of body, mind and spirit and into a holistic approach that recognizes the dynamically interactive nature of these systems. Transformation grows out of physical, psychological and spiritual awareness. Our bodies are not only a great resource that is generally overlooked by traditional therapies; our bodies are also a primary vehicle for the therapeutic process because psychological and physical aspects of ourselves are constantly

informing one another. Major therapeutic tools we use are awareness, presence, and recognition and acceptance of what is actually happening in the moment. To truly use these tools means to live in the present moment in the amazing vehicle and teacher, the body.

Awareness

There are different ways of working in the body. They involve *awareness* – paying attention and being present with sensations, posture, physical patterning, movements, energy, etc. in the body.

The approach I offer cultivates awareness of our physical system. Awareness of and resourcing in the body efficiently support transformation: positive beliefs can be embodied in our very structure, posture and felt sense; and vice versa, learning to be grounded in a positive felt sense in our bodies helps lead to supportive attitudes and resources.

Touch

One of the dimensions of working with the body includes the use of *touch*. There are a number of schools that recognize and work with the mind-body interface through touch.

The specific methods of body-centered work in which I've been trained and which are part of the palette of psychotherapy I offer include the following. They all make use of body awareness and offer touch as a dimension of the work:

- The Hakomi Method www.hakomicalifornia.org and www.hakomiinstitute.com
- Sensorimotor Psychotherapy for resolving trauma www.sensorimotorpsychotherapy.org
- Psycho-Physical Therapy www.psychophysicaltherapy.com
- Biodynamic Cranial Sacral Work www.dynamicstillness.com
- Unwinding The Belly www.unwindingthebelly.com
- Energy Work <http://mindbodyintegration.net> and www.sahajhealing.com
- Shamanic and Indigenous Work www.thefourwinds.com and www.shamanism.org

The type of touch all of these modalities use is very respectful. It is only used at specific times during therapy to either support the body and/or to facilitate a deepening of experience. It is not massage nor does it involve any removal of clothing. It is *always* done only with your permission and cooperation.

If you are interested, we can incorporate these particular forms of touch into your therapy. It is, however, an option, and your therapy can proceed effectively without it.

Your Rights as a Client

Your safety and comfort are my foremost concern. It is therefore important that boundaries are clear and honored in both bodywork and psychotherapy.

To these ends, I unhesitatingly support the ethics of my profession in prohibiting any kind of sexual contact or activity between therapist and client during the course of therapy. The methods of touch in which I've been trained are done consciously, non-sexually, and always with your consent. However, if you ever feel uncomfortable in any way, it is important that you communicate that to me.

You always have the right to ask any questions at any time.

You always have the right to know, beforehand, what methods will be employed.

You always have the right to stop or change any process at any time for any reason.

Consent for the Use of Touch in my Therapy

I understand that my therapy operates in a body-mind model and that within that model, a specific method of touch is available to me. I have received and read the statements which explain body-oriented modalities and which outline my rights as a client. I understand that touch, whenever used, is done consciously, non-sexually, and always with my consent. I further understand that I have the right at any time for whatever reason to modify or stop any methods of touch. I also understand that I may revoke, at any time, this agreement. Based on these understandings, I choose to incorporate the use of touch in my psychotherapy.

SHAMANIC AND INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES AND WORK

What is shamanism? It's an age-old way of healing that is also modern and timely. It is the belief that there is a connection between ourselves, our loved ones, our community and the planet. People, birds, stones, plants and the earth itself are all part of an interconnected web of life. Each piece of the web affects and is affected by the others. This way of looking at life acknowledges equal value in all things.

We practice being in balance and harmony with all aspects of life. Shamanic practice is a dedication to learn to listen deeply to our intuition, trust ourselves, and learn to be stewards for all things. It is one way we can learn to walk our path with heart and wisdom.

Shamanic practices are powerful, effective tools because they work with us at a core level, literally helping us realign our energy, beliefs and the architecture of our being with our true nature. As in any healing modality, this work involves a partnering of practitioner and client in the recognition and shifting of painful, dark or limiting aspects of yourself while helping your empowered, true self to come alive. As on any healing road, it involves a dedication to your true self as it unfolds. It is a practice where you balance the connection with yourself and all of creation with the ability to “do the laundry” with dignity, humor and discernment. It is a way to find the practical tools to uncover your destiny and live it.

Shamanic healing tools include the following

- Tap into the satisfaction of being part of the web of life
- Create and use sacred space
- Work with your energy and chakras
- Release old energies that are no longer useful – typically called extraction work
- Discover your power animals and spirit guides
- Reclaim lost parts of your aliveness through a soul retrieval
- Help make important shifts in your life
- Learn to “journey” to your own inner landscapes
- Use the power of storytelling to transform your life
- Find and feel the support of your “tribe” – family, friends, mentors
- Work with your “shadow”

Shamanism as a healing practice works at two levels: the “energetic” and the “mythic”

The “mythic” aspect of healing is about shifting from the old tired-out, limiting story we may tell about ourselves to a new, lively, beautiful story of the unfolding of our spirit and life-energy. At the “mythic” level, we actively re-write our scripts and find beautiful and practical ways to live from our true selves.

The “energetic” aspect of healing: Shamanism works at the level of energy with tools such as energy work, extraction work, finding a power animal, and soul retrievals.

Energy work and the chakra system: When you learn to recognize and flow with your own energy, you feel more balanced.

Extraction work: The release of energies that are no longer useful to you is typically called extraction work.

Power animals: When you receive a power animal, that spirit animal awakens dormant instincts that empower you. The animal is your ally and guide to show you aspects of yourself you may have never guessed at, but which can help you live more fully.

Soul retrieval work is about energetically retrieving your wholeness.

Shadow work: Our “shadow” refers to the parts of us that we split off from our persona; indeed we forget about them or fail to see them. Owning our shadow helps us find fuller access to our creativity, expression, intuition, openness, and vitality.

Shamanic work is an adjunctive therapy practice that treats the same issues as therapy, with the same benefits and risks. You have the right to stop doing shamanic work at any time and do regular psychotherapy.

Books on Shamanism

Mending the Past and Healing the Future

with Soul Retrieval – Alberto Villoldo

Shaman, Healer, Sage – Alberto Villoldo

Soul Retrieval – Sandra Ingerman

The Way of the Shaman – Michael Harner

Websites on Shamanism

www.thefourwinds.com Alberto Villoldo and the Four Winds

www.shamanism.org Michael Harner

I have read the above Psychotherapy Agreement and Informed Consent carefully (total 4 pages). I willingly enter into therapy with the intent of improving my life. I understand and agree to all of the information provided to me.

Client

Date

Therapist—Kathleen Dunbar, MFT #39880

Date