

# OFFICE POLICIES & GENERAL INFORMATION

## AGREEMENT FOR PSYCHOTHERAPY SERVICES

### ANGIE LEWIS, M.S.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** All information disclosed within sessions and the written records pertaining to those sessions are confidential and may not be revealed to anyone without your (client's) written permission, except where disclosure is required by law (See HIPAA Attachment).

**EMERGENCIES:** If there is an emergency during our work together, or in the future after termination where Angie Lewis, M.S., becomes concerned about your personal safety, the possibility of you injuring yourself or others and to ensure that you receive the proper medical care, she may contact the person whose name you have provided on the biographical sheet.

**LITIGATION LIMITATION:** Due to the nature of the therapeutic process and the fact that it often involves making a full disclosure with regard to many matters which may be of a confidential nature, it is agreed that should there be legal proceedings (such as, but not limited to divorce and custody disputes, injuries, lawsuits, etc.) neither you (client's), nor your attorney's, nor anyone else acting on your behalf will call on Angie Lewis, M.S., to testify in court or at any other proceeding, nor will a disclosure of the psychotherapy records be requested.

If your attorney, or anyone else acting on your behalf, chooses not to abide by this agreement, the fee for court testimony, or at any other proceeding, will be based on \$250 per hour with a minimum fee of \$1000.00. Insurance companies typically do not reimburse for this service and it is considered an out of pocket expense. If disclosure of your psychotherapy records is requested, a release of information form must be properly completed at least fourteen days in advance.

**CONSULTATION:** Angie Lewis, M.S. consults regularly with other professionals regarding her clients; however, client's name or other identifying information is never mentioned. The client's identity remains completely anonymous, and confidentiality is fully maintained.

**YOUR RIGHT TO REVIEW RECORDS:** Both law and the standards of my profession require that I keep appropriate treatment records. As a client, you have the right to review or receive a summary of your records at any time, except in limited legal or emergency circumstances or when Angie Lewis, M.S. assesses that releasing such information might be harmful in any way. In such a case, Angie Lewis, M.S. will provide the records to an appropriate and legitimate mental health professional of your choice. Considering all of the above exclusions, if it is still appropriate, upon your request, Angie Lewis, M.S. will release information to any agency/person you specify, unless Angie Lewis, M.S. assesses that releasing such information might be harmful in any way.

**TELEPHONE & EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:** If you need to contact Angie Lewis, M.S. between sessions, please leave a message on the answering service (251)928.2983 and your call will be returned as soon as

possible. Angie Lewis, M.S. checks her messages a few times a day. If an emergency situation arises, please indicate it clearly in your message. If you need to talk to someone right away, you may call the police (911), or go to the local hospital's emergency room.

### **PAYMENTS:**

The Counseling Ministry at First Baptist is offered to members at a reduced rate of \$50.00 per session on a sliding scale, according to your ability to pay. Checks are made payable to First Baptist and is expected at the time of the session.

**MEDIATION AND ARBITRATION:** All disputes arising out of or in relation to this agreement to provide therapy services shall first be referred to mediation, before, and as precondition of, the initiation of arbitration. The mediator shall be a neutral third party chosen by agreement of Angie Lewis, M.S. and you, the client. The cost of such mediation, if any, shall be split equally, unless otherwise agreed. In the event that mediation is unsuccessful, any unresolved controversy related to this agreement should be submitted to and settled by binding arbitration in Baldwin County, Alabama in accordance with the rules of the American Arbitration Association which are in effect at the time the demand for arbitration is filed. Notwithstanding, the foregoing, in the event that your account is overdue (unpaid) and there is no agreement on a payment plan, Angie Lewis, M.S. can use legal means (court, collection agency, etc.) to obtain payment. The prevailing party in arbitration or collection proceeding shall be entitled to recover a reasonable sum as and for attorney's fees. In the case of arbitration, the arbitrator will determine that sum.

**THE PROCESS OF THERAPY/EVALUATION:** Participation in therapy can result in a number of benefits to you, including improving interpersonal relationships and resolution of the specific concerns that led you to seek therapy. Working toward those benefits, however, requires effort on your part. Psychotherapy requires your very active involvement, honesty, and openness in order to change your thoughts, feelings, or behavior. Angie Lewis, M.S. will ask for your feedback and views on your therapy, its progress, and other aspects of the therapy and will expect you to respond openly and honestly. Sometimes more than one approach can be helpful in dealing with a certain situation. During evaluation or therapy, remembering or talking about unpleasant events, feelings, or thoughts, can result in you experiencing considerable discomfort, or strong feelings of anger, sadness, worry, fear, etc., or experiencing anxiety, depression, etc. Angie Lewis, M.S. may challenge some of your assumptions or perceptions or propose different ways of looking at or thinking about, or handling situations which can cause you to feel challenged, upset, angry, or disappointed. Attempting to resolve issues that brought you to therapy in the first place may result in changes that were not originally intended. Sometimes a decision that is positive for one family member is viewed quite negatively by another family member. Change will sometimes be easy and swift, but more often, it will be slow and even frustrating. There is no guarantee that therapy will yield positive or intended results. During the course of therapy, Angie Lewis, M.S. is likely to draw on various psychological approaches according, in part, to the problem that is being treated and her assessment of what will best benefit you. These approaches include behavioral, cognitive-behavioral, and family systems approaches to treatment within a Christian framework.

**DISCUSSION OF THE TREATMENT PLAN:** Within a reasonable period of time after the initiation of treatment, Angie Lewis, M.S. will discuss with you her working understanding of the problem, treatment plan, therapeutic objectives, and her view of the possible outcomes of treatment. If you have any unanswered questions about any of the procedures used in the course of your therapy, their possible risks, Angie Lewis, M.S. expertise in employing them, or about the treatment plan, please ask and you will be answered fully. You also have the right to ask about other treatments for your condition and their risks and benefits. If you could benefit from any treatment that Angie Lewis, M.S. does not provide, she has an ethical obligation to assist you in obtaining those treatments.

**TERMINATION:** As set forth above, after the first couple of meetings, Angie Lewis, M.S. will assess if she can be of benefit to you. Angie Lewis, M.S. does not accept clients, who, in her opinion, she cannot help. In such a case, she will give you a number of referrals that may be of help to you. If you request it, and authorize it in writing, Angie Lewis, M.S. will talk to the therapist of your choice in order to help with the transition. If at any time, you would like another professional's opinion or wish to consult with another therapist, Angie Lewis, M.S. will assist you in finding someone qualified, and if she has your written consent, she will provide her/him with the essential information needed. You have the right to terminate therapy at any time. If you choose to do so, Angie Lewis, M.S. will provide you with names of other qualified professionals whose services you might prefer.

**DUAL RELATIONSHIPS:** Therapy never involves sexual or business relationships or any other dual relationship that impairs Angie Lewis, M.S. objectivity, clinical judgment, therapeutic effectiveness, or can be exploitive in nature.

**CANCELLATION:** Since scheduling of an appointment involves the reservation of time specifically for you, a **minimum of twenty-four hours notice is requested** for re-scheduling or canceling an appointment.

**I have read the above Agreement and Office Policies and General Information carefully. I understand them and agree to comply with them.**

---

**Client Name (print)**

**Date**

---

**Client Name (print)**

**Date**

---

**Therapist**

**Date**

Initial \_\_\_\_\_ p. 1 of 3