

Policy Statement of Lakeland Counseling Services (LSC)

We welcome you to our practice. In an effort to make your experience with us as smooth as possible, please review our policies and sign below.

- It is the **client's responsibility** to: (1) Provide **current insurance card** and valid **picture ID** on your 1st visit. (2) **Notify our office of any changes** in insurance, address, or phone before your next appointment. (3) **Pay fees** for:
 1. **Services denied by insurance companies.** We will make every effort to verify benefits and collect claims, but insurance companies state that *authorization is not a guarantee of payment.*
 2. **Professional time** spent completing forms and writing letters. Prepayment is required before information is released.
 3. **No show/late cancel fees** for appointments *not* cancelled 24 hours in advanced. After payment, future appointments can be scheduled.
 4. **Copying records:** \$1.00 per page.
 5. **Court testimonies:** Standard master's level therapist fees are a minimum of \$400 (including travel time) and \$200 for every additional hour. *Testifying in court is considered counter-productive to therapy. It can affect the relationship between therapists, current clients, and family member who might become involved in treatment in the future.*
- **Our providers follow ethical rulings** of state licensing boards. Therefore, clinicians do not: accept gifts, engage in business (including solicitations), or have personal relationships with clients.
- **Suggested procedure for emotional crises:** Clinicians' cell phone numbers are on our answering machine and can be called in emotional emergencies. For times when counselors are not able to answer cell phones, the following options are possible: (1) see **another counselor** at our office; (2) call the **Polk County Crisis Hotline:** 863-519-3744; (3) ask a close **friend or family member** to stay with you; (4) go to the **ER or call 911** if imminent harm is likely.
- **Safety Contract:** Providers discontinue treatment in the event of an actual suicide attempt or life threatening action toward someone else. We believe that clients have the responsibility to keep themselves safe unless they have a disorder that impairs their ability to reason. Your signature below indicates that at the time of signing the form, you are of sound mind and willing to discuss a safety plan with your counselor and obtain appropriate support to prevent yourself or child from taking suicidal action. In the event that you make a suicide attempt, your counselor will be available for needed sessions for one month (maximum) while you find other services.
- **Treatment Discharge:** Clients who no show/late cancel 2 consecutive appointments are no longer considered in treatment. After paying related fees, clients are readmitted in treatment.
- **Medical Records:** 1. Clients are entitled to receive a copy of their mental health **medical record** (date, time, length, and type of service) at \$1.50/page. 2. Review of **clinical information** must be done with the provider present at the usual fee for service. 3. Florida law allows providing **treatment summaries** in lieu of actual records. 4. **Parents can access** a minor's mental health *medical record* (including non custodial parents) except when disclosures could result in child abuse or neglect. *Review of a child's clinical information is handled with caution; revealing information said in confidence can delay or abort treatment progress.*

I, the undersigned, have read and understand the policies of LCS/PPS and have reviewed the treatment approaches (**other side**). This promotes consent for treatment that is based on information.

Signed: _____ Printed Name: _____ Date: ____/____/20____

Treatment approaches: Clinicians at LCS/PPS use various treatment methods. The following describes them in plain language to better help you understand the nature of your (child's) treatment and available alternatives. You are encouraged to ask your counselor about approaches he or she uses.

- ❑ **Animal-Assisted Therapy (ATT)** is used to facilitate expression, allow touching, encourage spontaneity; reduce anxiety, and increase trust and rapport with the therapist.
- ❑ **Behavior Therapy** focuses on methods that reinforce desired and eliminate undesired behaviors without concerning itself with the thoughts and feelings that might be causing them. Aversive or rewarding consequences, exposure, habituation, and more are part of behavior therapy.
- ❑ **Behavior Management Guidance** provides caregivers strategies and skills to promote positive behavior, improve compliance, enhance communication and bonding, and manage melt downs.
- ❑ **Brainspotting** uses the neuroscience finding that *where* you look affects how you feel. Clients are helped to find a “spot” that increases the “felt sense” of an experience (or a spot that reduces over-arousal) and to process those sensations with a dual focus on the spot and body sensations. After arousing/processing sensations tied to an event a few times, clients discover new ways to view them.
- ❑ **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)** helps people replace maladaptive coping skills, thoughts, emotions, and behaviors with more adaptive ones by challenging an individual's way of thinking and reacting with certain habits or behaviors.
- ❑ **Ego State Therapy** identifies facets of the personality (*frightened child, inner critic*) and then uses various techniques to achieve a kind of internal diplomacy.
- ❑ **Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing therapy (EMDR)** is used for traumatic memories. While people focus on upsetting events, related thoughts, and body sensations, bilateral brain stimulation (horizontal eye movements, tapping, or tones) help people rapidly process memories by *assimilating* helpful information into isolated memory networks.
- ❑ **Family or Couples Therapy** focuses on systems of interaction between people. Various strategies are used to change the structure of the family, promote healthy leadership, improve interpersonal understanding, teach communication skills, and more.
- ❑ **Hypnosis:** Evokes desired change with hidden suggestions, confusion, and utilizing unwanted behavior. It narrows the focus of attention and promotes a focused inner search.
- ❑ **Integrative Psychotherapy:** Different schools of therapy are combined to become one approach to theory and practice v. **eclecticism** that draws from techniques of several approaches as needed.
- ❑ **Mindfulness** approaches moment-by-moment awareness of the body, feelings, and thoughts to teach people to switch from *reacting* to *reflecting/accepting/observing* without judgment.
- ❑ **Picture Gazing:** Research methods that use imagery to activate uplifting and upsetting brain centers are used in therapy by externalizing distressing thoughts and identifying with resources. Memory reconsolidation occurs by dissolving stressful neurochemicals with calming, rewarding ones.
- ❑ **Non-directive therapy** (person-centered or client-centered therapy): Therapists reflect client's feelings without judgment, advice, or analysis to help people develop their potential and a sense of self. This method is a basic, effective, popular approach, in spite of criticism for lack of structure.
- ❑ **Play Therapy** is used to communicate with and help children resolve psychosocial challenges. Therapists observe or engage in play with a child to determine the cause of the disturbed behavior, express feelings symbolically, and practice new behaviors.
- ❑ **Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT, formerly RET)** shows clients how they have learned to needlessly upset themselves, by teaching them the ABCs of emotions: activating events, beliefs, and emotional and behavioral consequences.
- ❑ **Relaxation techniques** are a part of CBT and many other treatment approaches and are used to help clients learn to calm themselves. These may include guided fantasies, body scans, breath awareness, breathing exercises, progressive muscle relaxation, meditation, self-hypnosis, and more.
- ❑ **Supportive psychotherapy** integrates analytical, CBT, and non-directive therapy to reinforce healthy patterns of thought and behaviors in order to reduce internal conflicts. Often it is used initially until more specific treatment approaches are identified.