Melanie Stone PhD HSPP

PRACTICE POLICIES & INFORMED CONSENT

Please review these policies carefully. They describe the nature of psychological services, office and payment policies, confidentiality and its limits, electronic communication, emergency procedures, and your consent to treatment.

Your Psychologist

Melanie Stone, PhD, HSPP is a licensed psychologist engaged in independent private practice providing mental health services.

Mental Health Services

The purpose of mental health treatment is to help you better understand your concerns, make changes in behavior or relationships, develop effective coping strategies, and move toward resolving difficulties. Dr. Stone may make observations and recommendations based on her training and clinical experience. Therapy is a collaborative process, and your participation, questions, preferences, and goals are important parts of treatment.

Psychological treatment can provide many benefits, including improved relationships, greater insight, better coping, reduced distress, and resolution of specific problems. Therapy can also involve discussing painful or difficult experiences and may at times bring up uncomfortable emotions such as sadness, anxiety, anger, guilt, frustration, grief, or loneliness. Outcomes cannot be guaranteed because each person's circumstances and response to treatment are unique.

With your agreement, other family members or significant persons may participate in a session when clinically appropriate.

Appointments, Fees & Payment

Appointments are scheduled directly with Dr. Stone's office. The current session fee will be provided to you before treatment begins. Full payment is due at the time of each session.

Accepted forms of payment are check, cash, credit/debit card and eligible HSA payments.

If you seek reimbursement from an insurance company, Dr. Stone can provide documentation for you to submit. You may also elect not to use insurance to maintain greater privacy regarding your treatment.

Cancellations & Missed Appointments

Please provide at least 24 hours' notice if you need to cancel or reschedule an appointment. Appointments cancelled with less than 24 hours' notice, as well as missed appointments, are charged the full session fee except when Dr. Stone determines that circumstances warrant an exception.

Goals, Purposes & Treatment Options

There may be more than one reasonable way to address the concerns bringing you to treatment. You are encouraged to ask questions about the methods being recommended and to participate actively in setting treatment goals. Goals may change as therapy progresses. You and Dr. Stone will work together to determine the treatment approach that best fits your needs.

Confidentiality

Your privacy is an important part of treatment. In most circumstances, information about your treatment will not be released to another person or organization without your written authorization. There are, however, circumstances in which disclosure may be permitted or required by law.

- If records or testimony are sought in a legal proceeding, information may be disclosed when you or your legal representative authorize the release or when disclosure is required by a valid court order or other applicable legal process.
- Information may be disclosed when required by a government agency or other authority acting within its lawful authority.
- If you make a legal claim, complaint, or other action against Dr. Stone, information relevant to responding to or defending against that claim may be disclosed as permitted by law.
- If you file a workers' compensation claim, relevant records or reports may be disclosed when required by applicable law.
- If Dr. Stone has reason to believe that a child or vulnerable adult is being abused or neglected, she may be required to make a report to the appropriate authorities.
- If Dr. Stone believes that there is a serious risk of harm to you or another person, she may take reasonable protective action, which can include contacting emergency services, family members or other supports, arranging emergency evaluation or hospitalization, or taking other steps permitted or required by law.

These examples are intended as a practical overview rather than a complete statement of every legal exception to confidentiality. Please review the separate Notice of Privacy Practices (HIPAA) and discuss any questions about confidentiality with Dr. Stone.

Email, Text Messaging & Electronic Communication

Email and text messaging can be convenient but may carry privacy and security risks. If you choose to communicate with Dr. Stone by email or text, you acknowledge these risks and consent to using those methods for routine communication. Electronic messages should not be used for urgent or emergency situations, and response cannot be guaranteed outside normal practice hours.

After-Hours Emergencies

This private practice does not provide 24-hour crisis coverage. If you are experiencing an immediate or life-threatening emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department. If you are experiencing a mental health or suicide-related crisis and need immediate support, call or text 988 to reach the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. Do not rely on voicemail, email, or text messages to Dr. Stone for an emergency.

Consent for Treatment

I have read and understand these practice policies and voluntarily consent to psychological services. I understand that I will participate in planning my care and may ask questions about treatment at any time. I understand that I may stop treatment at any time, subject to appropriate clinical discussion and any outstanding financial obligations. I understand that no particular outcome or result of treatment can be guaranteed.

I acknowledge that I have received, reviewed, or have access to Dr. Stone's Notice of Privacy Practices (HIPAA).

Client Name: _____

Client or Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Melanie Stone PhD HSPP: _____ Date: _____