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No secrets policy and other important information in couple therapy

The couple is the client: When you attend couples therapy sessions, you as a couple are considered to be “the client” and your mental health records therefore belong to both of you. This means that, unless I will need a written consent from both of you in order to disclose any information from your record to a third party.

No secrets: As a therapist who is entrusted with information from both partners of a relationship, I have a policy of “No Secrets”, which means that I cannot promise to protect secrets of either partner from the other person, especially if the secret is harmful or destructive to the process of therapy itself or undermines the agreed upon intention of the therapy. I will, however, guide you in the process and always use my clinical judgment.

Boundaries: Because the relationship is the main focus of couples therapy both partners of a couple should be present for the couples session to start. It is often not in the best interest of the couple to distribute time unevenly between partners or to have unplanned meetings with only one partner present. If one partner is late in arriving or does not show for the appointment, I reserve the right to delay the start of the session or to cancel the session if necessary.

Length of couples therapy: A completed couples therapy can take anywhere from 5-20 scheduled sessions. Length of time depends on severity level of problems, history of past trauma/ infidelity/ or betrayals, and the presence of co-occurring emotional or psychological issues such as mood disorders, depressive symptoms, substance use problems. It is advisable (but optional) for each partner to schedule at least 1 individual session with me as part of the couples therapy process.

Limitations to couples therapy: Couple therapy will only be effective in cases where both partners put in a good faith effort to work on their problems and their relationship. Deliberate dishonesty or deceit, unwillingness to introspect and take responsibility for one’s actions, or lack of interest and motivation to engage in the couples therapy process by one or both partners will undermine the therapy.

We, the couple, understand and consent to the above terms, and agree to initiate treatment with Mariella Lauriola, Ph.D. (Psychologist, License CA #31868)

(Print Name of Partner 1, D.O.B.)

(Print Name of Partner 2, D.O.B.)

(Signature of Partner 2, Date)

(Signature of Partner 1, Date)